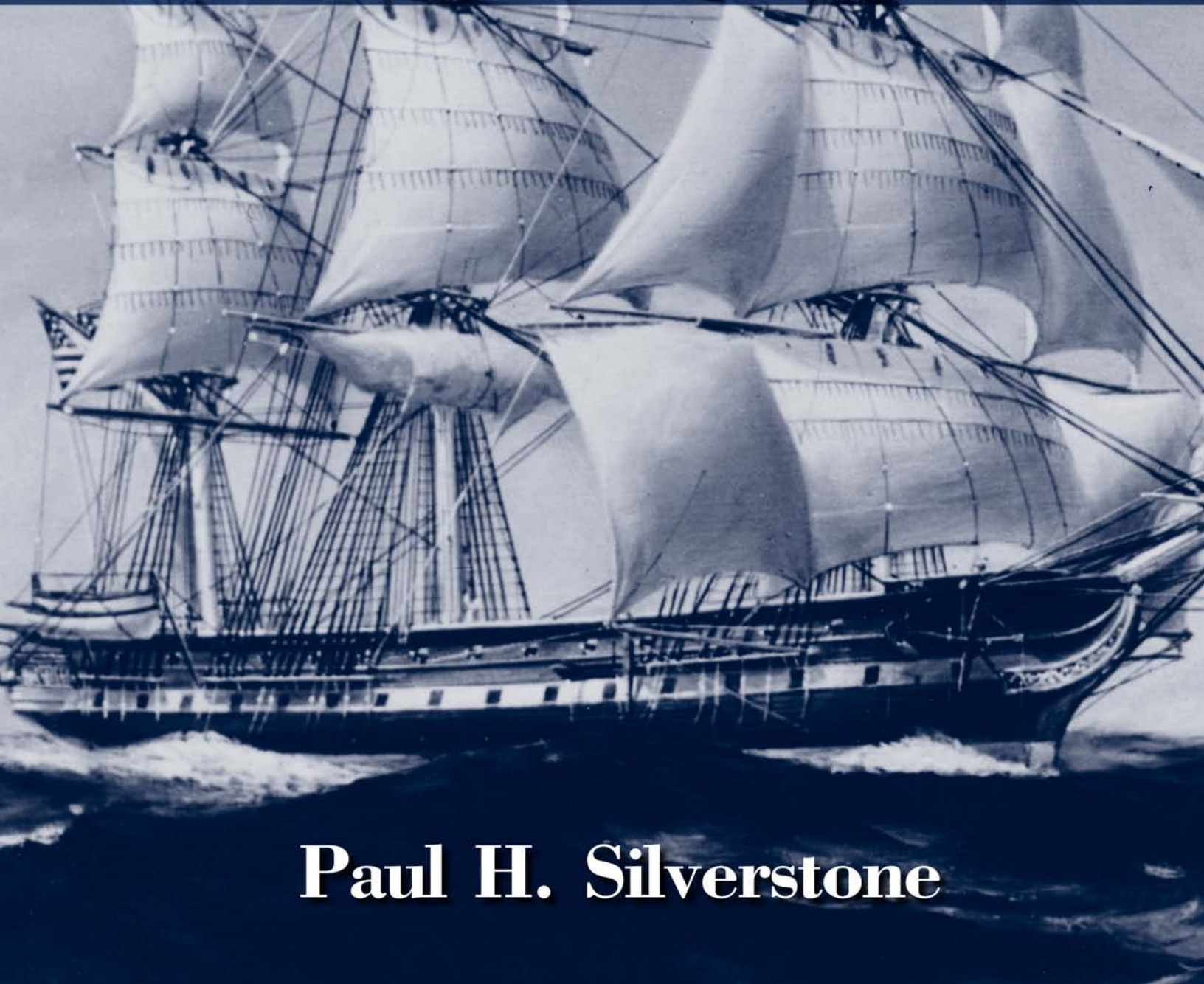

The U.S. Navy Warship Series

THE SAILING NAVY 1775-1854



Paul H. Silverstone

THE SAILING
NAVY
1775–1854

THE U.S. NAVY WARSHIP SERIES

The Sailing Navy, 1775–1854

Civil War Navies, 1855–1883

The New Navy, 1883–1922

THE SAILING **NAVY** 1775–1854

Paul H. Silverstone

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CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Abbreviations	ix
Explanation of Data	xi
U.S. Navy Chronology 1775-1855	xiii
U.S. Naval Ordnance, 1773-1855	xvii
1 The Continental Navy, 1775-1783	1
2 State Navies, 1775-1783	17
3 The United States Navy, 1794-1854	21
4 United States Revenue Cutter Service	77
5 Texas Navy	87
Appendix: Royal Navy Losses in North American Waters	89
Bibliography	93
Index	95

