

Prisoners of War and British Port Communities, 1793-1815

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Between 1793 and 1815 approximately one-quarter of a million prisoners of war were held in Britain. At Chatham between 1803 and 1814 there were approximately 90,000; at Plymouth between 1793 and 1814, about 175,000; and at Portsmouth for the same period, approximately 360,000. At any one time there were thousands of prisoners confined in these areas and many more at other ports. Yarmouth held approximately 38,000, and Bristol and Liverpool about 40,000 each.¹ Smaller ports absorbed fewer, but all prisoners were a potential source of trouble and a strain on local resources. Government responded to the 1797 invasion threat by gradually moving men away from the smaller ports, both in response to frantic appeals from local authorities and as a policy after 1803 to concentrate prisoners in fewer (if larger) depots.² The impact of that situation on British ports and port communities is a considerable topic. This paper can only deal with some of the more general themes but it may offer insights into the nature of a society so dependent on the sea.

Prisoners were a muted and secondary — but not negligible — part of war policy. Their release or retention posed not merely legal and administrative questions but involved balancing seemingly contradictory outcomes: weakening an enemy by keeping his men, particularly the skilled and the leaders, or weakening itself by using its resources to care for them. Systems for the humane treatment and exchange of prisoners had evolved during earlier eighteenth-century wars. Prisoners were to be fed, on an agreed food allowance, by their own country; an agent was appointed by each combatant nation to oversee the treatment of their nationals in enemy prisons, markets were open to them to check local prices, and they were allowed to visit prisons and hear complaints. Regular exchanges were to take place, prisoners being selected by the agents and a table, stating equivalents in numbers of men exchanged for officers, was drawn up. Prisoners suffering from wounds, infirmities or advanced age; boys under twelve; and women and children were to be returned at once without equivalents in exchange. Surgeons, pursers, secretaries, chaplains, priests, schoolmasters and non-combatant passengers were not to be held as prisoners. Serving officers, separated from men, either pledged their word (gave their parole) not to escape and were permitted to live in designated inland towns, or were granted their freedom to return home on condition that they would not serve again until exchanged in a regular fashion.³

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But revolutionary and imperial France ceased to abide by many of these rules, partly because it saw them as traditional, but chiefly because France held too few British prisoners for equal exchanges. Thus, in 1796 there were 11,000 French prisoners in Britain, but less than half that number of Britons in France; three years later the number of French prisoners had doubled, while the British total in France had not increased significantly. When this happened in earlier wars, a cash ransom made up the balance. But the French governments of the 1790s could not afford this and at any rate were ideologically hostile to the idea. Moreover, French policy, more clearly marked under Napoleon, was to force Britain to bear the entire cost of the prisoners it held in the hope that this would weaken its economy and force it to make peace. The cost certainly was considerable: by 1798 it was running at £300,000 per annum, while the estimated expense of French prisoners alone between 1803 and 1815 was £6 million.⁴ As a result, regular exchanges broke down and from 1809-1810 ceased altogether. At the same time, the number of attempted escapes rose on both sides, and captives were imprisoned far longer than was customary in alien communities.

Though officers were treated with greater consideration, the majority of men were held in prisons, mostly in major ports that also contained the chief naval bases and royal dockyards, like Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham. In addition to land-based prisons, these ports had prison ships or hulks moored in their harbours, since the supply of prisoners always outstripped available accommodation. Other prisons were located at important civil ports, such as Dover, Deal, Harwich, Yarmouth, Hull, North Shields, Edinburgh, Greenock, Liverpool, Pembroke, Bristol, Dartmouth, Weymouth and Southampton, and in Ireland at Kinsale and Cork. Holding prisoners in ports reduced transport costs — a major concern of the administration — and was convenient for receiving and repatriating them. But security problems were less easily solved. To hold large numbers of prisoners in Ireland in the turbulent 1790s seems foolish in hindsight. Approximately 8000 men, chiefly seamen, were held at Kinsale between 1793 and 1798.⁵ Although the majority were there for only three to six months before being transferred to Liverpool or Bristol, they were a sizeable presence in a country which from the mid-1790s was in a state of "smothered war" and where there was an unsuccessful French landing in 1796 and an armed rebellion in 1798. After the uprising no more prisoners were held in Ireland, since it was considered too dangerous.

