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Guarding the Other Frontier: The Virginia State Navy and its Men, 1775-1783

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**GUARDING THE OTHER FRONTIER:
The Virginia State Navy and its Men, 1775-1783**

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Portsmouth, Virginia

B.A. History, The College of William and Mary, 2004

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts

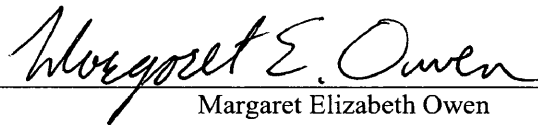
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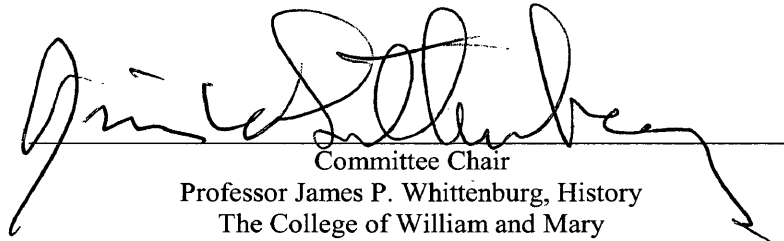
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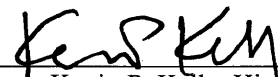
This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of


Master of Arts


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ABSTRACT PAGE

In his classic historical work on the American Revolution, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789*, Don Higginbotham commented: "Information about common seamen in the Revolutionary era is scanty; or, in any event, historians over the years have told us little about them."¹ Neither was his goal at that time to explore those uncharted waters. Indeed, Higginbotham included only a handful of pages on the Continental Navy and merely mentioned the state navies in passing. His noteworthy pinpointing of a gap in the historical research, however, furnishes the *raison d'être* for this paper. A dearth of qualitative primary sources concerning common seamen has resulted in their near exclusion from historical works. While more than one historian has taken the trouble to collect and publish the scraps of information available on Virginia's Navy men, none has gone so far as to analyze all this data quantitatively. As it turns out, there is much more that *can* be known about Virginia Navy men than has been previously drawn out. This paper is not intended to provide a comparative study of Revolutionary War navies: to attempt such a comparison in addition to a quantitative study of the Virginia State Navy would be the work of a dissertation or book. The purpose of this paper is to take full advantage of the available data, using quantitative analysis to obtain statistical information about the men of the Virginia Navy and provide a composite view of these otherwise illusive individuals. Chapter One will give an overview of how the Virginia State Navy was created and administered, providing the context for Chapter Two, which will use the available data to create a prosopography of the men of the naval service.

¹ Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence : Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* . A Classics edition. (Boston : Northeastern University Press, 1983, c1971), 335.

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DEDICATION

They that go down to the sea in ships,
Who do business on great waters,
They see the works of the LORD,
And His wonders in the deep.

Psalm 107:23-24

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In order of appearance, I wish to thank Mr. Whaley, my fifth-grade teacher, whose anecdotal additions to the textbook first made history interesting; “Henry Spaulding” of Jamestown, my first introduction to living history; my parents, Mack and Jan Whitford, who, egged on by their historically obsessed daughter, started a demanding and time-consuming family hobby and have now been stalwarts of the Revolutionary War reenacting community for over a decade; the teachers at Stonebridge School who made me think and write; my parents again, who said they were sure there were ways to gear a college education towards a job in living history; my friends of the 7th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line, whose fellowship is sweet and whose conversation is as good as a library full of history books; Louise Kale, who let me run amok in the Wren Building, pouncing on visitors; the reenactors of the H.M.S. *Otter* who first told me that Virginia had a State Navy during the Revolution, loaned me their handbook, and promised to read my paper; the History Department at the College of William and Mary, particularly my committee, Kevin Kelly and Jim McCord, who waited with extraordinary patience for me to conclude my paper and still dealt mercifully with it, and my advisor, Jim Whittenburg, who makes molehills out of mountains; Roz Stearns, a very fine lady to work for and a good neighbor; the Graziani family, who dream inspiring dreams for the *Liberty* Boat; my husband, Jonathan, who would not let me give up and very lovingly but firmly stayed on my case until I finished; my son Benjamin, who was my study buddy at Rockefeller Library during the months leading up to his birth; and my mother, mother-in-law, sister and sister-in-law, who helped preserve domestic sanity while I wrote.

INTRODUCTION

General histories of the American Revolution devote little or no space to naval matters. Don Higginbotham's *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* contains a mere handful of pages on the United States Navy and only a sentence acknowledging the state navies. This information, while brief, does include some interesting details and suggests several areas for further research.² Higginbotham's other general work on the Revolution, *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict*, does not address the navies at all.³ Robert Middlekauff's *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789*, belittles the contribution of the American navies and spends more time on John Paul Jones than on any other aspect.⁴

Histories of Virginia during the Revolution fare little better. In *The Revolution in Virginia*, H. J. Eckenrode only mentions the Virginia Navy in a few, scattered, inexplicit remarks.⁵ John E. Selby's *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783* contains only a small amount on the Virginia Navy, but does include some interesting discussion on the state's desperate attempts to fix the manpower shortage.⁶

General naval histories prefer to focus on the Continental Navy which was larger and more impressive than the state navies. Gardner Weld Allen's *A Naval History of the American Revolution* only provides a few tidbits about Virginia in a section juxtaposing

² Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789*. A Classics edition. (Boston : Northeastern University Press, 1983, c1971.)

³ Don Higginbotham, *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict*. (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.)

⁴ Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.)

⁵ H. J. (Hamilton James) Eckenrode, *The Revolution in Virginia*. (Hamden: Conn., Archon Books, 1964.)

⁶ John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783*. (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Charlottesville, Va.: Distributed by University Press of Virginia, c1988.)

the different navies.⁷ William M. Fowler, Jr.'s *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution*⁸ and Nathan Miller's *Sea of Glory: A Naval History of the American Revolution* likewise provide scant information about state navies.⁹ Charles Oscar Paullin, in his impressive work *The Navy of the American Revolution: Its Administration, its Policy, and its Achievements*, provides the most information on state navies, considering each in turn. While he devotes more than half his book to the Continental Navy, Virginia commands a chapter to itself. Paullin is an excellent source for understanding how the navies functioned, what their regulations were, and who was responsible for what. However, his focus is administration, not naval personnel.¹⁰

Two general naval works function as encyclopedias on the subject. Robert Gardiner edited *Navies and the American Revolution 1775-1783*, which focuses on campaigns and engagements.¹¹ Jack Coggins' *Ships and Seamen of the American Revolution: Vessels, Crews, Weapons, Gear, Naval Tactics, and Actions of the War for Independence* contains a little bit of everything with many illustrative drawings.¹² Both, however, deal with the various navies in general and go into few specifics about any one navy in particular.

Two published works and one doctoral dissertation deal solely with the Virginia State Navy. Robert Armistead Stewart's *The History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution*

⁷ Gardner Weld Allen, *A Naval History of the American Revolution*. 2 Vols. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962.)

⁸ William M. Fowler, Jr., *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution*. (New York: Scribner, 1976.)

⁹ Nathan Miller, *Broadsides: The Age of Fighting Sail*. (New York: Wiley, c2000.)

¹⁰ Charles Oscar Paullin, *The Navy of the American Revolution: Its Administration, its Policy, and its Achievements*. (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1971.)

¹¹ Robert Gardiner, ed., *Navies and the American Revolution 1775-1783*. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press: In association with the National Maritime Museum, 1996.)

¹² Jack Coggins, *Ships and Seamen of the American Revolution: Vessels, Crews, Weapons, Gear, Naval Tactics, and Actions of the War for Independence*. (Harrisburg: Stackpole Books, 1969.)

is largely a narrative account of the principal actions of the Navy. Stewart's contribution to the historical study of the Navy's personnel is a list of known officers and seamen along with various details about their careers compiled from original records. Though this list comprises nearly half of Stewart's book, he made no attempt to analyze the material he had gathered.¹³ *A Navy for Virginia: A Colony's Fleet in the Revolution*, by Charles Brinson Cross, provides a valuable and detailed, though brief, overview of the Navy's formation, organization, and activities, but, again, does little with personnel.¹⁴ Charles Thomas Long's doctoral thesis, *Green Water Revolution: The War for American Independence on the Waters of the Southern Chesapeake Theater*, which he submitted to the history department of George Washington University in 2005, does some quantitative analysis of naval personnel, but spends seven out of eight chapters on operational history. While Long analyzes what percent of the population of counties and cities joined the Navy and spends extensive time and effort to discover the Navy men's economic status, he leaves other topics, such as recruiting hubs, length of service, and post-war diaspora, for others to delve into.¹⁵

A couple works consider specific subjects within the Virginia Navy. Kolby Bilal's 2000 William and Mary Master's thesis *Black Pilots, Patriots, and Pirates: African-American Participation in the Virginia State and British Navies during the Revolutionary War in Virginia* discusses the "agency, motives, and participation" of black seamen in the Virginia State Navy and cites a number of individual cases. Bilal's

¹³ Robert Armistead Stewart, *The History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution*. (Richmond: Mitchell & Hotchkiss, printers, 1934.)

¹⁴ Charles Brinson Cross, *A Navy for Virginia : a Colony's Fleet in the Revolution* . Edited by Edward M. Riley. (Yorktown, Va.: Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission, c1981.)

¹⁵ Charles Thomas Long, "Green Water Revolution: The War for American Independence on the Waters of the Southern Chesapeake Theater" (Ph.D. diss., The George Washington University, 2005.)

bibliography also lists some useful sources on the Virginia Navy as a whole.¹⁶ Edward Phelps Lull's *History of U.S. Navy-yard at Gosport, Va.* follows the history of one shipyard that was for a time used by Virginia's Navy.¹⁷

While existing histories suggest various avenues for inquiry, only a few have begun researching the men of the Virginia State Navy, and none has focused exclusive attention upon them nor explored all the possibilities of the data available.

¹⁶ Kolby Bilal, "Black Pilots, Patriots, and Pirates: African-American Participation in the Virginia State and British Navies During the Revolutionary War in Virginia." (M.A. thesis, College of William and Mary, 2000.)

¹⁷ Edward Phelps Lull, *History of U.S. Navy-yard at Gosport, Va. (near Norfolk)*. (US Government Printing Office, 1874.)

CHAPTER I

INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIA STATE NAVY

Virginia's eastern border is the great Chesapeake Bay, nearly two hundred miles long and ranging from three to thirty miles wide.¹⁸ Four major estuaries, the James, York, Rappahannock, and Potomac Rivers, penetrate from this bay deep into the country and are navigable to the fall line,¹⁹ an average of one hundred miles inland. "In Virginia we have properly two frontiers," wrote Richard Henry Lee, "one bordered by a wilderness, the other by the Sea."²⁰ With every mile of riverbank an exposed coastline vulnerable to amphibious assault, Virginia's defenses were breached before the American Revolution ever began. That a navy was necessary was obvious; how to create and administer one was not. The story of the Virginia Navy of the Revolution is one of trial and error, of starts and stops.

HOW THE NAVY CAME INTO BEING

Early in the conflict, Congress gave the impression that it wanted the states to deal with the naval war.²¹ Congress avoided the question of a Continental Navy until repeated agitation by the New England colonies forced the issue in the fall of 1775.²²

¹⁸ "Chesapeake Bay," in *The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition* (Columbia University Press, 2003), 543.

¹⁹ Mark T. Mattson, *Macmillan Color Atlas of the States* (New York: Macmillan Library Reference USA; London: Prentice Hall International, c1996), 324.

²⁰ Richard Henry Lee, *Richard Henry Lee Letters*, ed. James Curtis Ballagh. 2 vols. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911, 1914, reprinted: (New York: De Capo Press, 1970), 2: 83.

²¹ Middlekauff, *Glorious Cause*, 527.

²² Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 32-37.

With British vessels already present and active in American waters, events were rapidly outstripping legislation by the time Congress resolved to officially organize a navy. By this point, George Washington, in his position as commander-in-chief of the continent's land forces, had been driven to commission a handful of vessels by his own authority in order to support his siege operations at Boston, Massachusetts.²³

Meanwhile in Virginia, the fleet of royal governor John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, and his loyalist allies had been harassing towns and plantations along Virginia's rivers since summer 1775; a naval attack on the town of Hampton had only been repulsed by concerted rifle fire from shore.²⁴ Virginia could not remain complacent about maritime defense. Late in the year, Colonel Patrick Henry spontaneously commissioned James Barron to man a vessel and pursue two suspicious ships, seizing the moment rather than waiting for authorization. The Virginia Convention, which was currently filling the gap left by the removal of the British government, voted its thanks and in December authorized the Committee of Safety to provide such vessels as it thought sufficient to protect Virginia's rivers.²⁵ This was the birth of the Virginia Navy. Congress, while it had completed its legislation first, would not have a fleet ready to send out until February 1776. Even then, Commodore Ezek Hopkins, commander of the untried and motley Continental Navy, decided that a direct assault on Dunmore would accomplish nothing but the destruction of his incipient force.²⁶ Virginia would have to fend for herself.

²³ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 41-2.

²⁴ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 6.

²⁵ Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 76.

²⁶ Congress had instructed Hopkins to attack Dunmore unless he considered the enemy too formidable. Hopkins claimed that this was the case, but Congress was not convinced and censured him for the decision.

NAVAL ADMINISTRATION: A WORK IN PROGRESS.

A navy was a new concept for Virginia and its organizational structure remained fluid and experimental throughout the war. When the Third Virginia Convention, or legislature, first became convinced of the need for a naval force, they turned responsibility for its creation over to the Committee of Safety; which they had created by a July ordinance to organize and oversee the war effort.²⁷ The Convention set certain broad guidelines for items such as pay, but other important decisions, such as the size of the naval force to be raised, were left to the discretion of the Committee of Safety. Also during their December 1775 convention, the delegates created admiralty judges, as Congress had recommended to the colonies, but only to try cases of importation or exportation in violation of the continental association. The following spring, they expanded these judges' authority to include crimes committed at sea and condemnation of captured enemy vessels.²⁸ The legislature always retained the power to give direct orders to or even reorganize the Navy, and it would use this power frequently.

In June 1776, Virginia adopted a state constitution, which renamed the legislature the Virginia Assembly and formed it into two bodies, the House of Delegates and the Senate. The constitution maintained the Council, which had both legislative and executive duties, and gave it the responsibility of recommending, in the strong sense of the word, courses of action for the governor. The members of this body and the governor

Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 56-57; Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 85-86; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, 7-8.

²⁷ William Waller Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619*. (New York: Printed for the editor, 1819-23. Charlottesville: Published for the Jamestown Foundation of the Commonwealth of Virginia by the University Press of Virginia, 1969), IX: 49-58, 83.

²⁸ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 49; Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 103, 131-32.

were elected jointly by both houses of the legislature, and the legislature removed two of them by ballot every three years.²⁹ With the reorganization of the government came the creation of a body specifically responsible for naval affairs, the Navy Board, consisting of five commissioners, appointed by the Convention before they adjourned for the last time.³⁰ The Navy Board originally had oversight of all Virginia state vessels, military or commercial. In April of 1777, however, a separate commissioner was placed in charge of the state's trading vessels.³¹ The two branches of the marine continued to cooperate, however, with some vessels being used alternately for trade and defense.³²

The legislature had been displeased with the slow development of the Navy under the Committee of Safety and hoped that by placing oversight in the hands of specially chosen men with no other responsibilities, better progress would result.³³ Congress already had a committee devoted solely to naval affairs, which may have served as an example. The Navy Board remained responsible for its actions to the Virginia Assembly, furnishing it and the executive Council with reports upon request and looking to the Council to confirm officer appointments.³⁴ The Assembly also replaced the admiralty judges with a Court of Admiralty at this time, leaning heavily on the regulations that Congress had adopted to this effect and English precedent.³⁵

The Navy Board remained in operation until May 1779. However, startled by British Major General Edward Mathew and Commodore Sir George Collier's two-week amphibious raid on the James in May, Virginia's government turned to self-scrutiny once

²⁹ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 114-116; Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 117-118.

³⁰ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 26; Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 121.

³¹ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 405.

³² Cross, *Navy for Virginia*; 57.

³³ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 149.

³⁴ Virginia. Council of State. *Journals of the Council of the State of Virginia*. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1931-), 1: 395.

³⁵ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 202-06.

again, deciding to move the state capital to Richmond and reorganize the bureaucracy with an eye towards better performance in preventing or at least punishing such invasions.³⁶ The Assembly dissolved the Navy Board, replacing it with boards of Trade and War responsible for activities on both land and water and passed new acts to improve revenue and raise more men for the military. The Board of War was in charge of actual naval vessels and operations, but the Board of Trade procured and distributed supplies for the military and superintended the facilities for building and maintaining trading vessels.³⁷ The Assembly chose the members for both boards, but authorized the Board of War to appoint a Commissioner of the Navy, which they did at the end of June 1779, choosing James Maxwell of Norfolk who had previously served as the Navy Board's overseer of vessel construction and equipping.³⁸

The Assembly, however, soon found the boards of Trade and War to be inefficient.³⁹ Trying a new tack, the legislature dissolved these bodies in their May 1780 session and created three commissioners to take their place: a Commissioner of War, a Commercial Agent in charge of trade, and a Commissioner of the Navy, which post James Maxwell continued to fill. The governor and Council were responsible for appointing the new commissioners and deciding upon the most logical division of duties.⁴⁰ Concerned also that the Navy might be retaining unqualified officers, the Assembly directed the governor and council to appoint a board, consisting of the

³⁶ John E. Selby, *A Chronology of Virginia and the War of Independence, 1763-1783* (Charlottesville: Published for the Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission by the University Press of Virginia, 1973), 36; Cross, *Navy for Virginia*; 52-53; Long, *Green Water Revolution*, 273.

³⁷ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 15-18, 123.

³⁸ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*; 53.

³⁹ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 291.

⁴⁰ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 278, 291-92.

