

Foreign Intervention: The Influence of the French and Spanish Navies on the American Revolution

Daniel Boone

American Public University

ABSTRACT

The American Revolution encompassed far more than a rebellion by the thirteen colonies. After 1778, the war became a global struggle for supremacy. At the center of the struggle were the European powers' colonial possessions. Great Britain in particular, being an island nation, relied heavily on the resources and income from their colonies. The colonies played a key role in Britain's overall economic and political power in Europe. While all of their possessions were important, the Caribbean and Indian colonies created the most economic revenue for Great Britain.

While the East India Company maintained a military presence in the Indian Theater of Operations, the West Indies was protected only by the Royal Navy and the British Army. Due to the importance of the Caribbean possessions, these colonies garnered the majority of the resources of the British military effort, particularly after the conflict with the Americans spread into a global war.

Prior to the outbreak of war in 1775, Great Britain found itself in a precarious situation, both economically and militarily. The British economic situation made the buildup and maintenance of the Royal Navy difficult. The entry of the French and Spanish navies into the conflict compounded Britain's problems, and it had to alter its overall war strategy. The combined strength of the French and Spanish navies, and later the Dutch navy in 1780, exceeded the power of the Royal Navy and thus forced Great Britain to refocus its naval might from the American colonies in order to protect its imperial possessions.

Keywords: American Revolution, sea power, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Spain, economics, colonies, West Indies, Caribbean.

Intervención extranjera: la influencia de las armadas francesa y española en la revolución americana

RESUMEN

La revolución americana abarcó mucho más que una rebelión de las trece colonias. Después de 1778, la guerra se convirtió en una lucha global por la supremacía. En el centro de la lucha estaban las posesiones coloniales de las potencias europeas. Gran Bretaña en particular, al ser una nación insular, dependía en gran medida de los recursos e ingresos de esas colonias. Estas colonias desempeñaron un papel clave en el poder económico y político general de Gran Bretaña en Europa. Si bien todas sus posesiones eran importantes, las colonias caribeñas e indias crearon los mayores ingresos económicos para Gran Bretaña.

Mientras que la Compañía de las Indias Orientales mantuvo una presencia militar en el Teatro Indio de Operaciones, las Indias Occidentales estaban protegidas solo por la Armada Real y el Ejército Británico. Debido a la importancia de las posesiones caribeñas, estas colonias obtuvieron la mayoría de los recursos del esfuerzo militar británico, particularmente después de que el conflicto con los estadounidenses se extendió a una guerra global.

Antes del estallido de la guerra en 1775, Gran Bretaña se encontraba en una situación precaria, tanto económica como militarmente. La situación económica británica dificultó el mantenimiento y la acumulación de la Royal Navy. La entrada de las armadas francesa y española en el conflicto agravó los problemas de Gran Bretaña, y ella tuvo que alterar su estrategia general de guerra. La fuerza combinada de las armadas francesa y española, y más tarde la armada holandesa en 1780, excedió el poder de la Royal Navy y, por lo tanto, obligó a Gran Bretaña a reenfocar su poder naval de las colonias estadounidenses para proteger sus posesiones imperiales.

Palabras clave: Revolución Americana, Energía marítima, Francia, Gran Bretaña, Países Bajos, España, Economía, Colonias, Antillas (Caribe)

外国干涉：法国和西班牙海军对美国革命造成的影响

摘要

美国革命的范围远不止十三个殖民地的反叛。1778年后，战争成为了全球的霸权之争。这场争夺的中心则是欧洲强国的殖民地。尤其是大不列颠，作为一个岛国，严重依赖殖民地的资源和收入。这些殖民地对英国在欧洲的整体经济实力和政治实力发挥了关键作用。虽然所有殖民地都很重要，但加勒比海和西印度群岛殖民地为大不列颠创造了最多的经济收入。