While the British government was fully aware of the potential danger these men posed, it had little choice at first in the location of prisons because it had to cope with a torrent of captives and was forced to rely on traditional places to hold them. This was exacerbated by the fact that the government did not expect the war to last long, given the desperate state of France, and it imagined there would be the customary prisoner exchanges to relieve pressure on existing facilities. At first it did not contemplate building new prisons and hesitated to increase taxation. A new depot at Norman Cross, near Huntingdon, was opened in 1797 to contain 7000 prisoners, but an imperfect exchange system limped along through the 1790s, although the peace of Amiens in 1802, when all prisoners were returned, temporarily solved the problem. But it was only after 1810 that the exchange system collapsed irrevocably and new prisons, representing a large capital outlay, were built on green field sites. The numbers in these new depots illustrate the extent of the problem: Dartmoor, opened in 1809 to hold 6000 prisoners; Perth, opened

in 1812 to house 7000; Greenlaw and Valleyfield near Penicuik in Scotland housed approximately 1500 and 7500, respectively, between 1810 and 1814.⁶ The threat of an uprising in 1812, led by officers who planned to march on the large camps, free the prisoners and occupy the ports preparatory to a French invasion, forced government to disperse prisoners to more distant locales. Even then the depots in the major ports remained, and for most of the war these ports were unwilling hosts to thousands of French, Spanish, Italian, German, Dutch, American, Russian, Greek, Croat, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Polish *prisoners* — all, in the eyes of the authorities, capable of mass escapes and of seducing British subjects with revolutionary ideas.

This did not seem implausible either to central or local government. The mayor of Liverpool wrote furiously to the Home Office in December 1793 that French prisoners could "in one short half hour...reduce the Docks and Town to Ashes and all the Inhabitants to Beggary" through their detested republican principles.⁷ By 1795 loyalist mobs had given way to crowds demanding "peace, bread, no Pitt." The Unitarian minister Gilbert Wakefield declared, in a 1798 pamphlet for which he was imprisoned, that the common people were so distressed that any change seemed desirable, and that if the French could land 70,000 or 80,000 men they would conquer the country. Certainly government was afraid to distribute arms to the poorer classes in towns in 1798, and although anti-French feeling was much stronger in the invasion scare of 1803-1805, there was still no consensus. The mayor of Leicester warned that if a landing coincided with a shortage of provisions, "a fourth of the population would join the French standard if they had an opportunity."⁸

Some of this may have been wartime hysteria by local officials or exaggeration by those, like Wakefield, opposed to government policy. Despite active radical groups in towns like Sheffield and Norwich, English opinion was largely anti-French and anti-Jacobin. But E.P. Thompson has identified "a major shift of emphasis" among the "inarticulate masses" from traditionalism and deference to a climate which sheltered and supported radical activists, and others have considered English society in the early 1790s "rent from top to bottom" by responses to the French Revolution.⁹

The authorities feared contacts between the populace and prisoners, particularly when these seemed to foster republican sympathies. Some Cornishmen who visited the small prison at Kegilliack just outside Falmouth in 1795 were reported to have joined with prisoners in cries of "Vive la Republique." At Portsmouth in 1793 a plan was discovered among prisoners to kill the agent and guards, escape through a tunnel, and steal a ship from the harbour. While the plan failed, there were further attempts to overpower guards and break out. A shower of regulations resulted, forbidding prisoners to wear the national cockade, sing inflammatory songs, play patriotic music or write republican graffiti on prison walls.¹⁰ Such revolutionary sentiments were powerful and enduring, as a vivid vignette from the memoirs of James Nasmyth, a Victorian engineer, illustrates. As a boy in Edinburgh in 1814, he had watched while the castle was emptied of its prisoners, who were marched by torchlight to embark at Leith, haggard but wildly enthusiastic, singing "Ca Ira" and "Le Marseillaise" while many of the inhabitants joined in. Similarly, when the peace of Amiens was declared, prisoners and guards at Portchester Castle spontaneously lit a large bonfire and danced around it together, singing and shouting. While these celebrations may have been understandable, they were still deplored by the authorities.