Commissioner of the Navy and six of the Navy's ablest captains, to ascertain the current officers' capabilities.⁴¹

The year 1781 saw the near destruction of the Virginia Navy by British forces. On April 20, the British captured or forced the scuttling of several row galleys that were trying to evacuate naval stores from the Chickahominy Shipyard. A week later, on April 27, the British brought the Virginia State Navy to bay at Osborne's on the James River. Nine naval vessels were destroyed or captured along with twelve merchant vessels they were defending. This reduced the Navy to only a few of her smallest vessels: the *Patriot* Boat, the *Liberty* Boat, and probably the *Fly* Boat. According to James Barron, Jr., however, the *Patriot* was the only one afloat that summer of 1781 and was captured sometime before August. Though the Navy's flotilla was destroyed, most of the crewmen escaped the April debacle, abandoning ship and swimming ashore.⁴²

Given this sorry state of naval affairs, the Assembly decided, after the American victory at Yorktown in the fall of 1781, that the expense of building the Navy up again would outweigh any possible benefits. They therefore dismissed the Navy personnel, commissioners, officers, men, and all, retaining only a handful to man a single lookout boat.⁴³ Small privateers, however, continued to haunt the bay and its tributaries, and during the same November session the Assembly changed its mind and ordered the outfitting of four new vessels.⁴⁴ In the legislative session of May 1782, the Assembly found it necessary to reinstate a more formal organization of the reincarnate Navy and appointed three Commissioners for the Defense of the Chesapeake Bay to work in

⁴¹ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 297-99.

⁴² Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 271-274; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, 101-103, 108-111.

⁴³ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 450.

⁴⁴ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 458.

conjunction with Maryland to protect trade. This body remained in operation until the close of the war.⁴⁵

Throughout the war, trial and error governed the legislature's treatment of the Navy. Between the vast range of their responsibilities as the main governing body of the state and the pressures of war, they sometimes resorted to sudden and drastic decisions concerning the Navy, which later had to be rescinded or amended. Besides the hasty decommissioning and equally hasty recreation of the Navy in the fall of 1781, there was also serious waffling concerning the marines, soldiers stationed on naval vessels. In the October session of 1776, the Assembly decided that the marines were not as useful as had been hoped and encouraged the whole force to join the army.⁴⁶ They soon realized their error, however, and the importance of having muskets to supplement Navy vessels' cannons, and by May 1780 they had apparently forgotten their past reservations and roundly lauded the value of marines in an act to raise an additional three hundred of these Navy soldiers.⁴⁷

A Williamsburg resident complained that the legislature also mishandled the stationing of ships, keeping two large vessels near the capital at Richmond while the Chesapeake Bay remained almost completely unprotected.⁴⁸ The Assembly acknowledged at least one of its mistakes in this regard, allowing in May of 1780 that its past orders regarding two galleys be nullified and these vessels be employed "in such manner as in [the governor and Council's] judgment shall be most conducive to the

⁴⁵ Hening, *Statutes*, XI: 42-44; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 415-416.

⁴⁶ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 195.

⁴⁷ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 297-9.

⁴⁸ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 60.

general defence [sic].”⁴⁹ The Council, however, also tended to give very specific orders that might not always have been approved by men closer to the action. For instance, in December 1776, they required the Navy Board to hire a vessel out for a voyage to Saint Domingo, and in August of 1777, they directed the sloop *Scorpion* to lend two cannon to a Mr. Reynolds. It was not always clear in the Virginia Navy what details fell under whose jurisdiction.⁵⁰

FACILITIES AND FUNDS

Virginia had merchant vessels before the war, but does not appear to have possessed any armed vessels. In May 1776, Colonel William Woodford of the Second Virginia Regiment had his troops constructing boats and fire rafts in an attempt to drive Governor Dunmore’s raiding fleet out of the Elizabeth River, a tributary of the James, suggesting that Virginia did not yet have any military vessels to use against the enemy.⁵¹

The Navy therefore obtained vessels wherever it could. In the first push to raise a navy, officers were often commissioned without vessels and told to find and outfit or oversee the construction of their own. Some vessels could be converted, but many new ones had to be built.⁵² At one point during the war, Governor Thomas Jefferson requested permission to impress boats with their crews in order to blockade Benedict Arnold who had stopped at Portsmouth for the winter during his raid of 1781, but impress was not the usual resort of the Virginia Navy.⁵³ During the crisis of Phillips and Arnold’s

⁴⁹ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 297-9.

⁵⁰ Virginia, Council of State, *Journals*, 1: 276, 462.

⁵¹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 27.

⁵² Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 21-23.

⁵³ Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 265.

invasion in 1781, privateer vessels were brought into the Navy to supplement the state's vessels.⁵⁴

Virginia turned to her merchant marine for existing vessels that could be bought and converted for use by the Navy.⁵⁵ In 1776, the Committee of Safety shortened the time needed to initially raise a naval force by buying two boats, two brigs, and a schooner.⁵⁶ Early in 1776, the Committee of Safety appointed a committee of two to buy and build vessels for the defense of the Potomac River.⁵⁷ Virginia also bought vessels to serve as state-owned traders.⁵⁸ Throughout the war, the naval administration continued to obtain vessels through purchase.

Virginia also built vessels for her Navy, particularly row galleys, which with their shallow draft and ability to maneuver with oars as well as sails were well suited to Virginia's littoral waterways. This unique type of vessel was first recommended to the Continental Congress as particularly appropriate for coastal defense in July of 1775 by Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts. At least in the spring of 1776, the rigging of the row galleys was patterned after Mediterranean galleys, which presumably had been carefully adapted to small bodies of water and complex coastlines.⁵⁹ Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold constructed similar vessels during the summer and fall of 1776 to use in his battle for Lake Champlain and Lake George.⁶⁰ The Virginia Navy used more row galleys than any other kind of vessel.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 413.

⁵⁵ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 21, 23.

⁵⁶ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 397.

⁵⁷ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 398.

⁵⁸ Virginia, Council of State, *Journals*, 1: 238.

⁵⁹ Eugene Michael Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787* (Richmond : Virginia State Library, 1978), 156.

⁶⁰ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 32-33, 73-77.

⁶¹ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Military Organizations*, 156.

Beginning in the fall of 1776, Virginia also built thirty small transports to assist the army, “each Boat to be of a proper size for carrying a complete company of sixty eight men, with their arms and Baggage,” and in 1777, the state won a Congressional commission to build two frigates for the Continental Navy.⁶²

Shipbuilding was not new in Virginia, but major existing facilities for building and outfitting ships were damaged in the burning of Norfolk and Gosport in 1776. Others at Hampton were judged to be too exposed to attack, and a number of new shipyards were built in more sheltered parts of the state, notably Chickahominy on a tributary of the James and South Quay on the Blackwater River, which drains into the Carolina sounds, avoiding the choke point between Capes Henry and Charles at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.⁶³ Eventually, the Gosport shipyard was repaired and saw renewed service, having been seized from its owner Andrew Sproule, a loyalist who had used his facilities to aid Lord Dunmore.⁶⁴

To supply her shipyards, Virginia purchased land in November 1776 at Warwick on the James River on which to construct a new ropewalk to provide cordage for her vessels, buying the necessary equipment and slaves from Thomas Newton’s old ropewalk in Norfolk.⁶⁵ At first, Virginia had to import canvas for her sails from the West Indies, but in their October session of 1776, the Assembly authorized Sampson Matthews and Alexander Sinclair to spend up to £1000 to build and oversee a manufactory for sail duck

⁶² Virginia, Council of State, *Journals*, 1: 156; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 402; Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 38-39.

⁶³ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 20-21; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 400.

⁶⁴ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 39.

⁶⁵ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 21, 38.

at the public expense.⁶⁶ Besides this, Virginia owned a foundry near Richmond, which could provide the metal fittings as well as cannon for Navy vessels.⁶⁷

Oscar Paullin, who did extensive technical research on the American navies of the Revolution, concluded that Virginia had more facilities devoted to the construction and maintenance of her Navy than any other state. Besides the locations already mentioned, Virginia had shipyards at Portsmouth, on the Eastern Shore, and on the Potomac, Rappahannock, and Mattaponi rivers, the Mattaponi being a tributary of the York.⁶⁸ On June 7, 1777, the Navy Board gave James Maxwell oversight of these facilities and responsibility for the construction and outfitting of all naval vessels. As an owner of merchant vessels, he presumably understood the logistics of ship maintenance.⁶⁹

Methods of supply for the Navy were variable. The British ship *Oxford*⁷⁰ was captured in June of 1776 and actually used for spare parts.⁷¹ Soon after, the Navy Board provided each of Virginia's four major rivers with a naval magazine and one to two naval agents responsible for gathering and distributing supplies.⁷² Sometimes, however, the supply systems of the Navy and the army overlapped. In October, 1777, the Council appointed John Pierce to obtain, preserve, and deliver sufficient beef and pork for the two services for one year. The Navy Board, however, participated in his appointment and had power to direct his purchases, while the army had no comparable body directly involved.⁷³ When supply became difficult, the Assembly empowered agents to force the sale at reasonable rates of grain and flour that private citizens were hoarding in the hopes

⁶⁶ Virginia, Council of State, *Journals*, 1: 158; Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 197.

⁶⁷ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 401; Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 168.

⁶⁸ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 400.

⁶⁹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 36; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 401.

⁷⁰ The specific class of vessel is not known.

⁷¹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*; 29.

⁷² Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 401.

⁷³ Virginia, Council of State, *Journals*, 2: 11.

of driving up the price. This act passed in October 1778 went so far as to permit the breaking of doors, if accompanied by a warrant from a justice of the peace and done in daylight.⁷⁴ In June 1779, the Assembly instated a per capita tax payable in tobacco, grain, or hemp, with the last being required to make rope for the state's vessels.⁷⁵

Funding was no less a problem for the Navy than for the rest of Virginia's institutions during the war. From time to time import duties and tonnage were laid on merchant vessels entering Virginia's ports. The state deemed it appropriate that merchants pay for the protection their shipping received, but these fees were never sufficient.⁷⁶ The Navy periodically sold vessels that could not be equipped or manned in order to raise money to support the vessels retained.⁷⁷ In 1779, the shipyard at Cumberland, which had been servicing the state's merchant fleet, was closed for financial reasons and the majority of work on naval and non-naval vessels alike was consolidated at the Chickahominy yard.⁷⁸ Gosport was also closed in this year, after suffering heavy damage in Sir George Collier's raid.⁷⁹ Economy was also a motivation in the frequent overhaul of naval administration. After Yorktown, the Assembly's dismissal of the Navy was due to its expense.⁸⁰

ABLE SEAMEN AND ORDINARY LANDSMEN

Naval administrators also had to worry about manning their vessels. The merchant marine provided an initial influx of trained men, but never enough. In October 1776, the Navy set up three pay rates—able seaman, seaman, and landsman—indicating

⁷⁴ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 584.

⁷⁵ Selby, *Chronology*, 37.

⁷⁶ Hening, *Statutes*, XI: 42; X: 382.

⁷⁷ Hening, *Statutes*, X, 23-24, 217, 379-86.

⁷⁸ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 57.

⁷⁹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 53.

⁸⁰ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 450.

that they took whoever was willing.⁸¹ Whenever invasion threatened, the legislature would offer higher pay, better bounties, and new pensions. Impressment was experimented with, as was the apprenticeship of orphans to the Navy, but the extent of these measures is hard to determine. Even some slaves purchased by the state were given to the Navy.⁸² Nothing provided the service with the numbers it sought; it always had more vessels than it had men to man them. In 1780 Governor Jefferson called off the planned refurbishing of several vessels because it was impossible to find crews for them.⁸³ At the time of the Virginia fleet's destruction in 1781, its vessels were manned by little more than a tenth of the necessary men⁸⁴

The daily wages initially set by the Committee of Safety in the spring of 1776 put a midshipman, or officer in training, on about the same financial footing as a journeyman in one of the trades who had completed his seven-year apprenticeship but still worked under a master. That fall, the Navy Board raised able seamen—distinguished by their advanced knowledge of the business from ordinary seamen and landsmen—to this level of pay.⁸⁵

In the summer of 1780, with enemy privateers active around Tangier Island and the Eastern Shore, the Navy temporarily did away with enlistment bounties and clothes allowances, adding the savings to sailors' daily wages in an attempt to boost recruitment. This raised pay to ten dollars a day, apparently a sufficient rate to entice even men who knew nothing of sailing, according to Commodore James Barron, who feared that his

⁸¹ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 196-97.

⁸² See Chapter 2, section on Ethnicity.

⁸³ Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 254-55.

⁸⁴ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 73-74.

⁸⁵ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 397, 403.

vessels would be crippled by inexperienced crews.⁸⁶ British Major General Alexander Leslie's brief October-November invasion of Hampton Roads led to not so much a pay increase as an attempt to pay seaman the actual wages due to them as American paper money continued to depreciate. Wages were paid in specie or in the number of paper dollars equivalent to the promised coin *at the time of payment* as the Assembly tried to encourage more men to join the defense of the coast.⁸⁷

The Navy also used bounties to encourage enlistments. As early as October 1776, the Navy Board instituted twenty-dollar cash bounties as rewards for men who enlisted in the Navy.⁸⁸ In 1779, with inflation rampant, the bounty for enlisting for the duration of the war went up to seven hundred and fifty dollars and one hundred acres of western land. In May of 1780, with British vessels lurking in the Chesapeake Bay and invasion appearing imminent, the Assembly raised the bounty again to one thousand dollars.⁸⁹

Prize distribution also changed as the war continued and the government sought new means for recruiting seamen. In the Continental Navy, whose prize regulations applied to the state navies as well, the percentage of a captured vessel's value that went to the crew who took it rose from one third for unarmed vessels and one half for armed vessels to one half for a merchant and the whole value for a naval vessel.⁹⁰ By October 1780, the Virginia Assembly, in desperation, promised crews the full value of any vessels they captured.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 61; Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 254-255.

⁸⁷ Selby, *Chronology*, 40; Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 65; Hening, *Statutes*, X: 379-386.

⁸⁸ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 196-97.

⁸⁹ Hening, *Statutes*, IX, 537; X, 296-99; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 410-11. This amount is not as extraordinary as it sounds, as inflation was rampant.

⁹⁰ Higginbotham, *War and Society*, 337; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 49-50.

⁹¹ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 379-86; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 412-413.

For seamen not driven by the prospect of immediate gain but more concerned about quality of life both in the service and upon leaving it, administrators with an eye to recruitment wrote the Navy's regulations on a more clement note than that of the British Navy, which permitted up to one hundred lashes, and originally set the maximum length of enlistment at a mere two years, though it was later raised to three or the duration of the war.⁹² During the enlistment push of spring 1780, the Assembly promised pensions for disabled men and Navy widows. That fall, they offered better clothing allowances. The Assembly also placed a duty on the wages of all mariners, including those of merchant vessels, to fund a hospital for disabled men of the Navy.⁹³

Not every man who joined the Navy did so by his own choice. In 1780, the Virginia Assembly passed an act permitting the Navy to impress one fifth of the crew from any Virginia vessel not already belonging to the state. This was a drastic measure as impressment was always unpopular and had even led to pre-war bloodshed when implemented by the British Navy in New England.⁹⁴ In an attempt not to harass supporters, the Assembly forbade impressment from taking effect on vessels already laden and outward bound and thereby crippling trade. Maryland and North Carolina's vessels were also explicitly exempt.⁹⁵

Late in 1780, Governor Jefferson obtained special permission to press whole vessels with their crews for a planned blockade of Portsmouth, where the traitor Benedict Arnold commanded a British force.⁹⁶ This mode of impress, where the original crew remained intact and in control of their vessel, could hardly be done with an iron fist, and

⁹² Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 397, 402-03; Hening, *Statutes*, IX, 196-97.

⁹³ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 537; X: 379-86; Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 410, 412-413.

⁹⁴ Higginbotham, *Military Attitudes*, 336.

⁹⁵ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 380.

⁹⁶ Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 265.

the vessels' captains, realizing this, refused to advance upon the enemy until the worth of their vessels was properly put in writing for the purpose of later compensation.⁹⁷ At the same time that it authorized the limited impress, the Assembly also required the county courts to apprentice half of the male orphans in their care to the Navy, though the extent to which this was carried out is unclear.⁹⁸

While Virginia commissioned seventy-seven known vessels during the course of the war, about a hundred Virginian vessels sailed as privateers, authorized to raid enemy shipping for personal profit.⁹⁹ This was despite the fact that Virginia never set up her own system for privateering, merely abiding by the Congressional guidelines, and suffered from an apparent lack of letters of marque with which to authorize privateers, which was complained of by Governor Thomas Jefferson.¹⁰⁰ Privateering vessels were in clear competition with the state Navy for capable seaman.

The lure of privateers was based on their right to keep a hundred percent of the proceeds from successful captures as well as the ability to devote all their energies to taking rich prizes. Besides owing a percentage of its captures to the government through most of the war, the Navy was constrained to convoy unarmed vessels, transport troops, stand lookout, carry messages, and engage in other duties unlikely to lead to a capture. Even the Continental Navy, while larger and better equipped than Virginia's, made only about one third as many captures during the war as did American privateers.¹⁰¹ Jefferson felt that the Navy could not even compete with the pay and benefits offered by the

⁹⁷ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*; 70.

⁹⁸ Hening, *Statutes*, X: 381, 385.

⁹⁹ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Military Organizations*, 149.

¹⁰⁰ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 405.

¹⁰¹ Higginbotham, *Military Attitudes*, 337, 345.

merchant marine.¹⁰² These more lucrative venues for the experienced seaman explain much of the Navy's recruitment difficulties, but not why any men at all joined the state's maritime forces. Patriotism probably inspired some, others may have been landmen who would not have been hired by merchants or privateers, and perhaps some more cautious individuals were encouraged by the promise of disability pensions and support for their wives if widowed or, looking to the future, appreciated the prospect of large tracts of virgin land. Charles Thomas Long finds some statistical support for the influence of revolutionary zeal, hope for economic gain, and fear of slave revolt, but shows that the most significant statistically-provable factor was fear of amphibious attack, as shown by the large numbers of recruits from areas specifically targeted by the British.¹⁰³

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NAVY

While Virginia formed her Navy independently from Congress or the other states, she often used it in cooperation with other vessels, as well as with her own and continental land forces. The convention's original order to the Committee of Safety for the creation of a naval force stipulated that Virginia's army personnel be able to embark on the vessels for temporary expeditions.¹⁰⁴ As noted, the Navy even built special boats for use as transports for the army's men and supplies. During the siege of Yorktown in 1781, the Virginia Navy, which had lost most of its vessels but not its men to the British earlier in the year, manned transports for the allied armies and provided pilots to guide

¹⁰² Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 62.

¹⁰³ Long, "Green Water Revolution," 462.