尽管东印度公司在印度战区中保有军事力量，但西印度群岛却只受到皇家海军和英国军队保护。鉴于加勒比海殖民地的重要性，该地区获得了英国军方的大多数资源，尤其是自与美洲发生的冲突扩散为一场全球战争之后。

1775年战争爆发前，大不列颠发现自身在经济和军事上都陷入了一个危险处境。英国的经济情况使得皇家海军的维护和军力扩增变得困难。法国和西班牙海军加入这场冲突，导致英国的问题更为严重，因此不得不改变其整体战争策略。法国和西班牙海军的联合实力，加上1780年荷兰海军的加入，军事力量超过了皇家海军，因此迫使大不列颠重新聚焦于其从美洲殖民地获得的海上实力，以保护其帝国殖民地。

关键词：美国革命，海上实力，法国，大不列颠，荷兰，西班牙，经济学，殖民地，西印度群岛（加勒比海）

The American Revolution pitted a growing, discontented segment of the British colonists in America against the might of the British Empire. This was a seemingly impossible task, considering the economic and military power of Great Britain. The British Empire, however, faced certain challenges that directly affected its ability to prosecute a war against the American rebels. The widespread nature of the Empire following the Seven Years'

War was one aspect that spread the British military thinly around the globe and hindered its ability to concentrate its force in one area, and the economic costs of the various wars prior to the American Revolution left the British economy in a precarious position. As a result, Great Britain was unprepared for a large-scale rebellion and even less prepared to fight a global war, two facts the British leadership, from King George III to Parliament, failed to recognize.

Britain enjoyed a powerful navy, but that navy had fallen into a state of neglect because the British did not expect the American rebellion to be a large-scale conflict and thus failed to mobilize for war.¹ Even if the British anticipated the coming conflict correctly, there was simply no money with which to strengthen the navy in 1775.² As a result, American privateers and smugglers managed to circumvent British attempts at interdicting war materiel and supplies. Following the formal intervention of foreign powers in 1778 and 1779, the British situation became even more tenuous. The power of the British navy could have initially provided Great Britain with a significant advantage in the American Revolution, but a weak economic situation prevented the Royal Navy from exercising its full might against the rebellion. The entry of the French and Spanish navies into the conflict compounded Britain's problems, and it had to alter its overall war strategy. The combined strength of the French and Spanish navies exceeded the power of the Royal Navy and thus forced Great Britain to refocus its naval might from the American colonies in order to protect her imperial possessions.

The early years of the war were the ideal time for Great Britain to strike at the rebellion and crush it with a powerful demonstration of force. This, however, did not occur for a variety of reasons. Early in the war, Parliament simply did not believe that the rebellion was a serious concern.³ As such, they neither mobilized the navy, nor injected enough ground forces into the colonies

to deal with the uprising. A contemporary account of the situation proclaimed in 1775 that "the military force which was destined for America, was far short of the strength requisite for the proposed coercion."⁴ This was a hard truth for the British to accept and many simply refused to believe the fact they did not have the power to suppress the rebellion. They compounded this error by sending General William Howe and his brother Admiral Richard Howe to act as both peace commissioners and commanders in chief of ground and naval forces, respectively, in the colonies.⁵ This most certainly created a conflict of interest over the use of overwhelming force. The Howes found it difficult to talk of peace and at the same time conduct a destructive campaign to end the rebellion. The Americans, however, also had their issues at the war's outset, and the primary one was the lack of war materiel.

When the war broke out, the Americans did not possess gunpowder in any great quantity, nor did they have the means of mass-producing it themselves.⁶ Fortunately for the Americans, numerous European countries were happy to supply the war materiel the rebellion required, adding to Britain's problems by creating a potential international incident over suppressing the flow of gunpowder into the American colonies. Over 90 percent of the gunpowder used by the rebels in the early period of the war came from sources outside the colonies.⁷ The Spanish smuggled supplies up the Mississippi River, and the French, Dutch, and Spanish all maintained active trade routes with

their possessions in the Caribbean.⁸ The Americans would then transport supplies from the European colonies in the Caribbean to the American mainland in fast sloops, with the majority of the goods coming in through Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Providence, Rhode Island.⁹ The British needed to stop this trade in war supplies to the rebellious colonies and thus attempted a blockade.