Yet most prisoners were probably neither violent revolutionaries nor republicans. Recent historians of the French Revolution, such as D.M.G. Sutherland, Colin Lucas and Peter Jones, have shown that many Frenchmen were ambivalent to its "benefits" and frequently unable to comprehend "republican" values, which were alien to their traditions and to a way of life based on kinship and clientage." The majority of prisoners between 1793 and 1802, and very large numbers thereafter, were merchant seamen, a group equally devoted to traditional values and ways of life. The registers containing details of these men often include the names of young sons, nephews or brothers of masters and mates, and sometimes of their wives and infant families, who sailed and were captured with them. This is true of French and Spanish prisoners whose details I have examined and may well be so for other nationalities. Officially, civilian passengers and their servants, women and children, and boys under twelve could be freed at once without being counted as prisoners for exchange, but many chose to remain. In 1812 there were 1500 such prisoners.¹² This gave a domestic aspect to some depots and complicated the work of the Transport Board, which was responsible for them.

Where possible the authorities tried to be flexible and humane. In 1793 the MP for Launceston asked the Board to permit the son of an elderly naval officer on parole there to join him from prison at Portsmouth. Although the younger man was not strictly entitled to parole, this was permitted and authorisation was also given for his daughter, confined at Portsmouth with her husband, to join her father should she wish to do so. When black prisoners from the French West Indies arrived in 1804, they brought their families. One of their generals brought his four wives, although the Transport Board paid the customary allowance for only one. When the French General Bron broke his parole at Welshpool, he was sent to prison at Bristol, but his wife was allowed to join him and was given her own room in the outer yard.¹³

For many prisoners, the ports at which they disembarked were not their first sight of Britain. Many had been captured as crews of ships seized under embargoes, like those against the French in 1793, the Dutch and Spanish in 1795 and 1796, or the Americans in 1812. Others were taken while sheltering from bad weather or from neutral ships searched for contraband by British warships; some men had even been discharged from captured warships for refusing to serve against their native land, although these men were paid their wages up to that point and also the prize money due them.¹⁴ Others were taken by privateers which swarmed from Liverpool, Bristol and other western ports to prey on hapless merchantmen from the West and East Indies, in happy ignorance of the outbreak of war, or had been captured by British frigates snapping up prizes in the western approaches or the Channel. Some prisoners were soldiers, captured while being moved from one front to another or, more often, making up crew numbers on enemy warships. But it was not until after 1803, and particularly after the outbreak of the Peninsular War in 1808, that large numbers of soldiers appear in the registers.

The seamen prisoners on average were in their early to mid-twenties, although officers, masters, mates and skilled men were approximately ten to fifteen years older. French seamen came chiefly from Brittany, Normandy and the western ports; Spanish seamen from the northern and Basque provinces, as well as Spain's colonial ports, such as Vera Cruz and Havana; and Dutch and German prisoners equally from their main ports and the North Sea coast. It was rare for men to come from more than about twenty to

thirty miles inland. The captives were held for varying periods: at the beginning of the war, often for only weeks or months, but later, sometimes for years. Many neutrals were also captured, although they were usually released at the request of their consuls in Britain, provided they had not been apprehended on board an enemy warship or had not engaged to navigate an enemy merchantman knowing war to have been declared. But although in these circumstances they were not considered prisoners of war, they were frequently held, sometimes for months, while their cases were investigated.¹⁵ If they were taken in enemy warships or merchantmen knowing war to exist, they lost their neutral status and became prisoners, classified by the flag under which they had been serving.