¹⁰⁴ Hening, *Statutes*, IX: 83-4.

the French fleet. Between Yorktown and the close of the war, Commodore James Barron spent much time assisting with prisoner exchanges.¹⁰⁵

Maryland and Virginia organized cooperative naval ventures throughout the war. Early in Virginia's naval endeavor, she approached Maryland about the defense of the Potomac River, which formed the border between the two states. Virginia oversaw the effort, while Maryland promised the occasional presence of her twenty-two gun ship *Diligence* when it was not busy patrolling the Chesapeake Bay.¹⁰⁶ In September 1780, Virginia and Maryland planned a joint operation to sweep the Bay of enemy raiders. This venture was not without success despite the last minute withdrawal of several vessels belonging to Baltimore merchants whose trading fleet required convoy.¹⁰⁷ During the last years of the war, the Virginia Assembly expressly ordered the Committee for the Defense of the Chesapeake Bay to work in tandem with Maryland, corresponding with her governor and settling any disputes that might arise between captains of the interstate naval force raised for the protection of the Bay trade.¹⁰⁸

For a time, Virginia also kept a naval force at Ocracoke, North Carolina. The South Quay shipyard was built specifically to build and maintain vessels for the Carolina sounds, as these shallow, confined waters were more easily dominated by a small force than the twelve-mile-wide entrance to the Chesapeake Bay. Large ships trying to blockade the sounds from the outside would be on the open sea and vulnerable to storms. Much trade made its way successfully through the back door of the Carolina sounds and

¹⁰⁵ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 415-416.

¹⁰⁶ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 25.

¹⁰⁷ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 62.

¹⁰⁸ *Henning, Statutes, XI: 43-44.*

up the Blackwater River into Virginia where it was moved overland a short distance to the Chesapeake Bay tributaries and so avoided any British ships guarding the Capes.¹⁰⁹

While the frequency with which the American land forces used guerilla tactics has been exaggerated in the past,¹¹⁰ the stereotype is closer to the truth when applied to the Virginia Navy. Pitched naval battles of the eighteenth century involved line tactics in a manner similar to land battles: two fleets lined up opposite each other and pounded away with their guns. A fleet in line of battle tried to keep its ranks intact and outmaneuver the enemy in such a way as to command the most favorable position or break the opponent's line. The Virginia Navy never attempted this form of engagement, never having vessels large enough. Virginia instead practiced hit-and-run tactics, capturing merchant vessels, tangling with the smaller raiding and scouting vessels attendant on the large ships, or swarming about a single larger vessel to overwhelm it by sheer numbers.

Most enemy privateers, when they operated independently, were of a size that the Navy could manage, but when, as in 1780, a large number of privateers banded together, twenty-five in this case, or when the British Navy decided to bring in its big guns, there was nothing the Virginia Navy could do to stop them.¹¹¹ At times like these, the Navy relied on its ability to retreat into the back rivers where the larger ships-of-the-line¹¹² could not follow. Richard Henry Lee lamented that the Navy's inability to prevent British incursions occasioned disgust among Virginians, as he was of the opinion that the naval forces were Virginia's "only true security," though he also desired that the ships

¹⁰⁹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 30-32.

¹¹⁰ Michael Stephenson, *Patriot Battles: How the War of Independence was Fought*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007), 193.

¹¹¹ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 59.

¹¹² In order to have a place in the line of battle a ship had to be at least a fourth-rate, carrying fifty guns on two gun decks. Miller, *Broadsides*, 4.

would be refurbished and the men more active.¹¹³ Despite their limitations, the Navy made sure that British and loyalist shipping did not have things all their own way: trade was not completely stopped, enemy shipping could not take its security for granted, and much energy had to be expended to deal with the swarm of biting flies that was the Virginia Navy. The British could not afford to ignore this small force or take access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries for granted.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Lee, *Letters*, 2: 84-85.

¹¹⁴ Perhaps the Virginia State Navy was humorously remarking on its ability, though small, to harass the British when it named several vessels after tiny, stinging creatures, namely: *Fly*, *Mosquito*, *Scorpion*, and *Hornet*.

CHAPTER II: THE MEN OF THE VIRGINIA STATE NAVY

METHODS

Several works provided, in published form, the quantitative data necessary for this chapter. John Hastings Gwathmey's exhaustive *Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution: Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, 1775-1783*, offers an alphabetical listing of every known Virginian participant in the war. "It is believed; in the collation of the records in Washington and in Richmond herein contained, that the records of the Navy personnel are practically complete."¹¹⁵ Two other sources, however, give more detail and anecdotal evidence drawn from pension and bounty claims: Eugene Michael Sanchez-Saavedra's *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787* and Robert Armistead Stewart's *The History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution*. I entered the data from these three sources into an Excel spreadsheet, and then merged records clearly pertaining to the same individual.¹¹⁶ This still left, in many instances, multiple entries for the same name with no way to be certain whether they were one or several men. For each distinct name, I marked one as the "keyname" to be used in data analysis, so as to prevent duplicate entries from skewing the data. Unless otherwise stated, I calculated means and medians for each variable, such as age, in Excel or SPSS, using all

¹¹⁵ John Hastings Gwathmey, *Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution: Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, 1775-1783* (Richmond, Va.: Dietz Press, 1938), v.

¹¹⁶ In the interest of conciseness and clarity, I have used the first person pronoun in the section on methods.

keynames for which that variable was known. Where useful, I created pie charts and maps using the output from the analyses; these are contained in the Appendix. I also considered anecdotal material contained in the sources alongside the quantitative results to aid in interpretation and provide a more complete picture of the Virginia State Navy men before, during, and after the war.

RECRUITMENT

In the Virginia Navy, officers were responsible for recruiting their own men and sometimes for supervising the construction of their own vessel.¹¹⁷ Records show that captains and lieutenants, both naval and marine, and midshipmen participated in recruiting men for their particular vessel. They went ashore to recruit, and recruiting locations, as remembered by the men, included towns such as Fredericksburg and Petersburg, but also such locally known landmarks as Frazier's Ferry, Hobb's Hole, the Great Warehouse on Great Wicomico, and Price's Old Tavern.

Officers were paid for recruiting work and commanded the men they enlisted; Navy men often gave the name of the officer who recruited them when providing evidence to support their pension claim. This one-on-one recruiting would fit easily with Virginia's face-to-face, hierarchical society. Local elections were a pre-existing parallel, where men voted for the elite men they knew and were in a reciprocal relationship with. In this context the naming of the recruiting officer in pension claims would be like naming a patron, someone who could and would vouch for you and who, due to their

¹¹⁷ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Eleazer Callender and Robert Tompkins. As the name lists in Stewart and Gwathmey are alphabetical and each page may contain dozens of names, I will give the name under which the information was found rather than the page, in order to provide more useful citations.

status as your superior, had a responsibility to make sure that you got what you were entitled to.¹¹⁸

The Navy also made officers responsible for obtaining the numbers of men required; Henry Hinton's commission as lieutenant was contingent upon him first raising the men to serve under him. Lieutenant Aaron Jeffries resigned when he was unable to fill his quota.¹¹⁹

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

Various anecdotal evidence of Navy men's previous occupations is sometimes included in pension and bounty claims. Not surprisingly, some naval officers and seamen came from the merchant marine, five mentioning the fact in their affidavits. In contrast, surgeon John Reynolds had a medical practice in Yorktown prior to the war and merely transferred his skills to the Navy.¹²⁰ At least four students left their studies to join, including two William and Mary students and two medical students.¹²¹ Some men who joined were independently wealthy, presumably elite plantation owners: Edward Cooper was designated "A man of large fortune",¹²² and Captain William Ivy owned at least sixty slaves. Several men had previously joined the war effort in other capacities before changing to the Navy. Commodore James Barron had served as a captain of militia, Midshipman Francis Webb was on a privateer before winning a commission in the Navy by his gallant conduct, and William Wood seems to have deserted to the Navy from the First Virginia Regiment!¹²³

¹¹⁸ Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*. (Chapel Hill, S.C.: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 111.

¹¹⁹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Henry Hinton and Aaron Jeffries.

¹²⁰ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Reynolds.

¹²¹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Godfrey Ragsdale, Samuel Barron, Cary H. Hansford, and Jonathan Calvert, respectively.

¹²² Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Edward Cooper.

¹²³ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Barron, Francis Webb, William Wood.

GEOGRAPHY OF RECRUITMENT¹²⁴

Accessibility by water affected who joined the Virginia Navy. The natural tendency of naval forces to recruit near the water combined with Virginians' habit of using the rivers as highways¹²⁵ to produce a Navy that recruited mostly from the Chesapeake Bay area, but also drew men down from the extensive drainage basins of the Bay's estuaries, some of them from more than a hundred miles inland. Virginia's four major estuaries are the Potomac, Rappahannock, York, and James. Of the forty Virginia counties that contributed men to the State Navy, eight touched the Potomac's drainage basin, thirteen the Rappahannock's, eleven the York's, thirteen the James's, and eleven the Chesapeake Bay. Four counties do not touch the drainage basins of any of the four major rivers. However, on closer examination, three of them, Brunswick, Charlotte, and Southampton counties, are in the drainage basin of the Blackwater River which flows south to North Carolina and drains into Albemarle Sound. The Virginia Navy maintained a shipyard on this river because it offered a naval backdoor out of Virginia when British men-of-war blockaded the Chesapeake Bay. Eight contributing counties touch the Blackwater drainage basin, leaving only Augusta County stranded away from a river. Since only one Navy man is known to have come from Augusta County (only 0.34% of recruits with a known origin), this landlocked county seems to be a fluke. Statistically, 72.9% percent of Navy men came from a county on the Bay, and only 2.72% came from an area without Chesapeake Bay drainage.

Also affecting recruiting was Virginia's Fall Line, which creates a natural barrier that vessels cannot cross, slowing trade and travel between the Piedmont and the

¹²⁴ Figures 1 through 4ac.

¹²⁵ Isaac, *Transformation*, 16.

Tidewater. Not surprisingly, less than 5%¹²⁶ of Navy men came from counties that were entirely above the Fall Line; they would have had less previous connection with the Chesapeake, a more difficult journey, and no British naval threat to their homes to prompt them to join in maritime defense.

Not all counties that were low naval contributors appear to have been far from the coast. However, there is always the possibility of missing data. If each vessel recruited in and around a particular county, the loss of the records for one vessel could all but wipe a county off the list of contributors.

The data indicates that an average of 43.08%¹²⁷ of each vessel's crew came from a single county. The highest percentage of crew members that came from one county range from 90.91% (*Accomac* Galley from Accomack Co.¹²⁸) to 15.79% (Ship *Tartar* in a tie between Lancaster, Northumberland, and Westmoreland counties). However, in the case of the *Tartar*, it is worth noting that the three counties that sent the most men adjoin each other by land as well as being easily accessible to each other by water. If the totals of these three counties are combined, they make up 47.37% of the *Tartar*'s crew, closely approximating the average percentage recruited in one place. The clustering of a vessel's primary contributing counties suggests that instead of only looking at individual counties in isolation, we should also look for these clusters as possible recruiting hubs.

Out of sixty-eight known vessels in the Virginia State Navy, twenty-five can be positively identified as having one particular county that served as the hub of recruiting; two further vessels, the Sloop *Defiance* and the Ship *Tartar*, were clearly recruited on the

¹²⁶ 4.79%

¹²⁷ 43.08% is the median; the mean is even higher at 46.56%.

¹²⁸ "Accomac" was once the accepted spelling. I have used the current spelling for Accomack County, but, as the name of the vessel was definitely *Accomac*, I have not altered it.

James River and on the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, respectively, but no one county stands out; twenty vessels have too few data points to yield conclusive results, and twenty-one vessels have no recruiting information at all.

Looking at those crew members who did not come from the recruiting hub, the data supports the theory that recruiting regions were determined by the rivers.

Approximately two-thirds of each crew (66.56%) came from the same drainage basin or basins serving the recruiting hub.

It should also be noted that, geographically, the Chesapeake Bay creates a recruiting region that overlaps with the regions commanded by Virginia's four major rivers; any point on the shore of the Bay was easily accessible to any other point, making neighbors of counties that were geographically far-flung. Evidence of the Chesapeake Bay as a recruiting region can be seen in the data for vessels like the *Dragon*, *Henry*, and *Northampton*. The result of this was that almost all vessels also included recruits from Chesapeake Bay counties, either because their recruiting hub was located on the Bay or because they recruited replacement crewmen while operating in the Bay. Bay recruits make up almost all of the final third (26.62%) of the crew for recruiting hubs not already located on the Bay. Sixty-five percent of identifiable recruiting hubs were on the Bay to begin with.

The fact that for each vessel, a large concentration of recruits came from a single county, combined with the realization that most of the rest of the crew came from the same basin, could indicate that the men moved, not the recruiters. This movement suggests that recruits from more western counties may already have been watermen who had moved down their home river pursuing their trade where they later came in contact

with Navy recruiters. However, since it is unclear which men were a vessel's original recruits and which men joined later, it is also possible, if the vessels were mostly stationed near their recruiting hub, that western recruits were obtained during cruises upriver.

The data also shows that a significant number of Navy men served on more than one vessel. Of 1033 men for whom at least one vessel assignment is known, 231, or a little better than one in five (22.36%) are known to have served on at least two different vessels, about one in twenty (5.52%) served on three or more vessels, fifteen individuals (less than 2%) are known to have served on four vessels, and three on five different vessels. These figures should be regarded as the minimum, since we do not know the full record of service for many of the men. Since it is often impossible to be certain which vessel a man was first recruited for, the above study of recruiting hubs and regions includes all vessels a man served on. That this does not prevent us from seeing vessels' recruiting patterns suggests that not only initial recruiting but also subsequent recruiting and vessel-to-vessel transfers may have followed some sort of pattern based around a particular drainage basin.

For men who served on more than one vessel, 52.63% of vessel changes occurred between vessels whose recruiting hubs were on the same river. So far, this does not indicate any trend in vessel changes. However, an additional 20% of changes were between vessels with recruiting hubs that not only were on neighboring rivers, but were also on the Chesapeake Bay. Since we know that at least in some cases, vessels were frequently on patrol in two neighboring rivers--for instance, the Boat *Patriot* had a

recruiting hub on the James but also patrolled the York¹²⁹--it is reasonable to combine the cases of vessel changes between neighboring rivers with those cases of changes within the same river and say that 72.63% of vessel changes occurred between vessels originating out of the same general area, which suggests a tendency for vessels to patrol the area around their recruiting hub.¹³⁰ The commissioning and recruiting of vessels primarily for the defense of a particular locale is supported by qualitative evidence as well: Robert Conway remembered only that he served on the "first galley on the Potomac", Robert Cook was on the second Eastern Shore cruiser, and James Markham served on the *Page*, also identified as the second row galley in the Rappahannock.¹³¹

It also seems that certain vessels were particularly associated with each other. William Bennett testified that, "He was occasionally changed from Boat *Liberty* to Boat *Patriot* as the whole crew were." Both *Liberty* and *Patriot* had recruiting hubs on the James. In their testimonies, Elkanah Andrews and a deponent on behalf of the brothers Simon and Stephen Stephens associated the galleys *Diligence* and *Accomac*, both of which were built and recruited for on the Eastern Shore.¹³² Besides these documentary hints at "sister ships" who worked together and even shared crew, the quantitative data also shows a certain affinity between particular vessels when it came to men changing from one to another. Out of twenty-two vessels chosen for the bulk of data available, five matched pairs and one matched triplet appear, where two or three vessels were each the

¹²⁹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Burke.

¹³⁰ For this analysis, I used only those vessels with identifiable recruiting hubs. I did not use those vessels coming from the Eastern Shore, because they were not associated with a particular river and all vessels would have had to pass through the Chesapeake Bay at one time or another, making the Bay a secondary recruiting area shared by the whole Navy. I also combined the Brig *Liberty* with the Boat *Liberty*, since they cannot always be differentiated in the records and had the same recruiting hub anyway. I did the same for the first and second Boat *Patriot* for the same reasons.

¹³¹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Robert Conway, Robert Cook, James Markham.

¹³² Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, William Bennett, Elkanah Andrews, Simon Stephens, Stephen Stephens.

most significant crew-trading partner of the other.¹³³ The data cannot prove that these relationships reflect an ongoing, reciprocal sharing of crew rather than a one-time transfer, but the fact that each vessel of the group was the most significant to the other suggests the possibility of an ongoing relationship. Even though they did not intend to use line-of-battle tactics, it makes sense that Virginia Navy vessels would hunt in packs to maximize their effectiveness in light of their small size and limited firepower. The other nine vessels that do not form groups still show one or, at most, two primary trading partners, though these relationships are much more likely to be one-time transfers. Statements by Navy men indicate several such large-scale transfers of crew. Seaman James Gibbs testified that “Later [Captain] Markham and [the] greater part of the crew [of the *Page Galley*] went on the *Dragon*.” John Thomas was 1st Lieutenant on the *Protector Galley* until it was destroyed, then he and his men were moved to the frigate *Dragon*. Captain of Marines Jacob Valentine stated that “His marines [were] ordered to the *Manley Galley* in 1776, from the *Mosquito*.”¹³⁴

FAMILY TIES

Family ties were also a factor in determining who joined the Navy. While the data shows that particular men certainly served with family members, it does not show that any men certainly did not serve with family members, making it impossible to analyze what percentage of men served with family. However, the data does show that a number of men did serve with family members. At least forty-four men served in the Navy with one or more brothers, three father-son pairs served together, Commodore James Barron had a nephew in the Navy, and two young men joined under their cousin-

¹³³ These groupings are: *Accomac* and *Diligence*; *Henry* and *Mosquito*; *Hero* and *Tempest*; *Liberty* and *Patriot*; *Manley* and *Tartar*; and *Dragon*, *Page*, and *Protector*.

¹³⁴ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Gibbs, John Thomas, and Jacob Valentine.

in-law, who was captain of a vessel. Families serving together made sense for Virginians, whose society relied heavily on kinship networks for status and career opportunities.¹³⁵

Captain Richard Taylor had two brothers serving directly under him; they both started as midshipmen, or commissioned-officers-in-training, and one rose to the rank of lieutenant.¹³⁶ This clustering of family members in and around a particular rank grade, in this case that of commissioned officer, was usual. Seventy percent of family groupings with one commissioned officer also contained another commissioned officer, fifty percent contained a warrant officer or midshipman, and only twenty percent contained a non-officer. For families whose highest rank was warrant officer or midshipman, over eighty-five percent had another warrant officer or midshipman and only about fourteen percent had a non-officer. Whether one family member gave his relatives a hand up the career ladder or whether all family members received due consideration for their family's rank in Virginia society, it seems clear that naval rank tended to run in families.