The British attempts to curtail war materiel from entering the colonies experienced problems from the outset. They had neither enough ships, nor the correct ships, to enforce a blockade, but in Boston they made a valiant effort.¹⁰ In Boston Harbor, the British stopped and searched all inbound ships, and at night sent crews out in rowboats to patrol the shallows, but their numbers were simply too few and the waterways too numerous.¹¹ American vessels would dart into convenient coves or rivers and then transport the supplies overland,¹² avoiding the British navy altogether. Small vessels, privateers, and smugglers all evaded the blockade. Privateering and smuggling was a highly profitable business,¹³ and numerous people engaged in the practice, too many for the British to stop.

Many private ship owners, such as William Holland of Massachusetts, petitioned to fit out their ships as privateers and engage the British.¹⁴ The privateers and European powers smuggling to the colonies seriously hampered the British war effort. The British experienced great difficulties in combating the privateers and could not openly confront the European powers providing the supplies. As mentioned, Britain

was dealing with a weakened economy and rising debt from the Seven Years' War; thus, they could ill-afford to provoke any of the European maritime powers.¹⁵ With an ineffective navy, the British turned to diplomacy to stop the flow of supplies to the rebels.

British diplomatic measures failed for two primary reasons: the smuggling business was too profitable for those engaging in it, and the other European powers enjoyed seeing Britain humbled after her victory in the Seven Years' War. The aforementioned privateers played on both of these issues. Made up of many nationalities, the privateers preyed on British shipping and found welcome Dutch and Spanish ports in the West Indies to sell their captured prizes.¹⁶ British resources could not match the growing demand and the idea of escalating the war into a European conflict was not a welcome one with many in the British Parliament. The British had counted on a blockade that would ruin the colonial trade and bring the colonies to their senses, but the eastern coastline of America was simply too great an expanse to effectively monitor.¹⁷ Then, in late 1777, the entire conflict changed.

Following the British defeat at the Battle of Saratoga and the subsequent surrender of General John Burgoyne on October 14, 1777, the Americans had what they needed: a stunning victory to bring France openly into the war. The French entered the war against Great Britain on June 14, 1778, following the ratification of a treaty with the American colonies on May 4.¹⁸ This change in the war greatly affected British strategy.

One of the key changes was in how to utilize the Royal Navy. Lord Sandwich in particular argued for an aggressive naval war against colonial maritime trade, but with the entry of France, that was not possible.¹⁹

When France entered the war, British intelligence estimated that the French navy comprised between thirty-three and forty-three ships of the line deployed between Brest in the Atlantic and Toulon in the Mediterranean.²⁰ The British mustered some forty ships of the line, half of those designated to channel duty to protect against invasion.²¹ The remainder covered North America and the West Indies. Added to this were the ongoing political and economic strain Britain endured and the suddenly immense strategic problems of a global war.²² A shift in British strategic thinking was in order.

The British were aware of French naval preparations as early as 1776, but did not heed the advice of ministers, such as First Lord of the Admiralty Lord Sandwich, and did not prepare their fleet.²³ The British assumed that the Americans could not contest the Royal Navy, yet American privateers and cruisers roamed North American and European waters.²⁴ American privateers captured over three hundred British merchant vessels in 1777, while the British captured only fifteen of the American raiders.²⁵ The American navy even recorded victories in the West Indies early in the war. In a raid on the port of Nassau in New Providence, the Americans captured quantities of war materiel and successfully returned it to

the American colonies.²⁶ Britain already had this naval problem to contend with when France entered the war. The focus thus shifted to protecting the home islands first and foremost.