PREFACE

This book provides a single comprehensive source of definitive information on the ships of the United States Navy during the age of sail from its beginning with the Continental Navy in 1775. No such source has previously been available that focuses on this period of U.S. naval history.

From 1775 to 1854 there is much conflicting information but lack of accurate information. Systems of measuring ships, both tonnage and dimensions, varied so that the numbers given differ from source to source. The dimensions of a ship were more meaningful than tonnage. There is occasional confusion about a ship's rig. Ships' batteries were changeable, and different armaments are often found for the same ship. One has little assurance that these figures are right or wrong or merely reporting different

systems of measurement. Some judgment has been required to choose which of these various measurements should be used.

Similarly it has been difficult to identify some acquired ships' prior identity and place or date of construction. Most of the records are handwritten, leading to a variety of spellings or readings of the names of ships and other data. For ship illustrations from this era prior to photography it was necessary to use line drawings, contemporary prints, and artists' impressions.

Appreciation is extended to Ernest Arroyo, William Jurens, Norman Polmar, and Charles R. Haberlein for assistance in obtaining information and photographs. And further appreciation to the editors for many helpful suggestions.

ABBREVIATIONS

bldr	builder
bm	burden
bp	length between perpendiculars
BU	broken up
comm	commissioned
crde	carronade
CSN	Confederate States Navy
CSS	Confederate States Ship
D	displacement (tonnage)
FFU	further fate unknown
H	howitzer
HP	horsepower
LofM	Letter of Marque
M	mortar
MLR	muzzle loading rifle
NHP	normal horsepower
NYd	Navy Yard

oa	overall
pdr	pounder
R	rifle
recomm	recommissioned
RN	Royal Navy (Great Britain)
RR	removed from shipping registers
rtnd	returned
SB	smoothbore
schr	schooner
SE	still existing
S/F	sold foreign
sqn	squadron
trfd	transferred
(U)	information unknown
USNA	United States Naval Academy
USCS	United States Coast Survey
USRCS	United States Revenue Cutter Service

EXPLANATION OF DATA

This book examines three main sections of naval history covering the Continental Navy, the United States Navy from 1794 to 1854, and the United States Revenue Cutter Service.

The ships of the Continental Navy, which operated from 1775 to 1783, are divided into four basic groups: those authorized and built by Congress, those existing ships purchased and converted, those acquired abroad, and those captured and put into service. The ships that served on Lake Champlain are in a separate section, and there is a brief listing of ships owned by the individual states.

The United States Navy was formally established in 1794. Most of its ships are listed by type—ships-of-the-line, frigates, brigs, and schooners—but again the ships that served on the lakes are discussed in separate sections. Also, the newly developed steamships are grouped together in another section.

Records from these early days are often sparse and nonexistent, and where they do exist they are unclear or conflicting. Reputable sources, as often as not, do not agree. Too often, basic information has been lacking altogether.

Particulars are given for each ship as follows. For certain types of ships, information is given in a single line without explanation. For ships remaining on the Navy List after 1855, historical details and changes in the ship or its armament after that date as well as its subsequent history will be found in the succeeding volume of this series, *Civil War Navies, 1855–1883*.

Name: Navy name as completed, with former names given below. Further changes of name, if any, are indicated in the service record with new Navy names in bold type. If a ship retained its merchant name in Navy service, no former name is given. It should be noted that using USS as a prefix for ships of the Continental Navy is not strictly correct as the United States did not come into existence until a later date.

Builder: Place where the ship was built, followed by the builder's name, if known, in parentheses.

Construction dates: For Navy-built ships, dates given are for laying down of keel, launching, and commissioning. For acquired vessels, dates given are date of launching, acquisition by the Navy, and commissioning.

Rate: Sailing ships were rated by number of guns, although this number may not coincide with the actual guns carried. It was customary to append the rate to the name of the ship, thus denoting its strength and size.