AGE

It is too often unclear when a man joined the Navy to give a median age at which men were recruited. However, the data does show that the median date of birth for Navy men was 1755, making 21 the median age in 1776 when the Navy was created and 26 the median age in 1781 when the Navy was destroyed. The youngest member of the Navy would have been 15 in 1781 and the oldest a mere 41. We see none of the superannuated

¹³⁵ Isaac, *Transformation*, 113. “[Virginia possessed] an entire social system based on personal relationships--kinship, neighborhood, favors exchanged, patronage given, and deference returned.”

¹³⁶ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Richard Taylor, Benjamin Taylor, and John Taylor, respectively.

officers common in the British Navy,¹³⁷ but this is not surprising considering that while both navies recruited young¹³⁸ the Virginia Navy had not been in existence long enough for its men to age.

Even though the Virginia Navy was only around for a few years, there was a noticeable tendency for older men to hold higher rank. The median date of birth for those who attained the rank of a commissioned officer was 1750, that for men whose highest rank was midshipman or warrant officer was 1754, and the median birth date for those who never advanced above seaman or marine was 1758. Whether the attainment of higher rank was due to slightly longer Virginia Navy experience, previous maritime experience, previous army or militia experience, or simply previous life experience is unclear, but a few years' difference was significant in a service whose men were mostly from the same generation.¹³⁹

ETHNICITY

Over 97% of Virginia Navy men had no listed ethnicity, presumably because they were considered unremarkable, the usual recruits, men of European extraction who had been in America for at least a generation. The next largest percentage, making up more than half the remaining recruits at 1.74%, were those Navy men listed as “negro” or “mulatto.” Sixteen of these men have a known rank: 62.5% were ordinary seamen, 12.5% able seamen, 18.75% pilots, and one free man was a boatswain. Comparing the category of black and mulatto seaman, able seamen, and pilots to that of non-black seamen, able seamen, and pilots, the data shows that while 5.39% of non-black Navy men

¹³⁷ Miller, *Broadsides*, 3-4, 69-70, 77-78; Michael Arthur Lewis, *The Navy in Transition, 1814-1864: A Social History*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), 50-54.

¹³⁸ Coggins, *Ships and Seamen*, 173.

¹³⁹ 83.33% were born within a twenty-year span and even the greatest age difference was only 26 years.

in this category were pilots, as many as 20% of black Navy men in this category may have been pilots. Even after adding in all the black Navy men without a known rank to the seamen category, at least 9.38%, or nearly twice the percentage of non-blacks, were pilots. This supports other historians' assertions that many black men came into the Navy with previous experience navigating the local waterways.¹⁴⁰

There also seems to be a higher ratio of black able seaman as compared to ordinary seamen: as many as 16.67% of black seamen were "able," compared to only 4.11% of non-black seamen. This may also point to previous maritime experience, or it may reflect the limitations placed on black naval careers. Talented non-black Navy men could continue advancing beyond the rank of able seaman, whereas a black Navy man, no matter how talented, would be less likely to be given a position of authority over others, even if he were a free man; this could result in more black Navy men stuck at the rank of able seaman.

Out of thirty-three known black and mulatto Navy men, only three were specifically listed as "free," in the Navy rosters. Six were certainly slaves, as shown by their records. Nine of the remaining men had no surname and so were probably also slaves. In fact, three known slaves had surnames, so even the last five men, who have surnames, may or may not have been slaves. In comparison, the only non-black Navy men to be listed without surnames are "Jacob the Dutchman" and "William the Dutchman," whose Germanic heritage was apparently still enough in evidence to set them apart in the eyes of Anglo-Virginians.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Bilal, *Black Pilots*, 11-12.

¹⁴¹ Gwathmey, *Historical Register*, Jacob the Dutchman and William the Dutchman.

Slaves came to the Navy by various means, despite their own lack of choice in the matter. Seaman William Bush was listed on the records as a "Public Negro", indicating that he was purchased by the State. Others were enlisted by their masters. Elenor Boury enlisted her slave Cuffy with the Navy, apparently because he had previous maritime experience, as shown by his starting rank of able seaman. When Jenifer Marshall joined the Navy as a sailing master, he brought his slave Kingston along as a seaman. When Thomas Hinton's health constrained him to leave naval service, he sent his slave Lewis Hinton to serve in his place. Interestingly, slaves were not the only individuals who could be enlisted at the whim of another. James Gibbs was apprenticed to a captain in the merchant marine until his master decided to use his authority to enlist him in the Navy. As soon as his enlistment was up, Gibbs returned to commercial shipping.¹⁴²

Men's status as blacks and slaves did not prevent other Navy men from noting and praising their conduct. Lewis Hinton was remembered as "an orderly colored man and respectable," and Kingston was considered "one of the foremost hands on board the *Accomac*." James Barron, Jr. remembered Boatswain James Thomas, a free black, particularly warmly: "[he] served through the War . . . with exemplary conduct, as I had frequent opportunities of witnessing . . . He was a fellow of daring and though a man of color was respected by all the officers who served with him." These praises are comparable to those given to non-black Navy men: Able Seaman Dunford Moore was memorialized by Lieutenant Singleton as "faithful to the end" and various officers were considered valuable, active, or brave.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, William Bush, Cuffy, Kingston, Lewis Hinton, James Gibbs.

¹⁴³ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Lewis Hinton, Kingston, James Thomas, and Dunford Moore.

The data does not show that any black Navy men received land bounties, but considering how few seamen in general received their land,¹⁴⁴ this may have had as much to do with rank as with ethnicity. We do know that Lewis Hinton received a pension, though whether he was still a slave or had been freed is unclear. In at least one case the State seems to have offered freedom in exchange for naval service, but Davis Baker was still petitioning for the fulfillment of this promise in 1794.¹⁴⁵

A very small number of Navy men, 0.73%, were noted as being of European extraction: English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, or German. Whether this meant that they had come to America during the war, or that they had been in America less than a generation, or simply that they retained a cultural distinctiveness, is usually unclear. One man was said to be a “Gibraltarian” by birth, one an Englishman by birth, one an Irishman by birth, and one an Irishman captured on an enemy vessel; no other details survive.¹⁴⁶ A further 0.34% of Navy men had distinctively French surnames, and sometimes French given names, which might indicate some French Huguenot ancestry.¹⁴⁷ One man was listed as a black Frenchman.¹⁴⁸ Only one Navy man had known American Indian ancestry, and that only on his father’s side.¹⁴⁹

NAVAL CAREER

RANK MOBILITY

At least 10.15% of Navy men with a known rank changed rank at some point in their careers. This is a minimum, as many Navy men’s career data are incomplete. Many

¹⁴⁴ See section on bounties and pensions.

¹⁴⁵ Stewart, *History of Virginia’s Navy*, Lewis Hinton and Davis Baker.

¹⁴⁶ Stewart, *History of Virginia’s Navy*, John Gibson, John Thomas, Robert Windsor Brown, and James Meriwether, respectively.

¹⁴⁷ Francis Brodut, Jacques Brodut, Blovet Pasteur, John Guiraud, etc.

¹⁴⁸ Stewart, *History of Virginia’s Navy*, Francis Arbado.

¹⁴⁹ Stewart, *History of Virginia’s Navy*, John Davis.

rank changes followed a pattern of promotion recognizable from British Navy practice: midshipmen becoming lieutenants and lieutenants becoming captains; ordinary seamen becoming able seamen and then gaining more specific responsibilities as cook, boatswain, or gunner when their experience warranted it; gunner's mates becoming gunners and surgeon's mates becoming full-fledged surgeons. Other Virginia Navy men, however, followed career tracks that would have been all but impossible in a more regimented navy. In the British Navy, there were separate career tracks for warrant officers and commissioned officers, but in the Virginia Navy we see men switching over in both directions and at all ranks. A midshipman, which in the British Navy was the entry-level position for commissioned officers in training, might, in the Virginia Navy, have been yesterday's first mate, gunner, carpenter's mate, seaman, or even marine; David Henderson went from the position of steward and clerk directly to the rank of midshipman. Boatswain Thomas Lilly went on to become captain of a vessel, possibly due in part to his "habit of strictest friendship and intimacy with Commodore Barron, who held him in high esteem."¹⁵⁰ In the other direction, several midshipmen went on to become sailing masters, a warrant officer rank. Not even marines always stayed with their branch of the service, but switched from being sea-soldiers to helping sail the vessel. The shortage of men in the Virginia Navy apparently led to an unusual fluidity between ranks, allowing men to be placed where they were needed most at the moment. This looseness in the system may have helped secure the rank of boatswain for James Thomas, the desperate need of the Navy overruling his status as a free black.¹⁵¹

LENGTH OF SERVICE

¹⁵⁰ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, David Henderson and Thomas Lilly.

¹⁵¹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Thomas.

The overall averages for length of service show that 30.51% of Navy men voluntarily served less than three years, 38.98% served three years voluntarily, and 30.51% served four or more years. It seems the promise of bounty land may have been a major motivating factor for more than a third of the men who joined the Navy; they stayed long enough to qualify then moved on.¹⁵² This does not contradict Charles Thomas Long's research indicating that most Navy men were of average economic means, though it may qualify his assumption that only the poor were drawn by enlistment incentives.¹⁵³ Western lands had long attracted the interest of Virginians across the social strata, from poor men looking for a new start to wealthy land speculators.¹⁵⁴

A breakdown by rank categories shows that warrant officers and midshipmen combined were somewhat more likely to serve at least three years than commissioned officers, 73.68% versus 70.37%, but much less likely to serve extra years beyond that, 15.79% versus an impressive 48.15% of commissioned officers who served four years or more. Seaman and marines were less likely to complete three years, but were still at 62.5%. However, none of these non-officers are recorded as serving beyond the three year point; apparently they had had their fill of naval service.

The only specific ranks for which sufficient data exists to give an average length of service are captains, with 76.92% serving three or more years; lieutenants, with 75% serving that long; midshipmen, with 66.67%; surgeons, with 40%; pilots, with 100%, and

¹⁵² Since the causes of men leaving naval service are dealt with elsewhere in this paper, and the primary interest here is voluntary length of service, I did not count those records for men who left the Navy involuntarily after less than three years due to death, injury, or capture. There were no men whose records indicated that they left service involuntarily at the three-year mark, so no records were removed from this category.

¹⁵³ Long, "Green Water Revolution," 462.

¹⁵⁴ Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill and London: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 3, 30-31.

seamen with 66.67%. Noticeably, pilots, who were highly skilled in a navy-specific area, had by far the highest rate of serving at least the basic three years, while surgeons, also highly skilled but in a field not specific to the Navy, were the least likely to complete a three-year term. As shown above, surgeons were more likely to enter land service than any other group of Navy men outside the Marine Corps. Those ranks most likely to serve longer than three years include captains at 61.54%, lieutenants at 41.67%, and pilots at an amazing 75%, which again emphasizes the specificity of their skill set.¹⁵⁵

CAREER KILLERS

We know what ended the naval career of 261 men; we also know of an additional 72 men who survived the war but for whom the end cause of their Navy service was insufficiently interesting for them to note, presumably because they left when the Navy no longer required their presence. This gives us a total data set of 333 men. Out of these, 32.73%, or about 1 in 3, left when their term of enlistment was up, the Navy ceased to exist, or the war ended.

About one out of every seven Navy men was captured at some point, and the careers of 9.61% of Navy men, or approximately 1 in 10, ended in captivity; about a third of those captured (31.11%) escaped or were released before the end of the war, a third (35.56%) were released at the end of the war or after the reduction of the Navy, and a third (33.33%) died in prison.

Captured Navy men were carried to various port cities held by the British, where they were placed in prisons or on prison hulks, stripped down vessels used as floating

¹⁵⁵ Since only 10.15% of navy men can be statistically shown to have changed rank, it is reasonable to say that, in most cases, rank affected length of service rather than vice versa.

prisoner of war camps.¹⁵⁶ Known locations of imprisonment included ports on the North American mainland such as Halifax, Nova Scotia; the city of New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Charleston, South Carolina; and St. Augustine, Florida.¹⁵⁷ Other men were sent to British holdings in the West Indies, including Jamaica, Barbados, and St. Eustatius.¹⁵⁸ Bermuda, situated in the Atlantic approximately 640 miles west-northwest of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina¹⁵⁹, also served as a destination for naval prisoners, such as the men from the *Scorpion*.¹⁶⁰ Some Navy men, notably the *Mosquito*'s officers¹⁶¹, were carried all the way to England, where they were held in Forton Prison, in or near Portsmouth, the headquarters and primary naval base of the British Navy.

There seems to have been a trend to imprison officers at more distant locations than the enlisted men: most of the *Mosquito*'s men were held in Jamaica and Barbados, while her officers were sent to England, and the *Scorpion*'s officers appear to have been mainly at Bermuda. This may have reflected the belief that officers were men of particular initiative and therefore more likely to attempt an escape. This concern was not unfounded, but apparently the distance of England from Virginia was an insufficient deterrent: groups of officers and crew from the *Mosquito* escaped from Forton Prison on at least two separate occasions, making their way across the English Channel to France,

¹⁵⁶ Cross, *Navy for Virginia*, 43; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, 39; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, William Jennings, John Hamilton.

¹⁵⁷ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Archer, George Rogers, Joseph Harrison, Alexander Massenburg, Thomas Humphlett, James Watkins, John Stevens, Henry Stratton, etc.

¹⁵⁸ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, George Maughon, James Dishman, Thomas Chandler, Ralph R. Horn, and Joseph White. While St. Eustatius was a Dutch island, it fell temporarily into British hands during the war, and American prisoners were held there.

¹⁵⁹ "Bermuda," *Wikipedia*, <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bermuda>> (6 November 2007).

¹⁶⁰ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Crew, Laban Goffagan, Peter Fiveash, Joseph Marshall, etc.

¹⁶¹ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Guide to Virginia Military*, 154; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Jesse George, William Buckner, and Ralph R. Horn.

and thence back to Virginia, where they again took up arms.¹⁶² A few other individual escapes are noted in the pension claims¹⁶³, but none so significant as those effected by the men of the *Mosquito*: Seaman Moses Stanley reported that the group he escaped with numbered sixteen. We have little information on failed escape attempts, but Pilot Allen Wood may have been hanged by his captors after one such effort, and there were probably others like him. There were also Navy men like George Reybourn, who found another way out of their captivity by joining the British Navy.¹⁶⁴

Death, including death in prison, death in battle, death from disease, death by drowning¹⁶⁵, and death by equipment malfunction, such as the bursting of a cannon¹⁶⁶, claimed about 1 in 6. Out of 333 men whose fate is known, 55 or 16.52 % died in the Navy during the war and 278 or 83.48% survived until after the war.

Of those Navy men with known career ends, at least 1 man in 8 deserted, or 12.61%, but the average is higher if one discounts the officers, who had other options for leaving the Navy in the middle of their terms. Counting only those men who were certainly ineligible to resign, it is possible that as many as 53.85% deserted. Resignation was the officer's alternative to desertion, and at least 10.59% and possibly as many as 26.67%, or 1 in 4 officers, took it. Combining desertions and resignations and comparing these with the number of known career ends, we find that the lower figures are probably more accurate, as the total percentage of Navy men who voluntarily cut short their service is 20.72% or 1 in 5.

¹⁶² Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, George Catlett, George Chamberlaine, Byrd Chamberlayne, William Mitchell, William Thorp, etc.

¹⁶³ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Henry Stratton and William Green.

¹⁶⁴ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Moses Stanley, Allen Wood, George Reybourn.

¹⁶⁵ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Benjamin Randall.

¹⁶⁶ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Crabb.

However, leaving the Navy before the end of his enlistment did not necessarily signal the end of a man's naval career. Captain John Calvert resigned on September 8, 1777, but rejoined the State Navy a year later. When Lieutenant Robert Milner felt that his superior officer was behaving in a traitorous manner, he left his vessel for about three weeks, returning only when the other man had been removed. Even desertion might be temporary. Ellis Edwards' records include both a notice of his desertion posted in the *Virginia Gazette* and an official discharge: either he was caught and returned to the service or he changed his mind and went back of his own will. John Grigg's records also suggest two different periods of service interrupted by a period of desertion.¹⁶⁷

Only 2.4% of naval personnel were discharged for some infirmity, either illness or a non-mortal wound, which suggests that injuries and illness were either minor or mortal: you got better or you died. One man alone was discharged for bad behavior, and he had been in the Navy only fifteen days!¹⁶⁸ Apparently most discipline problems were dealt with within the context of the service, not by removing men from it, which the Navy with its personnel shortage could ill afford.

Some left the Navy to join the Army. The names of many Navy men are also found in Army records, however, because of the sparseness of the data in most of these records there is often no clue as to whether these records refer to the same man or two or more different men who share the same name. The only way to get an idea of how many men did duty in both services is to take only those with the most unusual names, as judged by number of occurrences; presume them to be unique; and check both services for matches. This yields 212 unique names, 29 or 13.68% of which served in both land

¹⁶⁷ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Calvert, Robert Milner, Ellis Edwards, John Grigg.

¹⁶⁸ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Richard Whitt.

and sea services, leaving 183 or 86.32% who only served in the Navy. Dividing the data set by Marines and non-Marines, however, shows that 66.66%, or two-thirds, of Marines also served in the land forces.

When the data is broken down this way, the number of non-Marines who served on land drops to 10%. When the non-marine crewmen are divided into commissioned officers, warrant officers, and seamen, further distinctions arise. 8.70% of seamen also served in the army, which is a little below the overall average, but not too different. However, only 4.76%, or fewer than one in twenty, commissioned officers served in the army, presumably because, at their rank, they felt they had found their niche within the Navy. By far the most likely Navy men to serve on land were the warrant officers and midshipmen, men with some extra skills that might stand them in good stead when changing services but no high rank to hold them in the Navy; 18.87%, approaching one in five, served both on land and sea. It is worth particularly considering surgeons, whose skills were equally valuable on land or sea. Only three make it into the unusual-name subset, with one showing possible land service. However, looking at the data for all known individuals reveals that, at minimum, 21.88% of surgeons also served on land, putting them above the average for all groups except marines.