These regulations were clear, but there were still grey areas. In 1793 the Danish consul in Liverpool petitioned for the release of two fellow countrymen who had served on a French privateer that they claimed was their only way of escaping France. This may have been true, as they were probably caught in the French embargo on all shipping. The privateer *Sans Culotte* had taken an American vessel, the two Danes forming part of the prize crew, which was in turn taken by a Liverpool privateer in the autumn of 1793. Despite regulations to the contrary, they were released. More mysteriously, six Frenchmen, held at Chatham and taken on a French prize to HMS *Dido* in Danish territorial waters, asked to be sent to Denmark when their release was requested by the Danish minister in London in October 1793. They were put aboard a British warship bound for Denmark, though in the course of the investigation one man was found to be Welsh. William Price was kept to be tried for serving on an enemy privateer, the punishment for which was death. Sometimes mistakes occurred and individuals suffered. Thirteen Hanoverians, allies of Britain, were still being held at Chatham over a year after capture on a whaler.¹⁶

A shortage of seamen provided an opportunity for some men to escape prison by volunteering for the Royal Navy. French (later Dutch and Spanish) seamen were refused, even if they were royalists, as four French volunteers from Portsmouth declared themselves. Yet one example confirms Dr. Johnson's comparison between a ship and a prison. Twenty-one Danes from the hulks at Plymouth volunteered to serve in the RN on the understanding, given by Sir Home Popham, that if they did not like the service they should return to captivity. In 1811 they petitioned the Admiralty from HMS *Venerable* to do just that.¹⁷ Prisoners could also volunteer to serve in neutral merchantmen held in British ports due to lack of crews. The masters of such ships at Bristol in 1793, finding it difficult to get men, asked the agent if any prisoners were willing to volunteer, and several did. At Plymouth a local merchant asked for the release of four particular French prisoners to navigate a Spanish vessel he owned that was detained for lack of crew; this plea suggests a personal knowledge of the men and their previous employment.¹⁸ This practice increased, particularly as exchanges became more difficult. Writing in 1811 the Chairman of the Transport Board declared that Danes were particularly forward in volunteering for this work and that naval interests thought it inadvisable to send so many hardy seamen home where they would be enrolled in gunboats and privateers against Britain, although the governments of both countries encouraged the process. On the other hand, there were some prisoners the Admiralty would have been pleased to lose. Russians released on the jubilee of George III in 1810 were still in the country claiming subsistence several months later, and the Russian government did not reply to letters about them.¹⁹

The French recruited among their prisoners in the same way and the plight of six Swedish prisoners, petitioning for their release from the hulks at Plymouth in 1810, epitomises the dilemma many merchant seamen faced. These men had served in a West Indiaman bound for Europe, but at Halifax they were pressed by a British frigate and then drafted to another British ship that was captured by a French frigate. They were four months as French prisoners before being offered the chance to volunteer for service in a merchant ship. Arriving at St. Malo they found it was a privateer. Their protests were useless and they were forced on board, yet within twenty-four hours they were taken by HMS *Favourite* and brought to Plymouth, where they faced the possibility of a court martial.²⁰

Although the lives of prisoners of war may have been monotonous, their presence was felt in port communities. Government's first consideration was security, but the presence of thousands of even the most docile prisoners being fed and clothed by the authorities while contributing little to the local economy (and in some cases actually harming it), caused tensions. Contractors supplying food and clothes were appointed by the Transport Board on the basis of the lowest tender and were usually national firms, based in London, that could handle the large numbers involved, rather than local businesses. In 1812 the Victualling Office at Plymouth, which supplied the prison there and at Dartmoor, advertised for 500 sacks of flour and 1000 quarters of wheat per week, and in May 1814, 21,000 prisoners at Portsmouth were consuming 100 head of cattle per week. Such large numbers affected local food supplies. In periods of scarcity, such as 1795-1796, 1799-1801 and 1810-1812, when food prices soared and trade slumped, a prisoner-of-war depot in the neighbourhood could result in disturbances.²¹ A riot in Tavistock, about fifteen miles from Plymouth, in the autumn of 1812 was blamed on the high price of bread (corn was fifteen to sixteen shilling per bushel) caused by the great quantities of corn sent to Plymouth and Dartmoor, where there were 11,000 prisoners of war. An estimated 2000 bushels were being consumed by prisoners and there were fears that the county was being drained of grain. The rioters demanded either that the prisoners be sent home at once or that foreign corn be bought to feed them. The reporter of this incident to the local MP warned of the serious consequences if government ignored the complaints. The "daily passage of waggons full of corn to the French prison and Plymouth naturally incite them [the poor] to murmurs and even threats of seizure," particularly when they lived on the "hard fare of tea and half a bellyful of barley bread, and that grain has also increased to 8/- a bushel and beef exceeds last year's price."²²