Dimensions: Standard dimensions given in feet (') and inches (") are length × beam × draft (or depth of hull, prefixed with "d"). Figures varied widely and were often published without explanation of the method of measurement. The usual length given was between perpendiculars, that is to say between the fore side of the stem and the aft side of the rudder post. Others measured the length overall, on deck, or on the keel. The symbol (U) after the length indicates the type of measurement is not known.

Tonnage: Tonnage is not a good indicator of size in these early ships, but is mainly useful in comparing one ship to another. Measurement was often expressed in *tons burden*, an expression of the carrying capacity of a ship rather than weight, and rules of its calculation varied widely. Other measurements used are indicated in the text by: bm = burden, D = displacement.

Machinery (for steamships): The early steam ships of the Navy had simple engines but with many variations as engineers experimented with new ideas. Side wheels were the principal mode of propulsion with experimental screw propellers developed by Ericsson, Hunter, and others. The mode of propulsion; number, type, and size of engines; number of boilers; horsepower; and speed are given. The diameter of the cylinder(s) and the length of the stroke of the piston are shown, the former in inches and the latter in feet, for example (50" × 2'), following the type of engine. The maker of the

machinery is noted in parentheses, if known (bldr indicates machinery manufactured by the builder).

Complement: Normal figure for officers and crew. For many ships, where sources vary, a range (e.g., 50/75) is given.

There was often a large variance between peacetime and wartime complements.

Battery: Original number and type of guns are given first with later significant changes noted by date.

A description of ordnance of this period is given in a separate section. Additional information pertaining to design, construction or later modifications, acquisition, or earlier historical notes of interest are not included in other categories. The name of the designer and type of figurehead are noted here.

Service record: A capsule history of each ship's naval service, showing assignment by station or squadron and war service including participation in engagements, major damage to vessel, or loss. The number of crewmen killed is noted in parentheses. Changes in Navy name in bold are given here with date. Also listed is the

final disposition by the Navy—loss, sale, or transfer to another agency. Other than final disposition, details of the service record after about 1855 are given in *Civil War Navies*.

Ships captured: Names and dates of merchant ships captured or sunk. Some prizes were credited to several ships acting together and so appear more than once.

Later history: Brief details of the ship's career after leaving naval service, including later merchant names and service in other government departments or in foreign navies. The ultimate fate is given where known, the year the ship was removed from shipping registers (RR) or when it was sold to foreign buyers (S/F). Occasionally a date is given for the last published reference (SE = still existing).

British naval losses during the Revolution and the War of 1812 are listed in the appendix to show both the importance and cost of these wars to Britain.