Once France entered the conflict, many of the politicians at Whitehall proposed to fight the war the way they had during the Seven Years' War, with a European focus that blockaded the French in their homeports, while British squadrons raided the West Indies.²⁷ This plan was also unfeasible, for the British were alone in this war, the alliance with Prussia was gone and the Netherlands remained neutral for the time being. Great Britain was diplomatically alone, and with no distractions on the continent, the French could focus on the naval war.²⁸ The idea of fighting this war the same way as the last was abandoned. Instead, a strategy emerged from Lord North, George Germain, Lord Jeffery Amherst, and Lord Sandwich that focused on fighting the French at sea and subduing the rebellion in the American colonies.²⁹

The British faced the stark reality that they could lose their various colonies and still survive, but if they were defeated in the Channel, they would be open to invasion.³⁰ Thus, British strategy evolved to protecting the Channel first, then reinforcing the Mediterranean and West Indies squadrons. In so doing, they also recalled twenty ships from duty in the American colonies.³¹ The British clearly placed the American colonies as a lower priority in this scenario, even though the strategy mentioned above called for subduing

the rebellion. As the strategy unfolded, and the British realized they could not accomplish all of the goals, they had to continue prioritizing where to utilize their naval power as the war progressed.

Great Britain eventually scaled back the Mediterranean portion of their plan, as they simply did not have the ships to reinforce the Mediterranean squadron. British intelligence reported that a combined force of French and Spanish ships, should the Spanish enter the war, totaled sixty warships to the British forty-two.³² Thus outnumbered, the British could not afford to weaken the Channel fleet to send more ships to the Mediterranean.

This was a significant shift for the British; they were clearly on the defensive and had to prioritize areas of most importance. The home islands were obviously the most important, followed by the West Indies due to its profitable trade, which greatly helped to sustain the British economy. If they had possessed enough naval power, the Mediterranean would have been third. The British also had possessions in Africa, India, and Canada, aside from the Caribbean and Mediterranean, which they needed to protect. They thus stretched themselves dangerously thin around the globe.³³ The danger would become increasingly worse in 1779, once Spain entered the war against Britain.

Prior to Spanish entry into the war, France gained notable successes, particularly in the Caribbean where they captured Dominica in June 1778 and St. Vincent and Grenada in 1779.³⁴ The British had already abandoned

the Mediterranean, save Gibraltar and Minorca; now with the Spanish entry, those two remaining possessions were at risk, and they faced an invasion of the British home islands.³⁵ This possibility of invasion, however, may have saved Great Britain in what was surely the darkest stage of the war for the British.

Spain's decision to throw off neutrality and involve itself in the war came about because of Spanish national interest and pride. Spain had little concern over the American rebellion, and in fact, thought that a rebellion on a continent where they maintained colonial possessions a dangerous development.³⁶ What Spain desired was to humble Britain and recover lost possessions. One primary aspect of this revenge was an invasion of Britain itself and this was the price Spain demanded in agreeing to France's desire that Spain should enter the war. France agreed to continue the war until Spain regained Gibraltar and also agreed to a joint invasion of the British Isles.³⁷ This latter agreement proved disastrous for France and Spain.

In preparation for the invasion, the French sailed out of Brest on June 4, 1779 to the island of Cizarga, where they were to join with the Spanish fleet.³⁸ The Spanish, however, did not arrive until July 23. The delay reduced the supplies and health of the French fleet, which was ill-equipped from the start, owing to its hurried departure from Brest due to fear that the British would blockade them in port.³⁹

The invasion, while causing extensive panic in Britain, was a dismal failure, not due to British naval resis-

tance, but to weather and illness in the Franco-Spanish fleet.⁴⁰ The allied fleet eventually gave up the idea of entering the Channel and instead sought to engage the British fleet, which they outnumbered, but the British evaded these efforts and the French and Spanish returned to Brest.⁴¹ This action was important to the British in that it signaled the last time the allies would attempt to invade the British Isles. Naval engagements continued in home waters, however, until the peace in 1783.⁴² The joint allied fleet dispersed, with France turning her attention to the West Indies, and Spain to Gibraltar and Minorca.⁴³