The prison diet was monotonous and dietetically unbalanced, but it compared favourably with that of civil prisoners in British jails and not unfavourably with the fare of British seamen. Prisoners had a quart (two pints) of beer, one and one-half pounds of bread and one-third of an ounce of salt daily; three-quarters of a pound of fresh beef on six days; half a pint of dried peas on four days; four ounces of butter or six ounces of cheese on Friday; but no fresh fruit or vegetables or wine except to the sick. British sailors had a pound of biscuit per day; and four pounds of beef, two pounds of pork, two pounds of peas, one and one-half pounds of oatmeal, six ounces each of sugar and butter, and twelve ounces of cheese per week, plus a gallon of beer and half a pint of rum per day. Prisoners, however, were not always passive consumers. Attempts to bolster the Cornish herring fishery in 1807 by instituting two fish days at Bristol failed when prisoners refused to eat the fish and 63,000 pounds had to be sold.²³ Hunger was an

incitement to violence on both sides. In September 1814 a group of American prisoners from Halifax were landed at Plymouth and marched to Dartmoor. On route, being very hungry, they fell on a cartload of turnips, telling the farmer that "the King pays for all." Such actions were unlikely to endear prisoners to the local populace.²⁴

The attitude of ordinary people toward prisoners is difficult to learn, chiefly because of incomplete evidence. Only occasionally can we get glimpses of their views. According to Home Office reports there was a "natural antipathy" to the French, the result of former wars against a traditional enemy, but also a reflection of high food prices and fear of invasion, although this was expressed against emigres as well as prisoners.²⁵ Sometimes there were open demonstrations of hostility. Sergeant Major Beaudoin, landed at Greenock on George III's birthday, found a dummy representing Napoleon being paraded on a donkey before being burned; the townspeople threatened to treat Napoleon the same way if captured. Beaudoin declared that France would never be conquered and that it would take only 10,000 French soldiers to conquer Britain, whereupon there was a disturbance.²⁶ But equally there are many examples of sympathy and kindness to prisoners. French and German captives found this particularly in Scotland, perhaps because of historical links between the two nations.²⁷ Dutch prisoners were generally well regarded for their cleanliness and orderly behaviour, and attitudes to Americans, frequently the most violent and disorderly and thus much disliked by the authorities, were in Plymouth curious rather than hostile. This curiosity seems largely based on ignorance. An American prisoner, being marched in 1814 from Plymouth to Dartmoor, was in a group met just outside town by a party of market women who upbraided them, calling them traitors who should be hanged and denying they were Americans because they had white skins and talked English "almost as good as we do." There was, they declared, only one Yankee among them, pointing to a black prisoner from the West Indies.²⁸

The prime contact between the local population and prisoners was most common at the weekly market at prison depots where prisoners could sell the articles they were permitted to make. These were of bone, wood or straw, and included toys, models, boxes and pictures, which earned some men large sums and which, according to one observer at Liverpool, made the poor envious.²⁹ These markets also gave prisoners the opportunity to buy fresh food to supplement their diet and made possible early contacts over escape plans and the smuggling of tobacco and liquor, both forbidden.