The high ratio of service crossover among the marines reflects both their versatility, as soldiers who fought with muskets or rifles whether on land or sea, and the sporadic treatment of the Marine Corps by the Virginia Assembly. In December 1776, the Assembly disbanded the Marine Corps and sent its men to join the land forces. This wholesale liquidation of the corps is reflected in the pension and bounty records; in 1791, seven petitioners claimed to have been marines in the State Navy before being “turned

over” to the army.¹⁶⁹ This was not the end of the Marine Corps, however, and the data shows groupings of these pre-disbandment marines, mid-war marines serving after the reestablishment of the corps, and a couple dozen very late-war marines. These late-war marines need to be accounted for, given that the Navy itself was barely in existence during the 1780s, and there are a few possibilities for explaining these men’s presence. According to Sanchez-Saavedra, "In 1780 a new force of temporary marines was raised for coastal defense. Captain John Catesby Cocke raised at least one company for this purpose,"¹⁷⁰ and one man on record specifically stated that he enlisted with Cocke in the summer of 1780.¹⁷¹ Another man with a late-war entry was captain of marines on the *Cormorant*, a vessel newly commissioned in 1782 by the Committee for the Defense of the Chesapeake Bay.¹⁷² Since the *Cormorant* was in commission until 1783, it is possible that the eighteen marines listed as being in the service in 1783 belonged to this vessel. However, two entries raise other interesting possibilities. John Daughy claimed to be a marine stationed at Fort Nelson in 1782 and, that same year, John Peak was a sergeant of marines “on duty on the Ohio.”¹⁷³ These men’s records suggest the use of marines at land bases and on western waterways, but no further information on this has come to light.

POST-WAR

DIASPORA¹⁷⁴

The last known locations of the veterans of the Virginia Navy show that 54.79% stayed in Virginia after the war. Ninety percent of those who stayed remained in the Tidewater,

¹⁶⁹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Quarles, etc.

¹⁷⁰ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Virginia Military Organizations*, 175.

¹⁷¹ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, William Key.

¹⁷² Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Hardyman.

¹⁷³ Gwathmey, *Register*, John Daughy, John Peak.

¹⁷⁴ Figures 7 through 8.

either for family ties or to continue to pursue a career on the water. Only five percent who stayed in Virginia moved out of the Chesapeake Bay drainage system. Kentucky, where Virginia's bounty lands lay, received 17.81% of Navy veterans, who presumably went there to claim their promised reward. The remaining 27.4% of Navy veterans moved to other states or the West Indies; at least 65% and possibly up to 80% of these veterans who cut their ties with Virginia remained near the water.¹⁷⁵ Adding those veterans who stayed in Tidewater Virginia, we find that between 74.29% and 80.61% of veterans who did not go to Kentucky for their bounty land remained near the water.

Any correlation between age and post-war movement is tenuous at best, with only 14 cases providing both a year of birth and a known post-war location. In this subset, 75% of men who were in their thirties in 1781-83 moved away from Tidewater Virginia, while only 33.33% of men in their twenties did so. This is somewhat surprising, given the expectation that younger men would be less likely to have a family and an occupation to deter them from relocation. It is possible that the war, having delayed Navy men from settling down, resulted in more men in their thirties being free of the usual ties to one locale. This does not, however, explain why men in their twenties might be less likely to head west, and the data is too sparse to offer any clues.

BOUNTIES AND PENSIONS

While the amount of bounty land awarded depended not only on rank, but also on service rendered, standard bounty amounts clearly emerge from the data. Captains of vessels, captains of marines, and surgeons received the largest allotments of bounty land, ranging generally from 4,000 to 6,000 acres, though some captains of vessels

¹⁷⁵ The uncertain 15% represents those men for whom only a state is known: these states had ports, but it is uncertain whether the veterans were near them.

accumulated a good deal more, the largest number on record being an astounding 12,127 acres. Surgeon's mates and lieutenants, both naval and marine, whether commanding a vessel or not, made up the next tier, receiving between 2,666 and 4,000 acres. Midshipmen and all non-medical warrant officers generally received 2,666 acres. Only one seaman is listed as having received bounty land; he was given 1,666 acres.

How many men actually received the bounty land is another matter. In order to qualify for bounty land, a standard enlistment of three years was supposed to be required, except during the first year of the Navy's existence, when enlistments were for only two years.¹⁷⁶ Cases that include both length of service and whether or not bounty land was received are sparse. Those cases that do include both suggest that men who served at least three years had, on average, a 91.67% chance of receiving land. However, this is an overall average that masks differences among rank categories. Many more cases are available showing either length of service or receipt of bounty land. Considering these groups separately then comparing their respective averages gives a clearer picture of Navy men's chances of receiving the land promised them.

Higher ranks were more likely to receive bounty land. Commissioned officers, medical personnel, and gunner's and their mates had an 86-100% chance of receiving land, but only a 41.18% chance of completing three years of service. Midshipmen fared well too, with a better than 82% chance, though only 75% completed three years. Next came navigational officers, pilots and sailing masters, with a 70-78% chance of receiving land, though nearly 100% completed three years. The rest of the warrant officers had a 33-60% chance, except for the lowly clerks and stewards, who had only a 12.5% chance of receiving land; unfortunately only two of these men have a known length of service,

¹⁷⁶ Paullin, *Navy of Revolution*, 397, 402-03; Hening, *Statutes*, IX, 196-97.

but they both completed their three years. Less than 1% of seamen can be shown to have received bounty land, but 71.43% completed three years of service. It looks as though more care was taken to ensure receipt of bounty land by those men holding more important rank, importance being defined not only by level of authority, but by level of necessity. Medical personnel performed crucial service, but were susceptible to being recruited away from the Navy and into the land forces. Gunners had much needed skill as well, and though it cannot be shown statistically due to a lack of data, they also might be expected to be in demand on land where they would have made excellent artillerymen. Navigational officers were equally necessary, but less susceptible to recruitment across service lines, as their skills were specific to the Navy.

There are a few cases where bounty land seems to have been awarded to men who served fewer than three years, though all of these had extenuating circumstances: one died in service; two were captured, one remaining in prison until the end of the war, the other going on to distinguish himself in the Continental Navy; and the one who resigned was in State service again after the war.

As for pensions, the data only shows ten men who definitely received Navy pensions, and offers no way of knowing how many definitely did not. The only statement that can be made is that pensions were paid out to men of all different ranks, ranging from seamen to captains.

Difficulties with the distribution of bounty lands and pensions abounded. Many men could not produce official documentation of their service: John Fleming moved to Georgia before obtaining a copy of his discharge, Peter Foster's certificate was destroyed in a house fire, and James Gibbs lost his in a shipwreck. These men then had to make

lengthy depositions in an attempt to prove by sheer volume of remembered facts that they had indeed been in the Navy. They also obtained affidavits from shipmates, relatives, and neighbors who could attest to their service. William White based his testimony in favor of John Stevens on the fact that they were “from the same neighborhood.” When Elkanah Andrews was attempting to claim his own bounty land, he named twenty-five other Navy men, either to support his own assertions or to aid in their claims. Even so, efforts to claim lands and pensions dragged on well into the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁷ Groups of Navy veterans made joint petitions in Norfolk County in October 1794, in Princess Anne County in 1812, in Culpeper County in 1822, and in Gloucester County in 1830. In some cases, the struggle outlived the veterans, and their heirs continued to agitate for the rewards due them for their father’s or grandfather’s naval service.¹⁷⁸ The famous John Paul Jones, despite having never served in the Virginia Navy, was, on the strength of two years’ residence in the state prior to serving in the Continental Navy, granted bounty land, but, in keeping with the general lethargy of the system, only received this honor posthumously.

CAREERS

After the war, Navy men had to find new lines of work. Eleven men who noted their post-war occupation continued to have ties to the water. Some continued to work for the government, either state or national: James Bartee, Jr. served in the United States Navy; Lieutenant William Ham joined the Revenue Service, later known as the Coast Guard; Captain Francis Bright commanded a state trading vessel. Others, like Seaman

¹⁷⁷ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, John Fleming, Peter Foster, James Gibbs, John Stevens, Elkanah Andrews.

¹⁷⁸ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy and Gwathmey, Register*, Thomas Dameron, Robert Elam, Joseph Speake, John Williams, Joshua Williams, etc.

James Gibbs, became civilian mariners of the merchant marine. Thomas Jennings moved back on land, but continued his maritime ties as Inspector of Customs for Norfolk and Portsmouth.¹⁷⁹

Fifteen men listed a non-maritime post-war occupation. These entries show a great variety of pursuits. Some owned land and farmed, whether on a small or large scale: Joseph Godwin denominated himself “A Gentleman of property,” in his will. Surgeons like John Reynolds of Yorktown generally continued to practice medicine. Others held positions of public trust, both paid and unpaid, such as county surveyor, militia officer, and alderman. Several became ministers. Other miscellaneous occupations ranged from the very rural, such as keeper of a mill, to quintessentially urban, as in the case of John Cowper who was both Mayor of Norfolk and editor of a newspaper. These men who left the water treated their time in the Navy as a brief interlude that, when past, had little effect on their individual interests and pursuits.¹⁸⁰

DOMESTIC LIFE

Most Navy men waited to raise a family until after the war. Among men with known marriage dates, 16.67% married before the Virginia State Navy was formed, only 11.11% married during the existence of the Navy (it is not possible to tell whether they were in service at the time), and an impressive 72.22% waited to marry until after the demise of the Navy. For most Navy men, the war swept them up young before they had a chance to marry and apparently most felt that the middle of a war was a poor time to take on the responsibility of a wife. They were probably wise, considering that what little

¹⁷⁹ Gwathmey, *Register*, James Bartee, Jr.; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, William Ham, Francis Bright, James Gibbs, Thomas Jennings.

¹⁸⁰ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Joseph Godwin, John Reynolds, Samuel Hanway, Gabriel Madison, and Cary H. Hansford, James Dishman, John Canaday, John Cowper.

information we have suggests that Virginia's aid to war widows could not be depended on: some wives, like Usley McLainey and Ann McLean, were aided when their husbands died, and Mrs. Edward Morton even received pay and clothing while her husband was in prison, but Mrs. Jonathan Barrett had to personally petition the legislature for aid after her husband's death, and Mrs. Richard Tool was still petitioning in 1794, an effort which would be continued by her granddaughter.¹⁸¹

Out of 148 Navy men for whom we have some data concerning marriage and children, 84.46% definitely married and 70.95% produced heirs. Only 3.38% definitely never married, and 15.54% were either unmarried or survived any wife or children, as evidenced by their heirs who were neither spouse nor descendants.

Despite the number of Navy men who had children, they were not, on the whole, terribly prolific. Though 40% of Navy men who had children at all had three or more, another 40% had only one, and 20% had only two. This puts the median number of children at two and the average at fewer than three.

Only six brides of Navy veterans have a known birth date, yet the beginning of a trend is apparent: their earliest birth year was 1763, their latest 1777, and their median birth year 1771. The five with known wedding dates married between the ages of 19 and 22, with the average age to wed being just a couple months shy of their 21st birthday. In two of these cases, we have the age of the grooms: they were each five years senior to their brides. Ten Navy veterans' wives have a date when they were known to be still alive, but only three have fixed death dates. The median date of known survival is 1837, meaning that 50% of Navy veteran's wives still survived when more than 90% of Navy

¹⁸¹ Gwathmey, *Register*, Fran's McLainey, Ann McLean; Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, Edward Morton, Jonathan Barrett, Richard Tool.

veterans were dead.¹⁸² All this suggests, though the data is too sparse to prove, that Navy men married younger women, women who were still children when their future husbands went off to war.

DEATH

For those who survived the war, the median date of death was 1806. By 1810, 60% of Virginia Navy veterans had died, by 1820, 80% had, by 1830, 89% had, by 1840, 95% had, and by 1850, all veterans with a known date of death had died. The last known survivor, who died in 1847 at the age of 92, was also the oldest known veteran.¹⁸³

Interestingly, the 1790s were almost as deadly as the war years; the men would have been about forty years old during this time. Was it usual in a society with limited medical options to have a severe culling around age forty? Did the weak die as aging was just beginning, but the survivors were hardy enough to last another twenty years or so? These questions, while interesting, would require a whole other tangent of research into the demographics of eighteenth-century Virginia. Here it is only possible to note what the data shows.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF “JOHN TAYLOR” OF THE VIRGINIA STATE NAVY

From numbers and statistics we begin to perceive, however indistinct the outline, the image of the “average” Virginia Navy man. This theoretical figure, “John Taylor”,¹⁸⁴ was born in 1755 in the Virginia Tidewater, possibly in Elizabeth City County (present

¹⁸² See section on death.

¹⁸³ Stewart, *History of Virginia's Navy*, James Green.

¹⁸⁴ “John Taylor” is a composite of the most common given name and surname appearing in the data and not to be confused with the actual John Taylor who served in the Virginia State Navy.

day City of Hampton). He and another family member were recruited into the State Navy by a neighbor who had obtained an officer's commission. He served three years and left the Navy when his enlistment was up. He never served in the land forces, but had shipmates who did. After the war, he stayed in Tidewater Virginia, married a woman at least five years his junior, and had two or three children. He did not receive any bounty land during his lifetime. He died in 1806, leaving his descendents to continue the struggle to obtain his promised bounty.

CHAPTER III:

CONCLUSIONS

Since Congress was slow to accept the challenge of creating a Continental Navy, Virginia, under naval threat from her former governor, was forced to form her own Navy in self-defense. Despite the uncertain handling of the government, the Virginia State Navy was surprisingly active and comprised the war experience of a good number of Virginians.

A navy was a new concept for Virginia and its organizational structure remained fluid and experimental throughout the war. The Committee of Safety was succeeded in its role as naval organizer by the Navy Board, followed by the Board of War, then the Commissioner of the Navy, and finally the Commissioners for the Defense of the Chesapeake Bay. Trial and error governed the government's treatment of the Navy. It created, disbanded, and recreated the Marine Corps; obtained vessels then sold them when they could not be manned; and gave the Navy special agents in charge of supply then lumped naval supply in with army supply. The government levied certain taxes and fees with the Navy in mind, including a tax payable in hemp and fees paid by merchant vessels for the protection they received, but funding was always an issue and contributed a great deal to the government's inconsistent handling of the Navy.

Responding to threats of imminent invasion, the government frequently raised the rewards for joining the Navy, and tried other measures such as buying slaves, impressing

merchant seamen, and apprenticing orphans, but nothing provided the service with the numbers it needed, in part because of competition from merchant and privateer vessels. The motivations of the men who joined the Navy were probably complex and varied, but Charles Thomas Long has argued persuasively that the average Navy man was a “citizen-sailor” defending his home from imminent danger.¹⁸⁵

Naval recruitment methods and trends reflected Virginia society’s emphasis on face-to-face hierarchical relationships and kinship networks with officers acting as patrons and family members serving together. Virginia Navy men were young, with none of the aged officers found in the British Navy, but age may have been a consideration in bestowing rank, with slightly older men preferred for positions of greater responsibility. Most Navy men were white Virginians, with the only other significant contribution being black and mulatto Virginians, though there was a smattering of individuals still identified with European ties and one with American Indian heritage. Black Navy men might be slave or free, but they received praise from their officers comparable to that given their peers. Their rank mobility was limited, but they made up a disproportionate percentage of skilled pilots.

The Virginia Navy obtained vessels through purchase, construction, capture, and, rarely, impressment. Virginia had a tradition of shipbuilding which stood it in good stead, though the state also created new shipyards, a ropewalk, and a sail duck manufactory to support the war effort. Among other vessels Virginia built numbers of row galleys because of their suitability for riverine warfare. The geographic origins of vessels’ crews corroborate the use of the rivers as highways as well as suggesting that particular vessels had particular recruiting hubs and patrol areas. Vessels also appear to

¹⁸⁵ Long, *Green Water Revolution*, 485.

have had one or more sister vessels with whom they regularly shared crew and coordinated efforts. The Navy generally employed hit-and-run tactics, attacking privateers or small tenders or lone British ships, but heading for cover when an enemy fleet was abroad. Despite its difficulties and small size, the Virginia State Navy kept a door cracked open for trade that contributed to the continuance of the war. The Navy often cooperated with Maryland and North Carolina as well as the French fleet at Yorktown and state and continental land forces, and her men served even when her vessels had been destroyed.

Though the Virginia Navy possessed the same career tracks as the British Navy, they were much more fluid, allowing men to change between the commissioned officer, warrant officer, seaman, and even marine tracks. The majority of marines spent part of the war as sea soldiers and part of it as land soldiers. A much smaller but still significant percentage of non-marines also served in the army at one point or another, with midshipmen and warrant officers being the most likely to go ashore and commissioned officers the least likely. Men with high rank or navy-specific skills generally served the longest in the Navy; those likely to leave the service soonest were surgeons, whose skills were highly valued on land as well as sea. A man's naval career might end for a variety of reasons, such as, in order of probability: the end of the war or his enlistment, desertion or resignation, death, imprisonment, or, rarely, infirmity. Imprisonment, desertion, and resignation, however, did not always signal the end of a man's naval service. Although captured naval officers were likely to be imprisoned farther away than their men, this did not eliminate successful escapes by both officers and non-officers, which were effected

from as far away as England. Men who resigned, or even deserted, sometimes returned to service as well.

After the war, about half of Navy men stayed in Virginia, nearly all of them in the Tidewater. A little more than a sixth moved to Kentucky, presumably settling on their bounty lands. The rest scattered, but, like those in Virginia, generally stayed near the water.

Priority in distributing bounty land seems to have gone to commissioned officers, medical personnel, and gunners. Medical officers also received surprisingly large acreages, with a surgeon's bounty being comparable to a captain's, and a surgeon's mate's to a lieutenant's. This probably reflects competition between naval and land forces for medical personnel. Many men had difficulty producing documentation proving their right to bounties and pensions. Instead they offered other evidence, such as their own extensive memories and the affidavits of family, neighbors, shipmates, and superior officers. At various times, groups of naval veterans filed joint petitions. The struggle to receive compensation for service frequently outlived the veteran and was passed down the generations.

Most Navy men joined young and unmarried and decided to stay that way until they left service. They mostly did marry eventually however, choosing women younger than themselves and raising one or two children. Men who survived the war and were hardy enough to make it through their forties had a good chance of living into their sixties or beyond. For some men, their naval service was only the beginning of a long career on the water, as they joined the United States Navy, the Virginia Revenue Service, or the merchant marine. For others, wartime naval service was merely an interlude in an

otherwise land-locked life. The fact that these men went on to become planters and public officials, mill keepers and ministers, supports Long's theory of men who took to the water to defend their homes from naval assault, only to return home when the danger was past.

Further research could profitably compare the Virginia State Navy with other state navies; the Continental Navy; the British Navy, using, for instance, N.A.M Rodger's *The Command of the Ocean*¹⁸⁶ and the seamen's journals listed in his bibliography; privateers and Virginia's land forces. It would be interesting to consider whether the noteworthy successes of some of the State Navy's smallest vessels, which are known to have captured vessels much larger than themselves, may have been brought about in part by the youthful vigor of their officers in contrast to the ill-health and lethargy that plagued the many aged officers of the British Navy.¹⁸⁷ One could also look at what State Navy men's previous maritime experiences might have been with Peter Earle's work on English merchant seamen.¹⁸⁸ Another interesting avenue would be to fit the handling of the Navy into a larger history of the politics of wartime Virginia. A broad demographic study could show whether Navy men were usual or unusual for their time and place. As with most history papers, this thesis benefits from those that have come before and, hopefully, provides some items useful to those that will come after.