U.S. NAVY CHRONOLOGY

1775-1855

1775	Apr 19	Battles of Lexington and Concord; American Revolution begins.		Mar 7	USS <i>Randolph</i> blows up during attack on English convoy.
	Sep 5	First' armed U.S. ship, <i>Hannah</i> , commissioned by Continental Army.		Apr 14-25	USS <i>Ranger</i> under John Paul Jones captures 6 ships off Ireland.
	Oct 13	Marine Committee appointed by Continental Congress to fit out a navy; two vessels authorized.		Jul 8	French fleet arrives in America.
1776	Dec 13	13 frigates ordered by Act of Congress.	1779	Apr 6	Squadron under John B. Hopkins captures 8 ships from British convoy.
	Feb 17	Expedition under Esek Hopkins leaves to attack Bahamas; New Providence Island attacked 3 Mar.		Jun	John Paul Jones operating off France.
	Apr 4	First enemy ship, HMS <i>Hawk</i> , captured by a U.S. naval vessel, <i>Columbus</i> .		Jul 15	Commodore Whipple attacks convoy from Jamaica; 11 ships captured.
	Jul 4	Declaration of Independence.		Aug 17	USS <i>Warren</i> and other ships destroyed after defeat in the Penobscot River, ME.
	Sep	John Paul Jones in <i>Providence</i> captures 16 ships.		Aug-Sep	Jones squadron operating off Scotland.
	Oct 11-13	Battle of Lake Champlain; British victory but delay in advance results in Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga the following year.	1780	Sep 23	John Paul Jones in USS <i>Bonhomme Richard</i> captures HMS <i>Serapis</i> off England.
	Nov 2-8	USS <i>Alfred</i> and <i>Providence</i> under John Paul Jones capture 9 ships.	1781	May 12	Fall of Charleston, SC; American fleet destroyed.
	Nov 16	First salute to American flag by a foreign power at St. Eustatius on board USS <i>Andrew Doria</i> .	1782	Sep 7	Robert Morris appointed agent of marine.
	Nov	USS <i>Reprisal</i> arrives in France with Benjamin Franklin; captures 2 ships en route.	1783	Oct 19	Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown.
1777	Nov 20	Congress authorizes first ship-of-the-line.	1785	Sep 3	USS <i>America</i> presented to France.
	Jun 14	Congress adopts Stars and Stripes design as the U.S. flag.	1794	Apr 19	Hostilities cease.
	Jun	An American squadron captures 14 ships in the Bay of Biscay and English Channel.	1797	Sep 3	Treaty of peace signed.
	Jul 4	First Stars and Stripes unfurled on a ship, USS <i>Ranger</i> .	1798	Jun 3	Alliance sold, last ship of the Continental Navy.
	Jul 7	Frigate <i>Hancock</i> captured after 30-hour chase.		Mar 27	Congress authorizes construction of six frigates.
	Jul 8	American ships burned to escape capture in Delaware Bay.	1799	May 10	Frigate <i>United States</i> launched at Philadelphia; first ship of the Navy.
	Sep	USS <i>Raleigh</i> and <i>Alfred</i> attack English convoy.	1800	Apr 30	Navy Department established.
	Oct 1-16	Actions in Delaware River; American ships scuttled.		Jul 9	Congress authorizes capture of any French armed vessel.
	Oct 6	Two incomplete frigates destroyed to avoid capture in New York.		Jul 7	USS <i>Delaware</i> captures French <i>La Croyable</i> .
1778	Oct 17	Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga.		Nov 16	USS <i>Baltimore</i> halted by British fleet and 5 seamen taken off.
	Feb 6	Alliance between U.S. and France signed.		Feb 9	USS <i>Constellation</i> captures French <i>L'Insurgente</i> .
				Feb 2	<i>Constellation</i> action against <i>Vengeance</i> .
				Sep 30	Treaty of peace with France signed; In effect 21 Dec 1801 (or 18 Feb ?).
				Oct 19	USS <i>George Washington</i> forced to carry Algerian tribute to Constantinople after delivering tribute to the Dey.

1801	Jun 10	Pasha of Tripoli declares war on U.S.
1802	Feb 6	U.S. declares war on Tripoli.
1803	Oct 31	USS <i>Philadelphia</i> runs aground and is captured at Tripoli.
1804	Feb 16	Stephen Decatur burns <i>Philadelphia</i> in Tripoli Harbor.
	Aug-Sep	U.S. squadron under Preble lays siege to Tripoli.
	Sep 4	<i>Intrepid</i> blows up in Tripoli harbor.
1805	Mar 2	25 gunboats authorized by Congress.
	May 27	Derna, in Tripoli, captured by U.S. Navy and Marines.
	Jun 3	Peace with Tripoli signed.
1807	Jun 22	Chesapeake-Leopard incident.
	Dec 18	Congress authorizes 188 more gunboats.
1810	May 1	All French and British vessels prohibited from entering U.S. ports.
1811	Mar 16	President-Little Belt incident.
1812	Jun 18	U.S. declares war on Britain.
	Aug 19	USS <i>Constitution</i> under Isaac Hull takes HMS <i>Guerriere</i> .
	Oct 18	USS <i>Wasp</i> captures HMS <i>Frolic</i> .
	Oct 25	USS <i>United States</i> under Decatur takes HMS <i>Macedonian</i> .
	Dec 29	USS <i>Constitution</i> takes HMS <i>Java</i> .
1813	Jan 2	Congress authorizes 4 ships-of-the-line and 6 frigates.
	Apr 27	U.S. squadron under Isaac Chauncey attacks Fort York (Toronto, Canada).
	Jun 1	USS <i>Chesapeake</i> taken by HMS <i>Shannon</i> .
	Sep 10	Battle of Lake Erie; Oliver Hazard Perry obtains victory over British squadron.
1814	Mar 28	USS <i>Essex</i> , David Porter, captured off Chile after a successful cruise in off Chile.
	Aug 24	Washington burned by British forces.
	Sep 11	Battle of Lake Champlain; Thomas MacDonough defeats British squadron.
	Dec 24	Peace treaty signed at Ghent.
1815	Jan 15	USS <i>President</i> taken by British squadron.
	Feb 20	USS <i>Constitution</i> defeats HMS <i>Cyane</i> and <i>Levant</i> .
	May 20	American squadron under Decatur sails for Mediterranean to suppress piracy; war with Algiers. (<i>Guerriere</i> , <i>Constellation</i> , <i>Epervier</i> , <i>Ontario</i> , <i>Spark</i> , <i>Spitfire</i> , <i>Torch</i> , <i>Macedonian</i> , <i>Firefly</i> , <i>Flambeau</i>).
1816	Apr 29	Congress authorizes additional 8 ships-of-the-line and 9 frigates.
1819-1822		War against pirates in West Indies.
1836		
1838		
1841-42		Expeditions against Seminole Indians in Florida.
1842	Apr 14	Congress authorizes Stevens' iron war steamer.
	Dec 1	Mutiny on board USS <i>Somers</i> .
1844	Feb 28	Explosion on Princeton killing two cabinet ministers.
1845	Oct 10	Naval Academy established at Annapolis.
1846	May 12	Declaration of war on Mexico.
	Jul 7	Landing at Monterey, CA.
	Aug 7	Expedition against Alvarado, U.S. withdrew.
	Oct 15	2nd attack on Alvarado, which failed when 2nd division unable to cross harbor bar.
	Oct 16-	Capture of Frontera and Tabasco.
	Nov 1	