Although prisoners were forbidden to disrupt local trades, they sometimes did so.³⁰ Guards often smuggled in fine straw to make plait and smuggled out the finished article, sharing the proceeds with the prisoners and often smuggling in spirits as well. It was for this reason that guards were frequently prohibited from speaking or having contact with prisoners, although this proved impossible to enforce strictly.³¹ At Bristol such manufacture caused conflicts as well as security problems, while the employers of straw plait makers complained that their considerable trade was being ruined by illegal manufacture, which they demanded the authorities stop. But the commander of the militia guarding the prisoners urged its continuance, since it kept the captives gainfully employed and the preparation of the straw for plaiting gave employment to 200 Bristol children who were thus able to earn between twelve and eighteen shillings a week. These weighty social and security arguments prevailed. Yet on occasion "middle-class morality" could overcome even this reasoning. In 1808 there were complaints about the sale of obscene

snuffboxes and toys at the Bristol depot. William Wilberforce, to whom the complaints were addressed, asked the secretary for the local Society for the Suppression of Vice to investigate. The complaints were upheld and the prison market was suppressed until the culprits were betrayed by their fellow prisoners, whereupon they were sent to the hulks. This is an interesting example of the power of the evangelical movement and the only such instance I have seen of government as a reforming agency.³²

Yet there were many people, often dissenting ministers or local doctors, like Dr. Currie at Liverpool, and sometimes radical in politics, including some MP's, like the radical Samuel Whitbread, who tirelessly investigated conditions in the camps, listened to prisoners' complaints and protested to the authorities about the frauds of contractors and prison staff, or the sickly and unclothed state of prisoners, and forced government to investigate.³³ Local people in times of great distress collected food, clothing and money to relieve prisoners' wants. It is interesting that in 1800 visitors to Plymouth prison were forbidden to bring in bread for the prisoners exceeding their government ration.³⁴

Government was painfully aware of discontent with the war and rising food prices and was anxious not to make the lot of prisoners appear better than that of the native poor. The Chairman of the Transport Board set out the government's position in 1811 to Whitbread. To please 46,000 men, he declared, "kept in close confinement is impossible, and it is equally so to give satisfaction to the persons who visit them; some think they are treated too well and the Country put to the expense of upwards of £20,000 a day to keep them in order for cutting our throats, and others are indignant if they do not possess every comfort."³⁵ Yet the authorities tried to be humane and to treat prisoners as unfortunates rather than criminals. Viscount Bateman, commander of the Hertfordshire militia at Bristol depot in 1793, forbade casual visitors who came merely to stare at the prisoners, "since Humanity even to our enemies should prevent them being exhibited to an idle mob like wild beasts."³⁶ Similarly, although visitors had been admitted in 1797 to view prisoners of war in Liverpool gaol, it proved inconvenient and provoked unrest among the prisoners from "the incautious expressions" of the visitors, and the Chairman of the Transport Board recommended the practice be stopped.³⁷ Seamen were particularly sensitive to the needs of fellow mariners unhappily caught up in war. When Captain Oakes of the British frigate *Seahorse* delivered money collected by his officers and crew to the Spanish prisoners he landed at Portsmouth in October 1793, he wished "as little as possible to make them individually feel the horror of war" and hoped it would enable them to buy "the many little necessaries and comforts they stand in need of, coming off a long voyage and being in a foreign Country."³⁸ This showed true delicacy of feeling.

Prisoners of war were indeed perceived as prisoners and aliens and sometimes were hated and feared as traditional or ideological enemies and potential invaders. Or they were seen as consumers of scarce food, cared for by government while the native population suffered. Individually, or in smaller groups, they were seen as fellow seamen and fellow sufferers. Propaganda, xenophobic sentiments and the long war notwithstanding, sympathy and humanity, so often early casualties in any conflict, survived and even flourished.