This project also revealed that a lot of raw data for Virginians in the Revolutionary War is available in secondary sources, but it is still a grueling process to

¹⁸⁶ N.A.M. Rodger, *Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.)

¹⁸⁷ As an example, the failing health of Admiral Rodney prevented his presence in the Chesapeake, and Admiral Graves' lack of initiative probably cost the British the Battle of the Capes, and thus, Yorktown. Richard M. Ketchum, *Victory at Yorktown: The Campaign that Won the Revolution* (New York: Henry Holt and Company LLC, 2004), 188, 191-192.

¹⁸⁸ Peter Earle, *Sailors: English Merchant Seamen 1650-1775* (London, 1998.)

glean anything from it. Gwathmey's *Historical Register* organizes entries alphabetically by last name, requiring a researcher looking for any other piece of information to skim the volume from start to finish, pulling out entries that include, for instance, the word "navy." The researcher also has to keep a sharp lookout for possible alternate spellings that may be cataloged pages apart. It would be well worth a grant to have this amazing resource turned into a database searchable by rank, county, unit, alternate name spellings, etc. Hundreds of monographs could be written using such a database to locate information for quantitative analysis.

APPENDIX
 FIGURE 1
 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS OF NAVY MEN BY COUNTY

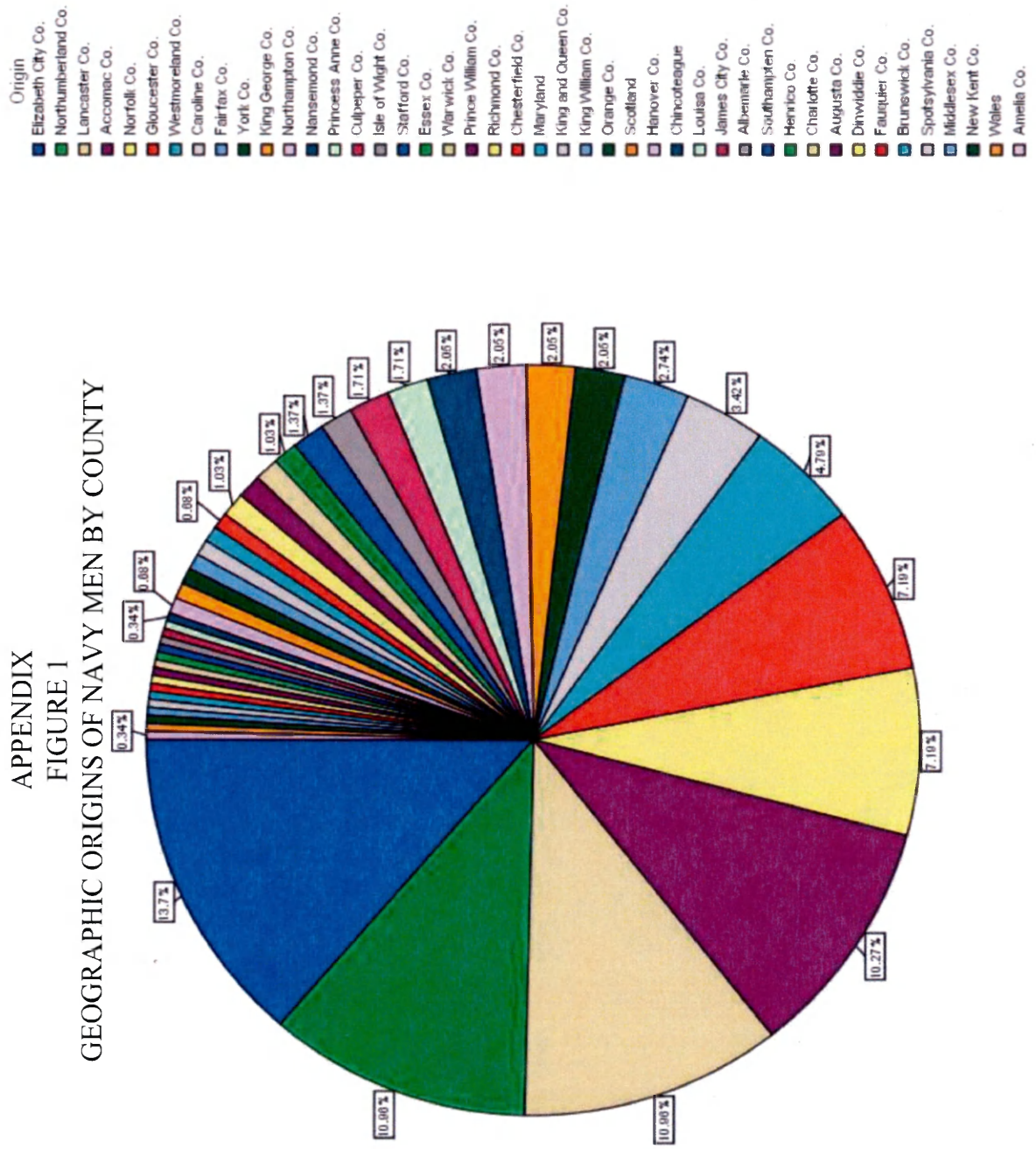


FIGURE 2
INFLUENCE OF THE FALL LINE ON GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS OF NAVY MEN

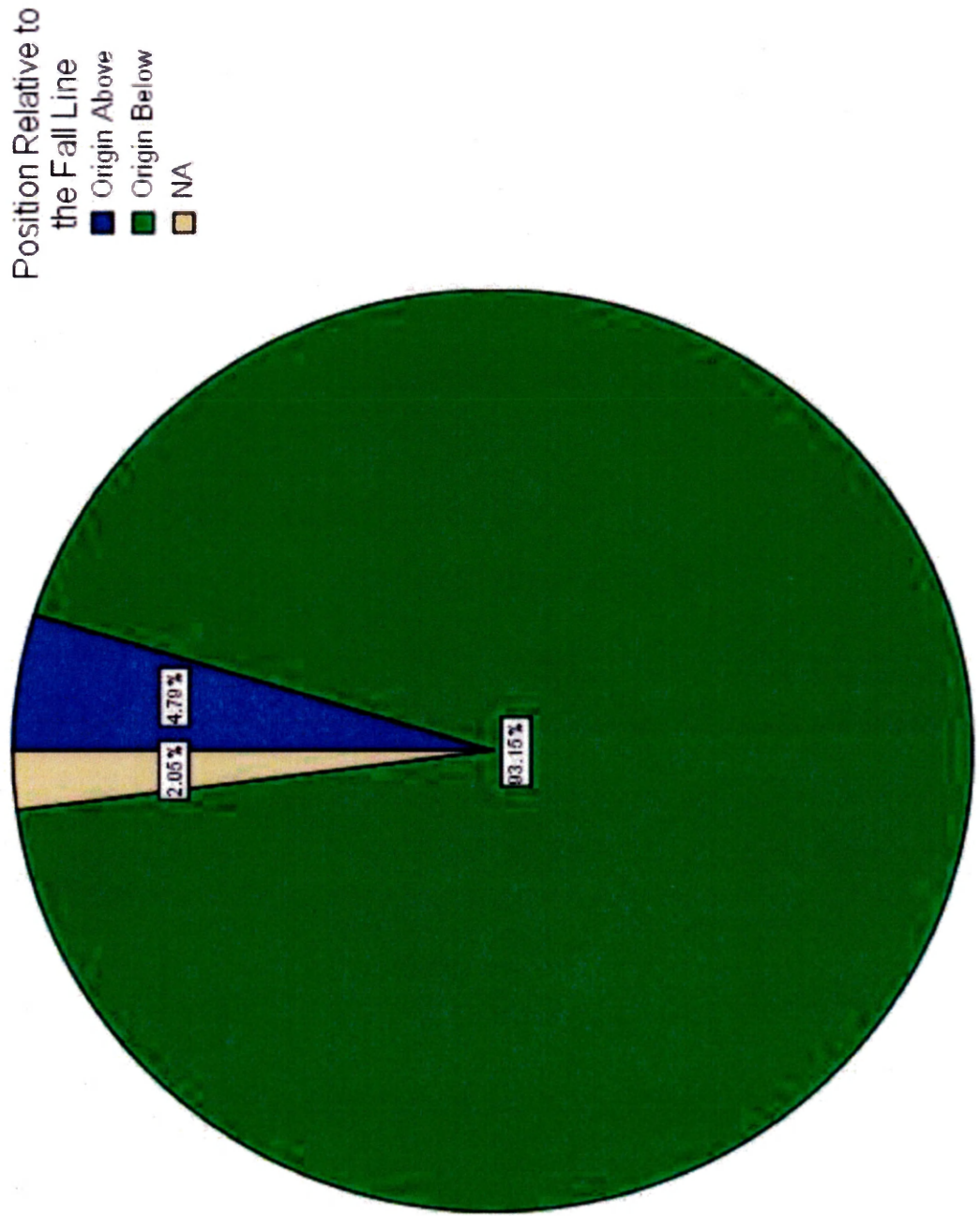
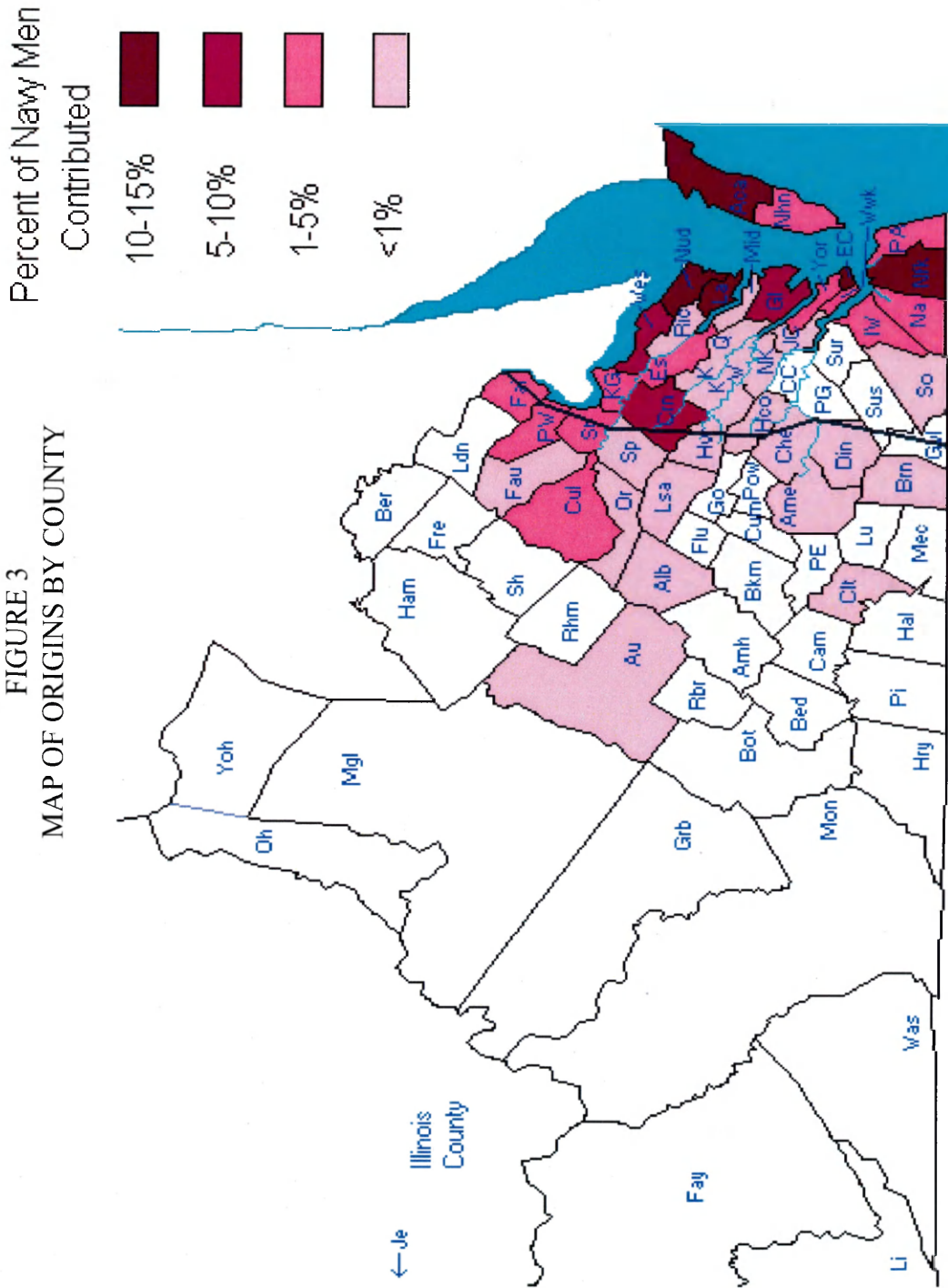


FIGURE 3
MAP OF ORIGINS BY COUNTY



All maps provided are modified, by the author, from Genealogy Inc., "1782," *My Virginia Genealogy*, 1999, www.myviriniogenealogy.com/va_maps/va_cf.htm (16 August 2007)