	Nov 10-19	Capture of Tampico and Panuco (Commodore David Conner).
1847	Feb 22-23	Battle of Buena Vista, Zachary Taylor defeats Santa Ana.
	Mar 9-29	Siege of Vera Cruz and landings; Vera Cruz captured 25 Mar 1847.
	Apr 2	Siege of Alvarado (Commodore Matthew C. Perry).
	Jun 14-16	2nd landing at Tabasco.
	Sep 13	Battle of Chapultepec, U.S. Marines enter Mexico City.
	Nov 11	Occupation of Mazatlan.
	Feb 2	Peace Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between U.S. and Mexico.
1852 Oct-1855 Jan		Survey expedition to Bering and China Seas under Ringgold and John Rodgers (<i>Vincennes</i> , <i>John Hancock</i> , <i>John P. Kennedy</i> , <i>Fenimore Cooper</i>).
	Nov -1855	Expedition to Japan under Matthew Perry (<i>Mississippi</i> , <i>Powhatan</i> , <i>Macedonian</i> , <i>Supply</i> , <i>Southampton</i> , <i>Lexington</i> , <i>Vandalia</i> + <i>Plymouth</i> , <i>Saratoga</i> , <i>Susquehanna</i>).
1856	Nov 20-22	Bombardment and assault on Canton forts.
1858-59		Paraguay Expedition.

DISPOSITION OF THE NAVY

1 NOVEMBER 1851

Home Squadron

sloops *Cyane*, *Albany*, *Decatur*, **paddle frigate** *Saranac*, **steamers** *Vixen*, *John Hancock*

Mediterranean

razee *Independence*, **paddle frigate** *Mississippi*

Brazil

frigate *Congress*, **sloop** *Jamestown*, **store ship** *Relief*

Coast of Africa

sloops *John Adams*, *Germantown*, *Dale*, **brigs** *Porpoise*, *Bainbridge*, *Perry*

Pacific

frigates *Savannah*, *Raritan*, **sloops** *Vincennes*, *Warren*, *Falmouth*, *Vandalia*, *St. Mary's*, **steamer** *Massachusetts*, **store ships** *Lexington*, *Southampton*, *Supply*

East Indies

sloop *Saratoga*, *Plymouth*, *Marion*, **paddle frigate** *Susquehanna*

Norfolk

frigate *Columbia* (**repairing**), **ships-of-the-line** *Pennsylvania* (**receiving ship**), *Columbus* **and** *Delaware*, **frigates** *United States*, *Constellation*, **sloops** *Fairfield*, *St. Louis* (**all in ordinary**), **steamer** *Engineer*