NOTES

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1. Great Britain, Public Record Office (PRO), Admiralty (ADM) 103/56-79/81, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Chatham, 1803-1814; ADM 103/41-42/409-419, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Bristol/Stapleton, 1793-1814; ADM 103/221-224, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Liverpool, 1793-1801; ADM 103/455-465, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Yarmouth, 1793-1801; ADM 103/315-380, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Portsmouth, 1793-1814; ADM 103/268-314, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Plymouth, 1793-1814. These are cumulative, estimated figures based upon a preliminary survey of the registers. As yet I cannot provide figures for prisoners held in depots and in hulks, but further research will clarify this point.
2. PRO, Home Office (HO) 28/22/63, 1 February 1797; HO 28/23/207, 8 March 1797; and HO 28/23/191, 4 March 1797.
3. PRO, ADM 98/104, 8 February 1744; ADM 98/105, "Instructions, Precedents and Historic Notes of the Commission for Sick and Wounded Seamen," vol. 1.
4. PRO, ADM 98/107, Transport Board to the Admiralty, 12 January 1796; Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, Parliamentary Papers (BPP), *Commons Journals*, LIV, 20 November 1798-27 August 1799, 657; BPP, *Commons Accounts and Papers (CAP)*, 1810-1811 (236), XI, 115; BPP, *CAP*, 1812, IX, 225; National Library of Scotland, Melville Papers, 70, Mss. 353, Prisoner of War, ff. 110-111, 1810 [?]; Bedfordshire County Record Office (BRO), Whitbread Mss., W1/2595, 24 October 1810; Melville Papers, Mss. 1075, ff. 222-226, 24 December 1810; W. Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy. A History from the Earliest Times to the Present* (7 vols., London, 1899), V, 184-185; T.J. Walker, *The Depot for Prisoners of War at Norman Cross, Huntingdonshire, 1796 to 1816* (London, 1913), 219-222; Lt-Col. M.E.S. Laws, "Prisoners of War," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institute*, XCV (1950), 92-93; and Laws, "The Exchange of Prisoners of War," *ibid.*, XCVIII (1953), 603-605.
5. PRO, ADM 103/213-214, Registers of Prisoners of War held at Kinsale, 1793-1798.
6. Francis Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain 1756-1815* (Oxford, 1914), 117-118; and Ian MacDougall, *The Prisoners at Penicuik* (Dalkeith, 1989), 5-26. As yet I cannot estimate how many remained in the ports and hulks, but further research will produce these figures.
7. PRO, HO 28/12/15-16, 24 August 1793.
8. J.R. Dinwiddy, "England," in Otto Dann and J.R. Dinwiddy (eds.), *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution* (London, 1988), 68. The Carter family, which ran the local politics of Portsmouth, was described to the Home Office in December 1792 as "if not disaffected...certainly lukewarm" to government — and this in a town where government wielded enormous patronage through the naval dockyard; see Clive Emsley, "Repression, 'Terror,' and the Rule of Law in England during the Decade of the French Revolution," *English Historical Review*, C (1985), 822. Three dockyard workers brought before the Portsmouth Town Sessions in October 1796 for singing seditious songs and refusing to disperse, were merely cautioned and discharged; see Emsley, "An Aspect of Pitt's 'Terror': Prosecutions for Sedition during the 1790s," *Social History*, VI (1980), 184. In Bristol in September 1793 there were serious riots over bridge tolls in which fifteen people were killed and fifty wounded by the militia, but local authorities did not report this to the Home Office; Emsley, "The Home Office and Its Sources of Information and Investigation 1791-1801," *English Historical Review*, XCIV (1979), 537.
9. Dinwiddy, "England," 66; and Alan Booth, "Popular Loyalism and Public Violence in the