FIGURE 4a
 RECRUITING MAP: ACCOMAC GALLEY

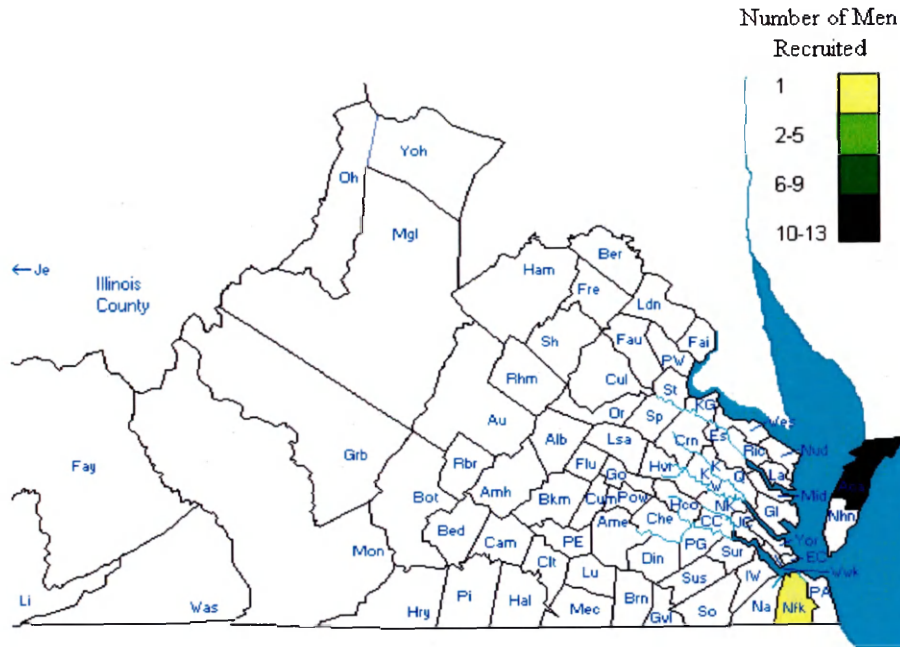


FIGURE 4b
 RECRUITING MAP: CASWELL GALLEY

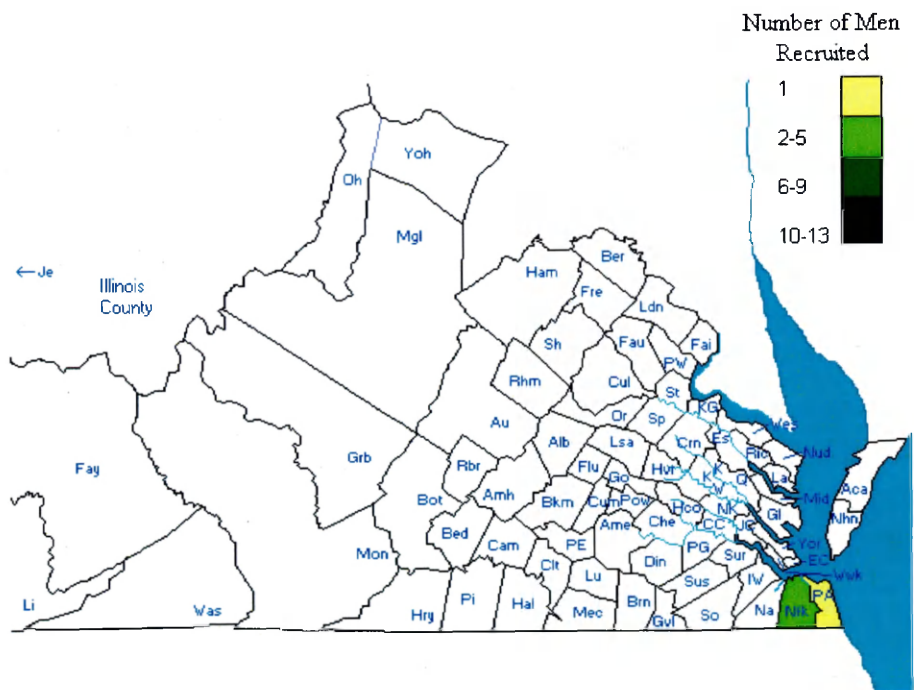


FIGURE 4c
 RECRUITING MAP: *SLOOP CONGRESS*

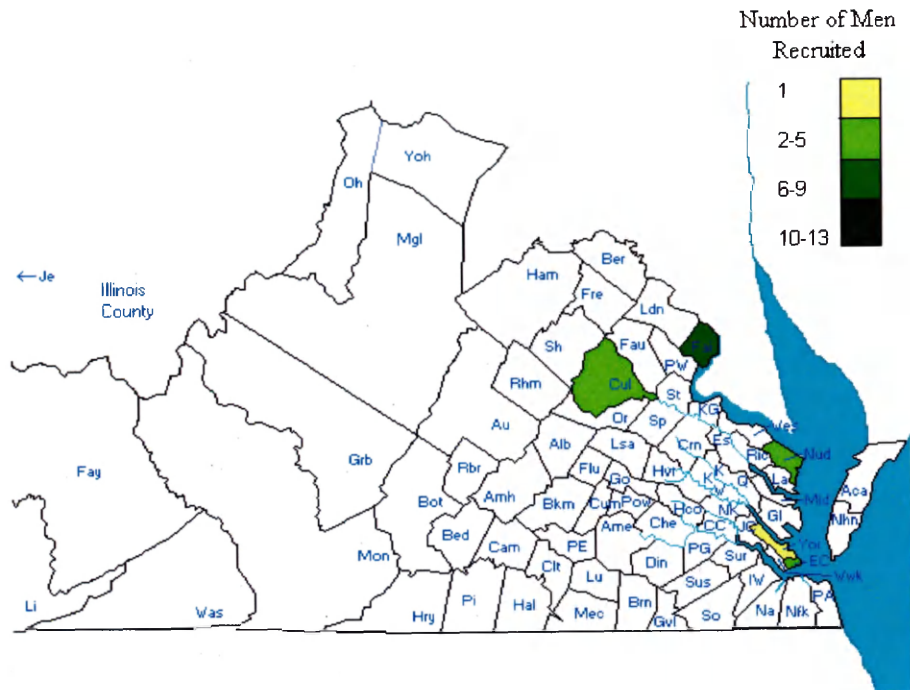


FIGURE 4d
 RECRUITING MAP: *DILIGENCE GALLEY*

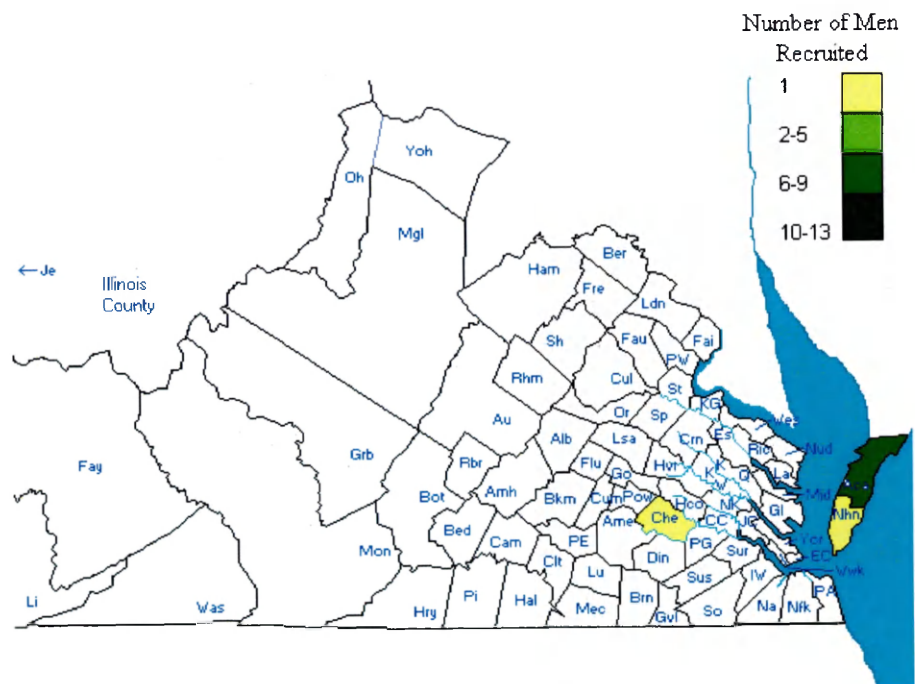


FIGURE 4e
RECRUITING MAP: FRIGATE *DRAGON*

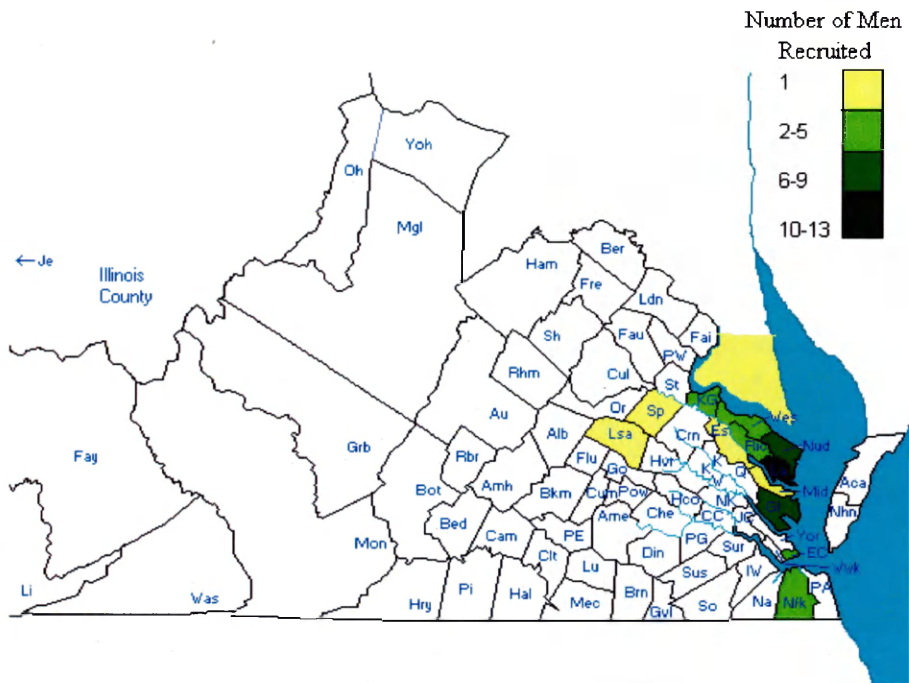


FIGURE 4f
RECRUITING MAP: *FLY BOAT*

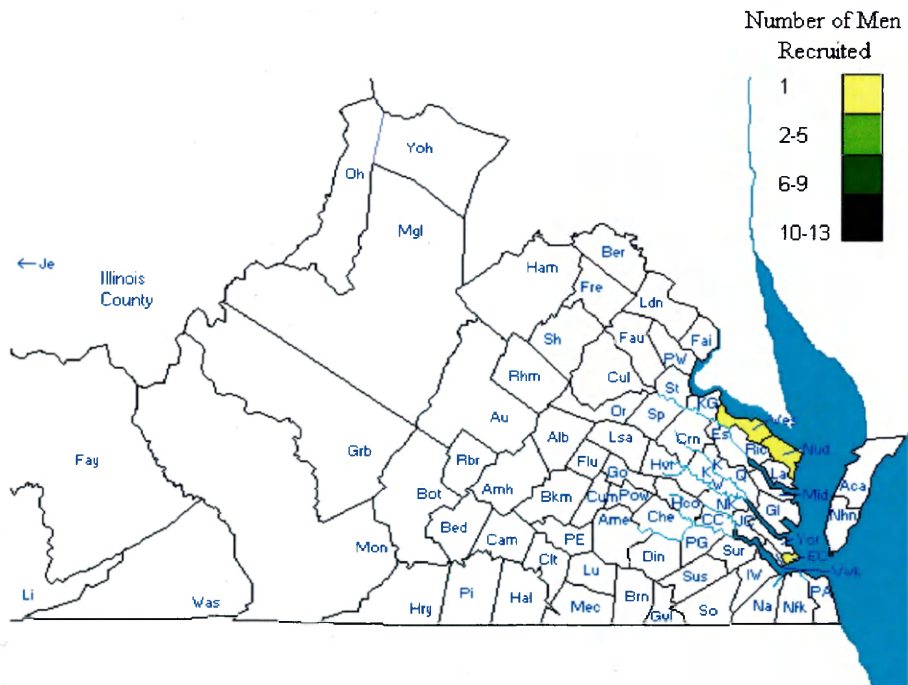


FIGURE 4g
 RECRUITING MAP: SHIP *GLOUCESTER*

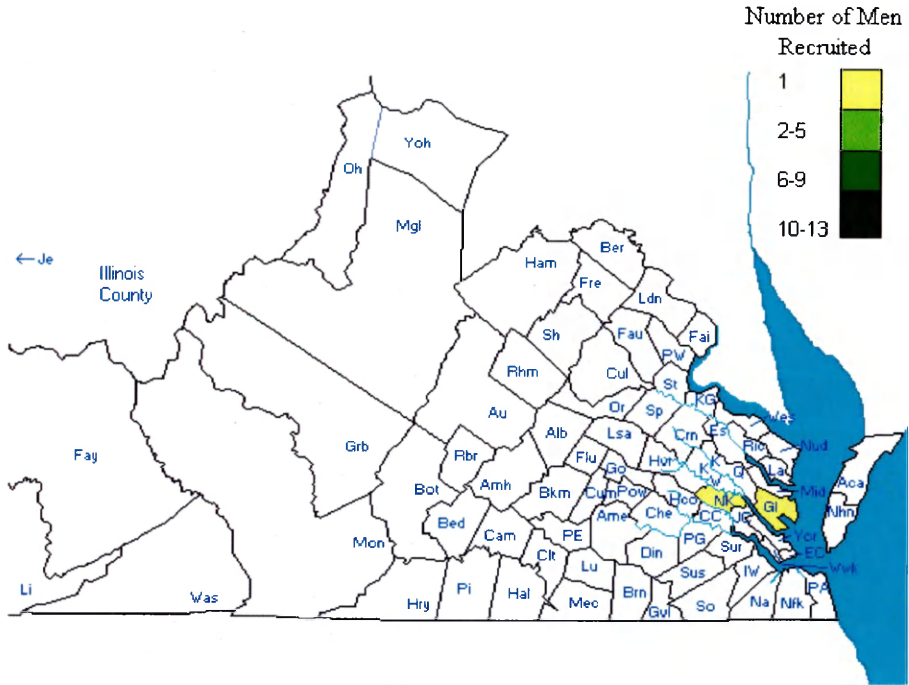


FIGURE 4h
 RECRUITING MAP: *HENRY GALLEY*

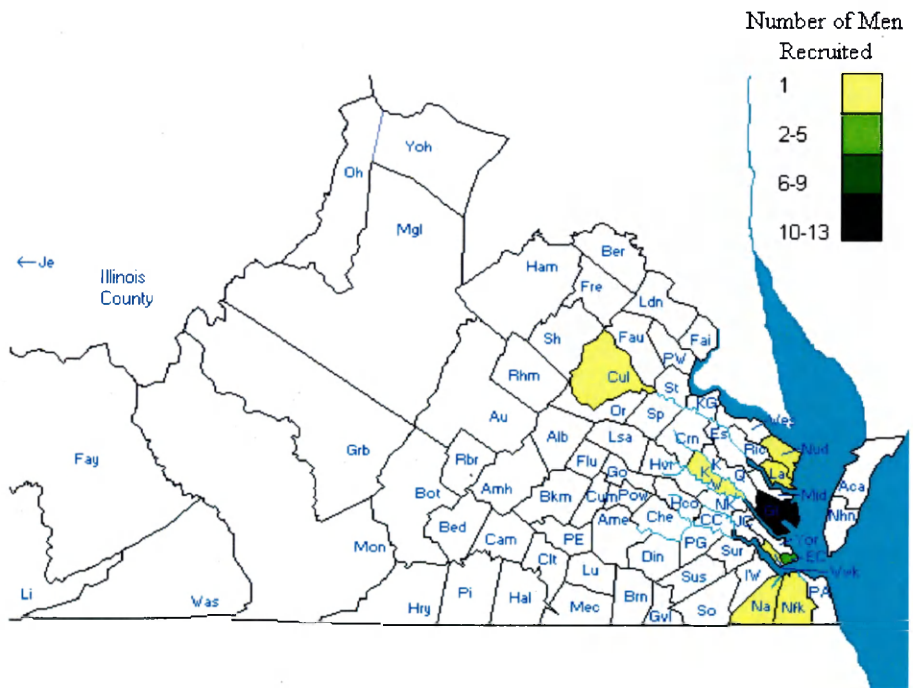


FIGURE 4i
 RECRUITING MAP: *HERO GALLEY*

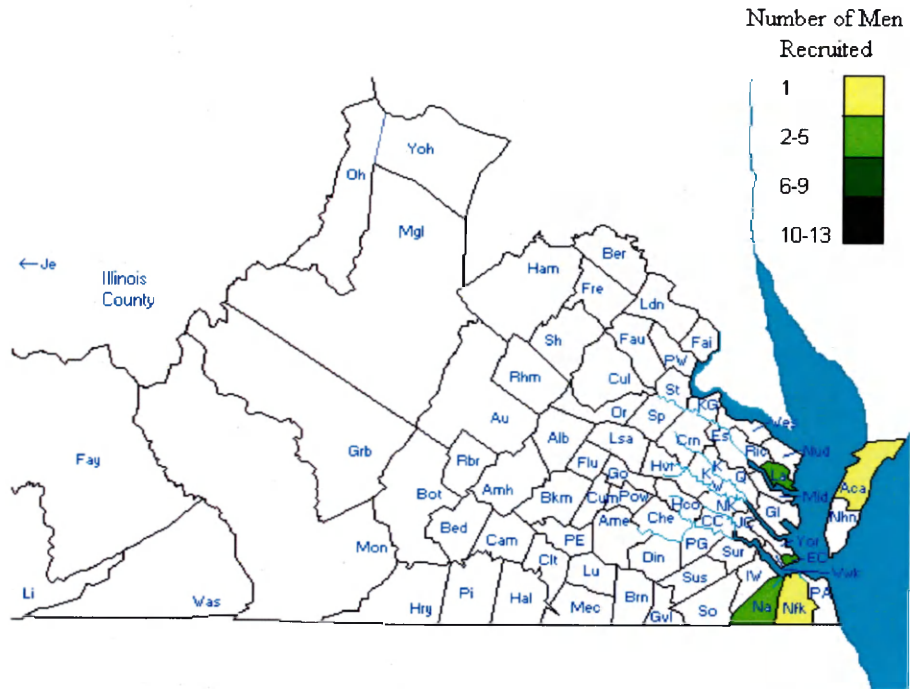


FIGURE 4j
 RECRUITING MAP: *SCHOONER HORNET*

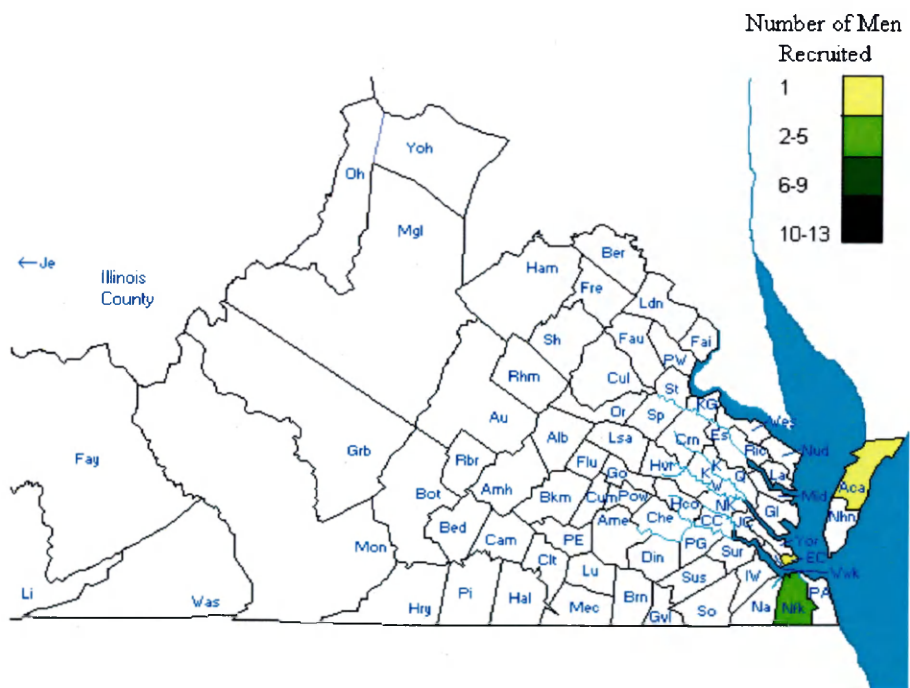


FIGURE 4k
RECRUITING MAP: BRIG JEFFERSON