As soon as the Spanish declared war on Great Britain, they blockaded Gibraltar, and now they turned their full attention to that strategic base. The British were also aware of the strategic importance of Gibraltar and elected to relieve it. Fortunately for Great Britain, during 1779 twenty-three ships of the line joined the Royal Navy, including seven taken from the French and two from the Spanish.⁴⁴ These additional ships made the prospect of a relief expedition feasible. To command the relief of Gibraltar, Lord Sandwich chose Admiral George Rodney to lead the expedition, which was a risk due to Rodney's unpopularity in the navy as a result of his pro-government views and blatant dishonesty.⁴⁵ Rodney, however, was an aggressive and intelligent admiral who was not averse to taking risks.⁴⁶

Rodney's relief force set sail on Christmas Eve, 1779 and met with early success. The British fleet comprised twenty-two ships of the line and eight frigates, along with hundreds of support

vessels.⁴⁷ The British first encountered a Spanish convoy, also heading to Gibraltar, and the British easily captured the smaller Spanish fleet.⁴⁸ Then, on January 16, 1780, the British encountered a Spanish fleet sent out to intercept the British relief expedition.

This second Spanish fleet was also significantly weaker than the British fleet as it contained only eleven ships of the line and two frigates, and thus the Spanish elected to flee.⁴⁹ Rodney ordered the British fleet to pursue, and in a desperate gamble on a stormy night amidst the shoals and reefs, placed his ships between the Spanish and the coast.⁵⁰ The gamble was a success and the British captured six Spanish ships and destroyed a seventh.⁵¹ Gibraltar was relieved and Minorca was as well. The Spanish, however, continued the siege, which culminated in an attack on September 13, 1782 that ended in utter failure.⁵² While Spain would continue to pose a threat to the British, they never seriously endangered the British fleet. The entry of France and Spain, however, had expanded the war from a colonial rebellion into a global conflict, and this altered the British war strategy. The entry of the Netherlands into the war against Great Britain, far from complicating Britain's position by bringing in yet another naval power, actually aided her war effort.

The entry of the Netherlands into the conflict in late 1780 brought economic ruin to the Dutch and solved a dilemma for Great Britain. The French figured out a means of circumventing the British blockade of the English Channel using a canal system, which al-

lowed ship materials, such as masts, to arrive in French ports via the canals.⁵³ Once the blockade became ineffective, the British elected to declare war on the Netherlands in order to directly blockade her coasts and halt the flow of war materiel to France.

Britain declared war on December 20, 1780 and set about shutting down Dutch maritime trade. The result was the economic ruin of the Netherlands, as the Dutch did not have the naval or political power to break the English blockade.⁵⁴ The economic fallout from the war also affected the Dutch colonies in the West Indies, and the Netherlands relinquished the colonies of Demerary and Essequibo in the southern Caribbean to Great Britain without a fight in 1781.⁵⁵ The French, however, captured these colonies from the British in 1782, which they returned to the Dutch at the war's end.⁵⁶

The major naval engagement between the British and the Dutch took place in 1781, when the two navies fought an inconclusive engagement in the North Sea. While the actual battle was a tactical draw, strategically the British scored a victory, as they effectively kept the Dutch navy bottled up in its home waters for the remainder of the war.⁵⁷ This latter development was important, as it removed one of the Royal Navy's maritime foes from the contest. The naval war in European waters, particularly after the Dutch retreat, was at something of a standstill. The attention of the remaining combatants shifted to the West Indies, which was of vital interest to the British, and they accordingly sent an able commander to re-es-

tablish their dominance in the area.