- North West of England, 1790-1800," *Social History*, VIU (1983), 295-313.
10. PRO, HO 29/3/133, 21 February 1793; and Rev. G.N. Godwin, "Prisoners of War in England a Century Ago," *The Antiquary*, XXXVII (1901), 70. See also Walter Besant, *The Holy Rose* (London, 1890), a novel which draws on local memories of prisoners confined at Portchester.
11. D.M.G. Sutherland, *France 1789-1815: Revolution and Counter Revolution* (London, 1985); C. Lucas and G. Lewis (eds.), *Beyond the Terror: Essays in French Regional and Social History 1794-1815* (Cambridge, 1983); Peter Jones, *The Peasantry in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1988); and Norman Hampson, "The French Revolution: Update," *The Historian*, No. 21 (Winter 1988/89), 10.
12. Of 52,649 French prisoners in Britain; BPP, *CAP*, 1812, IX, 225.
13. PRO, ADM 98/138/59-60, 21 April 1797; Dorothy Vintner, "Prisoners of War in Stapleton Jail," Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society *Transactions*, LXXV (1956), 142.
14. PRO, ADM 98/107/338, 29 September 1797; and ADM 98/303, 6 February 1797 and 1 May 1798.
15. PRO, HO 28/12/147, 3 October 1793.
16. PRO, ADM 98/16/142-143, 18 November 1793; ADM 2/602/116-117, 18 October 1793; PRO, Foreign Office (FO) 95/364/381, 15 October 1806.
17. PRO, ADM 2/125/201-202, 11 December 1793; ADM 1/5128, 26 January 1811; ADM 98/16/164-165, 11 December 1793.
18. PRO, ADM 98/16/139-140, 15 November 1793; and ADM 2/125/207, 14 December 1793.
19. BRO, Whitbread Mss., W1/2595, 24 October 1810.
20. PRO, ADM 1/5127, 28 May 1810.
21. Essex County Record Office (ERO), Brogden Correspondence, D/Dse, 11 and 12 November 1812; Rev. G.N. Godwin, "Prisoners of War in England a Century Ago," *The Antiquary*, XXXVI (1900), 374.
22. ERO, Brogden Correspondence, D/Dse, 12 November and 4 December 1812.
23. Brian Lavery, *Nelson's Navy The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815* (London, 1989), 203-206; BPP, *Lords Reports, Committees* (7), "Gaols in England and Wales," 1835, XI, appendix 10, 656; Vintner, "Stapleton Jail," 147.
24. "The Diary of Benjamin F. Palmer Privateersman," *The Acorn Club of Hartford, Connecticut* (1914), 102-103.
25. PRO, HO 28/23/195, 1 March 1797.
26. Abell, *Prisoners*, 202.
27. "The Diary of Major M. Meinhard 1812-1814," *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society 1916* (Hawick, 1916), 21-25.
28. "The Papers of an Old Dartmoor Prisoner," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, XVIII (1846), 204.
29. See *Notes and Queries*, 8th series, X (1896), 197 on an 1807 visit to Norman Cross prison depot of two Lincolnshire gentlemen, who were told that some prisoners there had made between two and three hundred pounds by such work. Captain Boteler, RN, bought a little model of a frigate, eight inches long and "a perfect treasure complete in all her fittings," for £1.8/- (116p) in May 1808 from a prisoner on board one of the hulks moored in the Medway. D. Bonner Smith (ed.), "Recollections of John Harvey Boteler" *Navy Records Society*, LXXXII (1942), 7; and Alfred de Curzon, *Dr. James Currie and the French Prisoners of War in Liverpool 1800-1801* (Liverpool, 1926), 19.
30. De Curzon, *Currie*, 115-116.
31. Devonshire Regimental Museum (DRM), 1st (East Devon) Militia, Orderly Book, 1793-1794, Account No. 1332, 30 July 1794; General Order Book, 1799-1801, Account No. 1355, 4 August 1800.

32. Vintner, "Stapleton Jail," 138 and 163. There were also protests at Liverpool that prisoners were ruining the straw plait-making trade; *The Times*, 20 December 1799.
33. Vintner, "Stapleton Jail," 145 and 147-148; and De Curzon, *Currie*, 41.
34. Devonshire Regimental Museum (DRM), 1st (East Devon) Militia, General Order Book, 1799-1801, Account No. 1335, 26 December 1800.
35. BRO, Whitbread Mss., W1/2607, 29 June 1811.
36. Vintner, "Stapleton Jail," 141.
37. De Curzon, *Currie*, 18-20.
38. PRO, War Office 1/913/13, 5 October 1793. See also the petition of the owners, masters and crews of Dover fishing boats to the Admiralty in March 1813 about the capture of a French fishing boat, the *Saint Jean* of Saint-Valéry. The fishermen were fearful of reprisals, but noted that despite the war and the fact that English boats worked closer to the French coast than the French did to the English shore, there had been no interference from the enemy. They begged that the boat and its crew be released. PRO, ADM 1/5129, 13 March 1813.