The commander the British elected to send to the West Indies was Admiral Rodney, now a hero after the Gibraltar expedition. Rodney demonstrated the same aggressive tactics against the French in the Caribbean as he did against the Spanish and achieved notable results. Rodney prevented the French from taking Barbados in 1781, and in 1782 he destroyed the French fleet at the Battle of the Saintes (April 12, 1782).⁵⁸

In the latter engagement, Rodney utilized the same tactic, attacking from the leeward position, as he did against the Spanish fleet en route to Gibraltar. The move once again proved successful and granted victory to Rodney. The British fleet destroyed the French fleet off Santo Domingo, where the French were waiting to join the Spanish fleet for a combined assault against the British base at Jamaica.⁵⁹ The French suffered over three thousand casualties⁶⁰ and lost eight ships, and the French Admiral de Grasse became a prisoner of the British.⁶¹ The British regained the advantage in the West Indies, and once again dealt a decisive blow to French naval power, but this victory came too late to save the British army at Yorktown, which suffered defeat and surrender in October 1781.

The naval victories over Spain and France strengthened Britain's military position and political power in Europe.⁶² The victory also deprived the Americans of the French navy from joint operations in the American colonies: following the British surrender at

Yorktown, the French turned to combatting the British elsewhere. Even with the blow dealt the British at Yorktown, the Americans could not mount any serious campaigns against the remaining British possessions in North America.⁶³ The absence of a French Navy to aid them in combined-arms operations effectively hamstrung the American war effort. Following the victory at Yorktown, de Grasse sailed to his eventual fate against Rodney in the Caribbean, and the majority of the French troops in America desired to return home now that the contest in the American colonies was all but over.⁶⁴ The war was winding down, and while further battles and engagements occurred, it was really only the peace negotiations that remained.

At the beginning of the rebellion, the British navy had the power to control events and possibly ensure an early British victory. The weak economy of Britain, however, prevented the navy from fully mobilizing, and the eventual entry of France and Spain into the conflict forced Great Britain to alter its war strategy. The combined strength of the French and Spanish navies presented a serious challenge to the power of the Royal Navy. This led to Britain re-prioritizing the value of its imperial possessions, and the American colonies did not rank high on the list. The home waters became the area of highest importance, likewise the relief of Gibraltar and re-establishing control in the economically vital West Indies. To accomplish this, the British reduced forces allocated to the war in the American colonies, and reinforcements were unavailable to counter defeats and losses.

The British shift in strategy, however, saved the majority of their empire and enabled them to be ready when France once again became a threat following the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. There are historians who state that the Royal Navy failed in its mission to protect Great Britain's interests and in fact lost the war.⁶⁵ The facts, however, demonstrate something different. The British political leadership failed to prepare for war; they misjudged both the Americans and the French. Once the war became a global affair, however, the British shifted strategies and strengthened their navy, and this enabled them to be prepared to deal with the French and Spanish, as well as the Dutch when they entered the war as well. They lost their American colonies, but they retained the majority of the global British Empire. Canada, India, the African possessions, and most of the West Indies remained British. This was a result of Lord Sandwich shifting the British naval strategy and focusing on winning the global war, even at the cost of the troublesome American colonies.⁶⁶ A decisive victory it was not. Indeed, the terms of the Peace of Paris were decidedly unfavorable to Britain. However, the British Empire, although reduced, survived.⁶⁷ France did not; revolution swept the country in 1789. Spain was meanwhile already in decline and, by the end of the nineteenth century, collapsed altogether following a disastrous war against the United States in 1898. The British, however, would go on to defeat Napoleon Bonaparte and continue to dominate the oceans until their former enemy, the United States, took

over the mantle of the primary global naval power during the Second World War.

Bibliography

Beatson, Robert. *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain*, Vol. 4 of 6: *From 1727 to 1783*. London: Forgotten Books, 2016.

———. *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain*, Vol. 5: *From 1727 to 1783*. London: Forgotten Books, 2016.

“Journal of the Massachusetts House of Representatives 2 October 1775.” In *Naval Documents of the American Revolution: Volume 2: 1775*. Edited by William Bell Clark, 269. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964.

Ferling, John. *Almost a Miracle, The American Victory in the War of Independence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Herman, Arthur. *To Rule the Waves, How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004.

Mahan, Alfred T. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*. 1890. Mineola: Dover Publications, 1987.

———. *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence, 1914*. New York: Firework Press, 2015.

Middlekauff, Robert. *The Glorious Cause, The American Revolution, 1763-1789*. 1982. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

O’Shaughnessy, Andrew Jackson. *The Men Who Lost America, British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

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

Rodger, N.A.M. *The Command of the Ocean, A Naval History of Britain, Volume Two, 1649-1815*. London: Penguin Books, 2004.

Simms, Brendan. *Three Victories and a Defeat, The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783*. New York: Basic Books, 2009.

Syrett, David. *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War*. Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1998.

Tiley, John A. *The British Navy and the American Revolution*. Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1987.

Tuchman, Barbara W. *The First Salute*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988.

Willis, Sam. *The Struggle for Sea Power, A Naval History of the American Revolution*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Notes

- 1 David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 1–2.
- 2 Sam Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, A Naval History of the American Revolution* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 37.
- 3 Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America, British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 84.
- 4 Robert Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain, Vol. 4 of 6: From 1727 to 1783* (London: Forgotten Books, 2016), 55.
- 5 O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 91.
- 6 Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power*, 41.
- 7 Robert H. Patton, *Patriot Pirates, The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2008), 16.
- 8 Willis, 42-44.
- 9 Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, 16.
- 10 John A. Tiley, *The British Navy and the American Revolution* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 4.
- 11 Ibid., 10-11.
- 12 Patton, 16.
- 13 Ibid., xviii.
- 14 “Journal of the Massachusetts House of Representatives 2 October 1775,” in *Naval Documents of the American Revolution: Volume 2, 1775*, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 269.
- 15 Willis, 42.
- 16 Patton, 136.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause, The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 411.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 John Ferling, *Almost a Miracle, The American Victory in the War of Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 270.
- 21 Ibid.

22 Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause*, 411.

23 Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War*, 14.

24 Ibid., 15.

25 Arthur Herman, *To Rule the Waves, How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004), 311.

26 Barbara W. Tuchman, *The First Salute* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 49.

27 Tiley, *The British Navy and the American Revolution*, 119-120.

28 Syrett, 18.

29 Tiley, 120.

30 Syrett, 19.

31 Ibid., 20.

32 Ibid., 25.

33 Ferling, *Almost a Miracle*, 564.

34 Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat, The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 629.

35 Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat*, 629.

36 Ibid., 601.

37 Syrett, 69.

38 Alfred T. Mahan, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence* (New York: Firework Press, 2015), 62.

39 Mahan, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence*, 62.

40 Tuchman, *The First Salute*, 166-167.

41 Mahan, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence*, 63-64.

42 N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean, A Naval History of Britain, Volume Two, 1649-1815* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 356.

43 Mahan, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence*, 64.

44 Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain, Vol. 4 of 6: From 1727 to 1783*, 576.

45 Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, 343.

46 Ibid.

47 Tuchman, *The First Salute*, 168.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid., 168-169.

50 Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1987), 404.

51 Ibid.

52 Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, 355.

53 Syrett, 126.

54 Ibid., 129-130.

55 Robert Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain, Vol. 5 of 6: From 1727 to 1783* (London: Forgotten Books, 2016), 172.

56 Ibid., 459-460.

57 Syrett, 131.

58 Herman, *To Rule the Waves*, 317.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid., 318.

61 Ferling, 547.

62 Simms, 658.

63 Ferling, 546.

64 Ibid.

65 Tiley, 277.

66 Herman, 313.

67 Simms, 660.