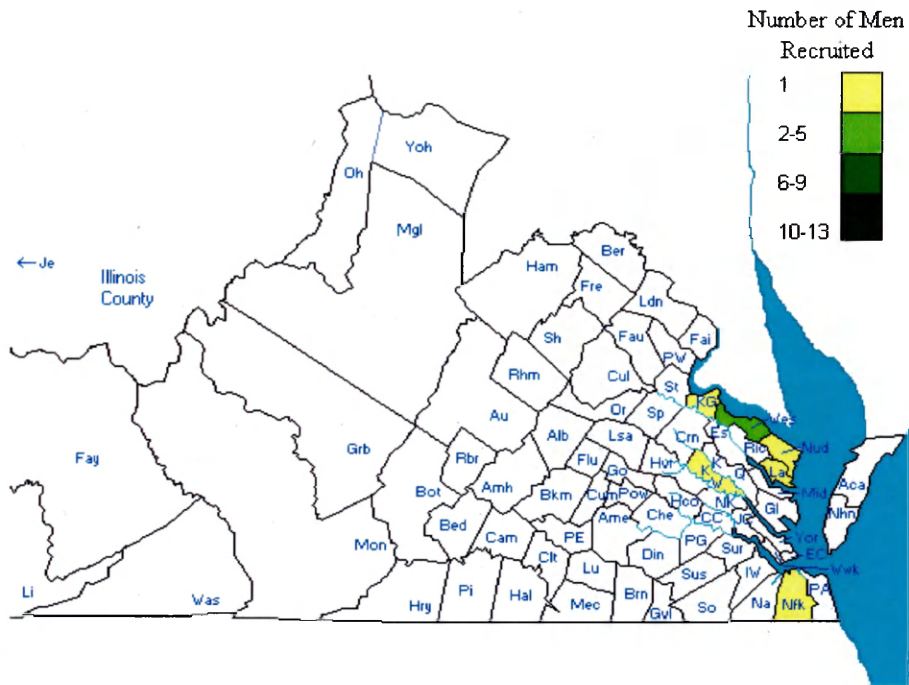


FIGURE 4l
RECRUITING MAP: LEWIS GALLEY

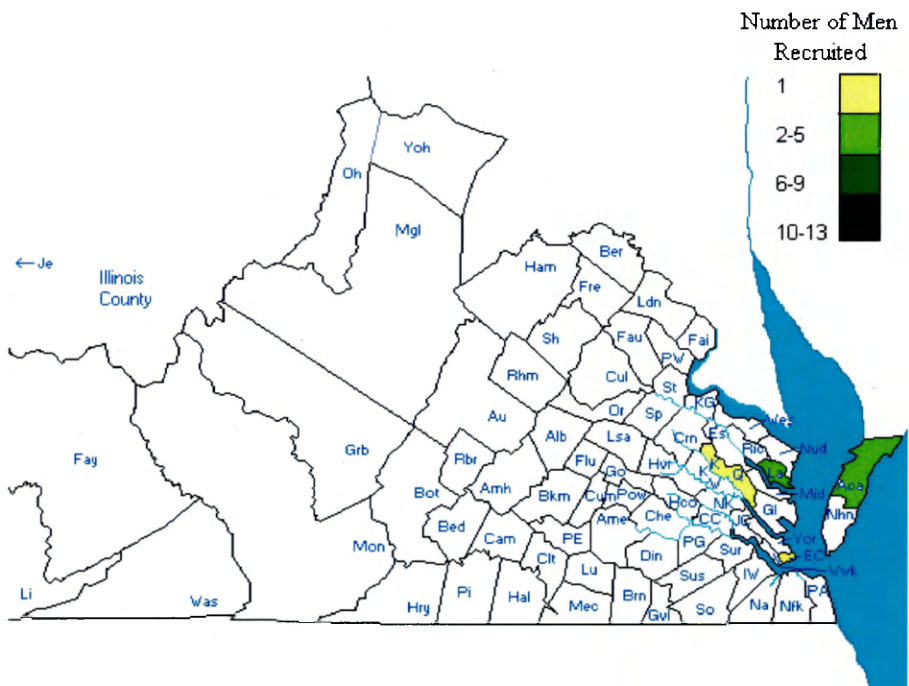


FIGURE 4m
 RECRUITING MAP: *LIBERTY BOAT*

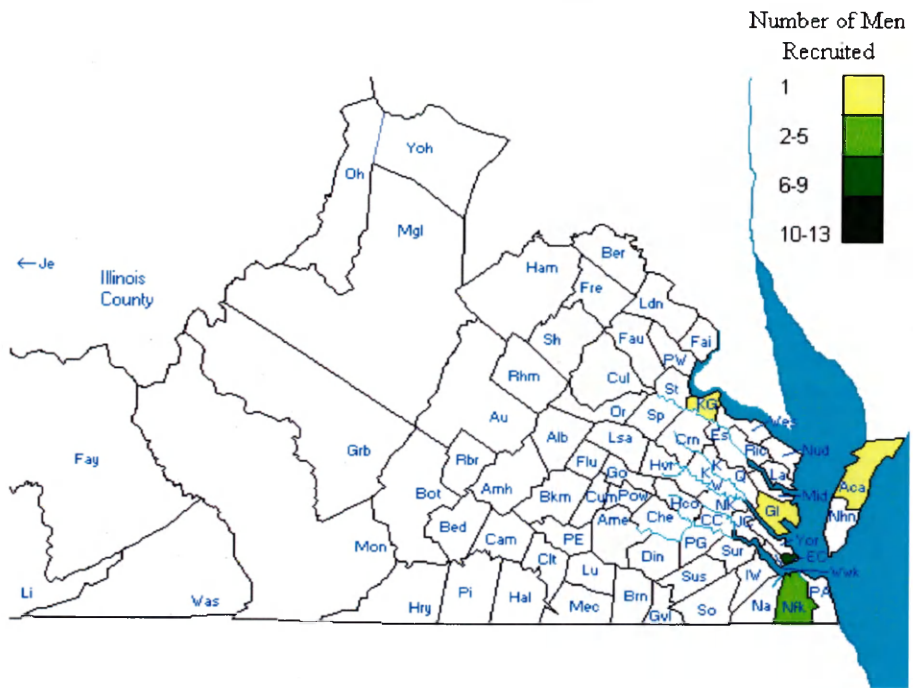


FIGURE 4n
 RECRUITING MAP: *BRIG LIBERTY*

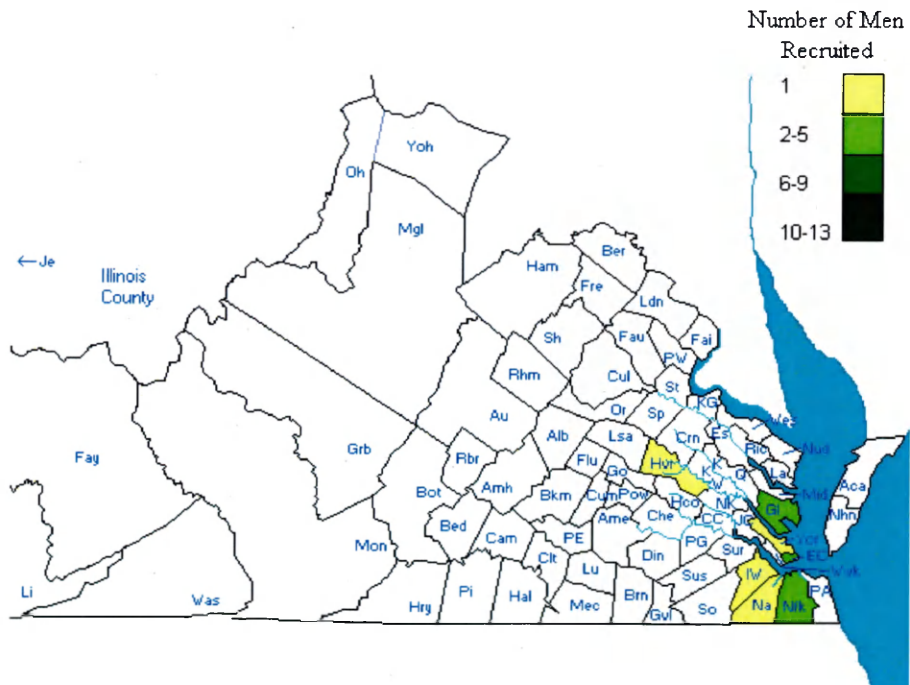


FIGURE 4o
 RECRUITING MAP: *MANLEY GALLEY*

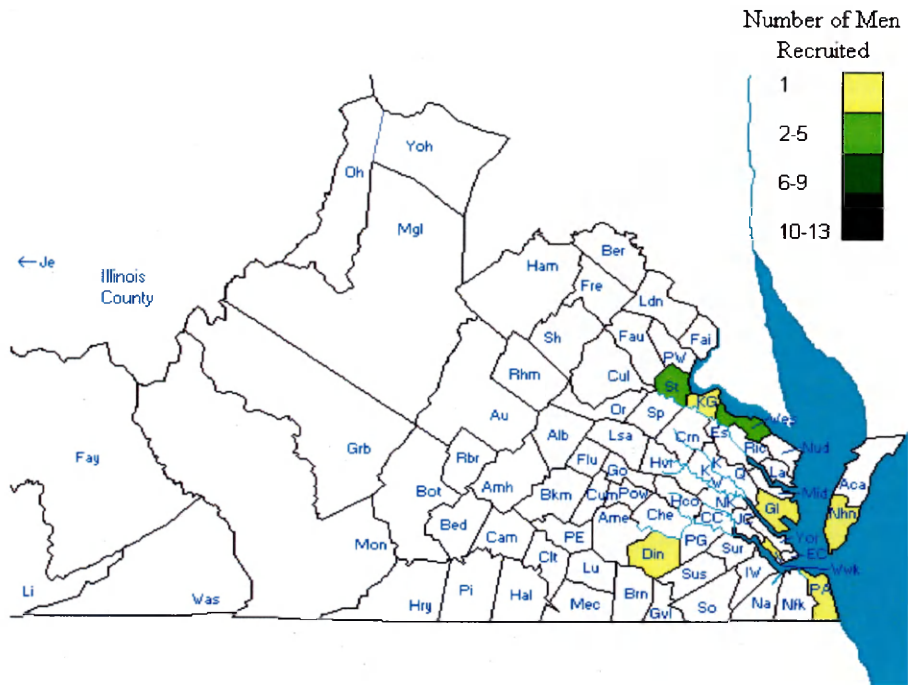


FIGURE 4p
 RECRUITING MAP: *MOLLY BOAT*

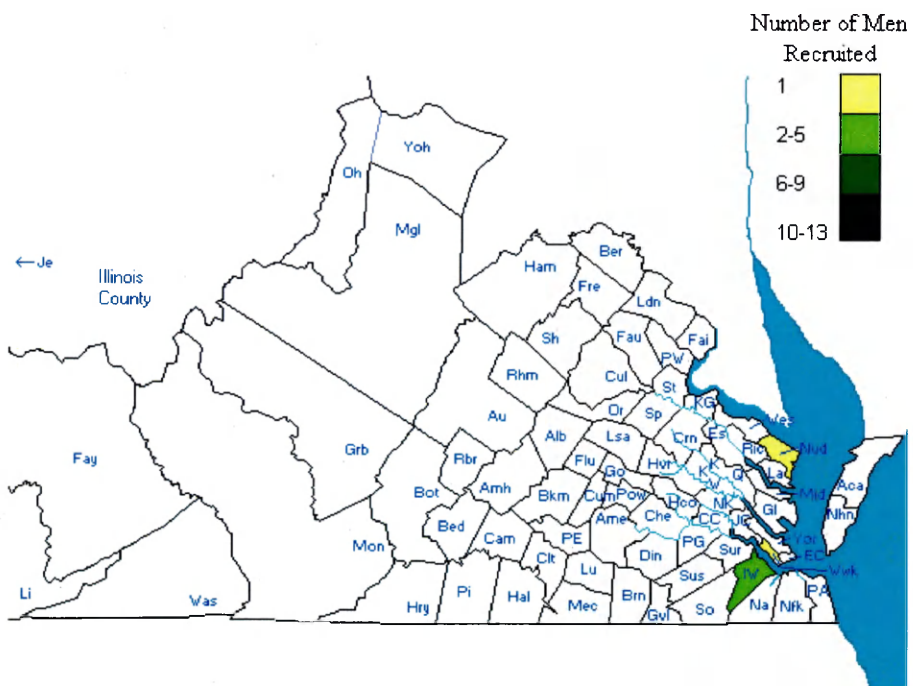


FIGURE 4q
 RECRUITING MAP: BRIG *MOSQUITO*

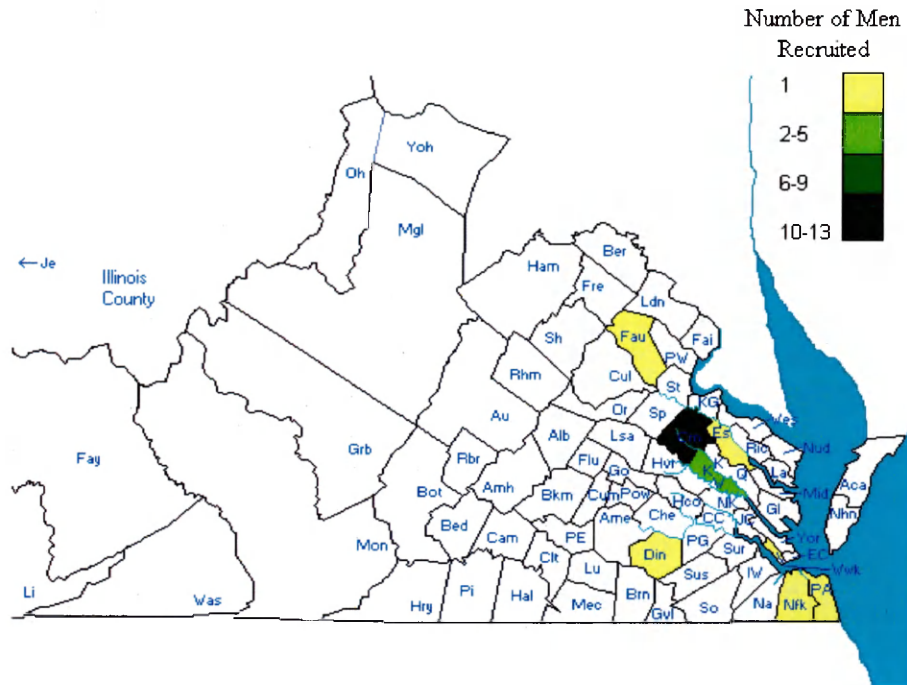


FIGURE 4r
 RECRUITING MAP: *NICHOLSON BOAT*

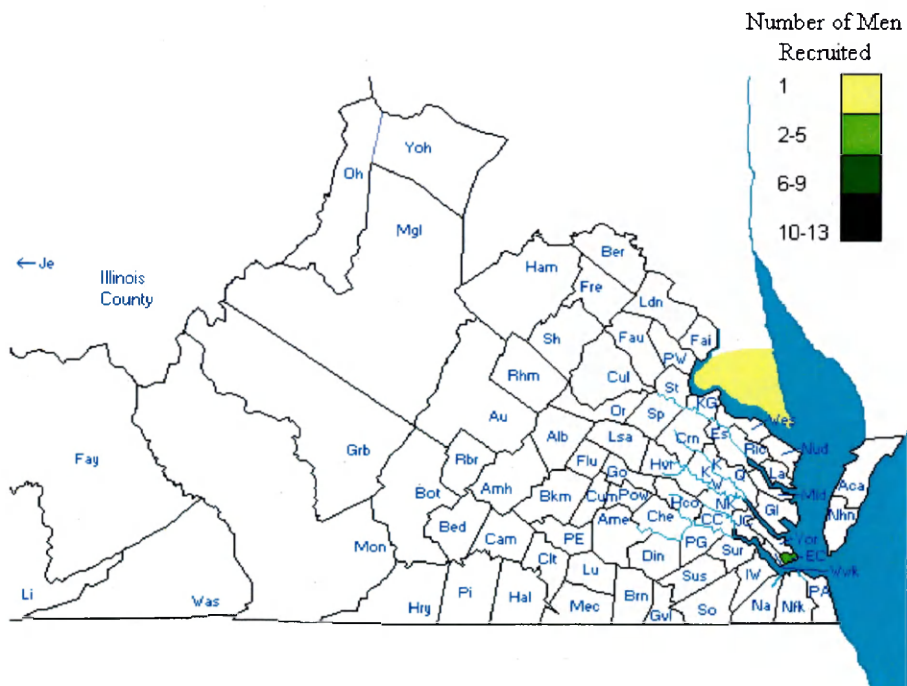


FIGURE 4s
 RECRUITING MAP: *NORFOLK REVENGE GALLEY*

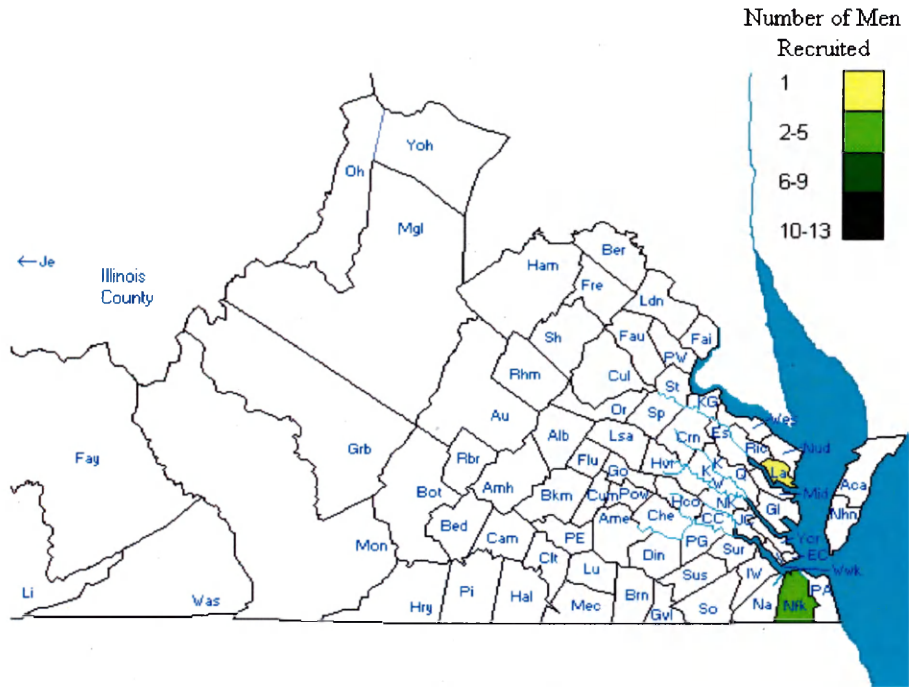


FIGURE 4t
 RECRUITING MAP: *BRIG NORTHAMPTON*

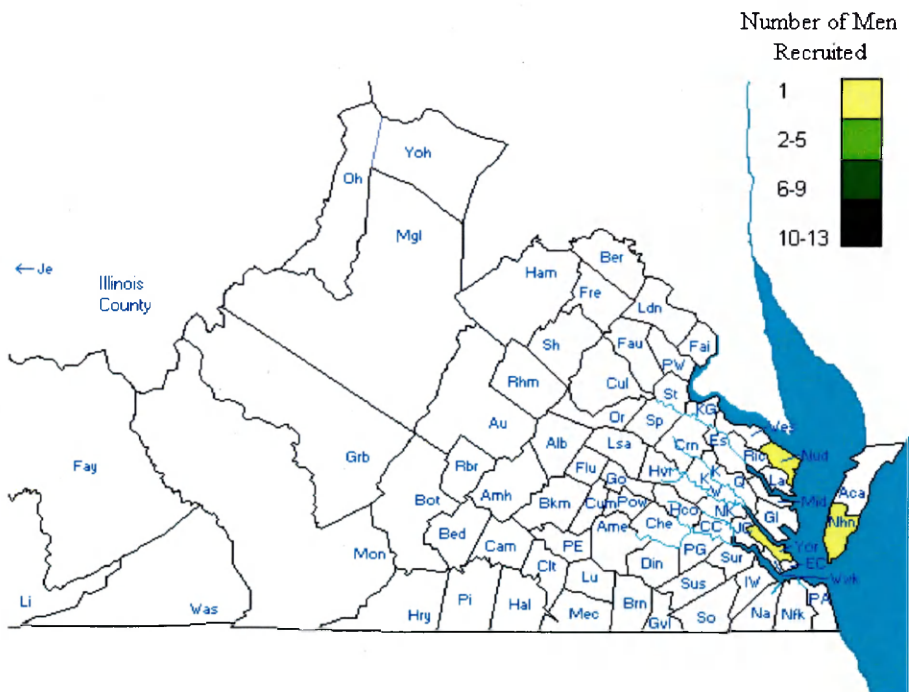


FIGURE 4w
 RECRUITING MAP: *PATRIOT BOAT* (II)

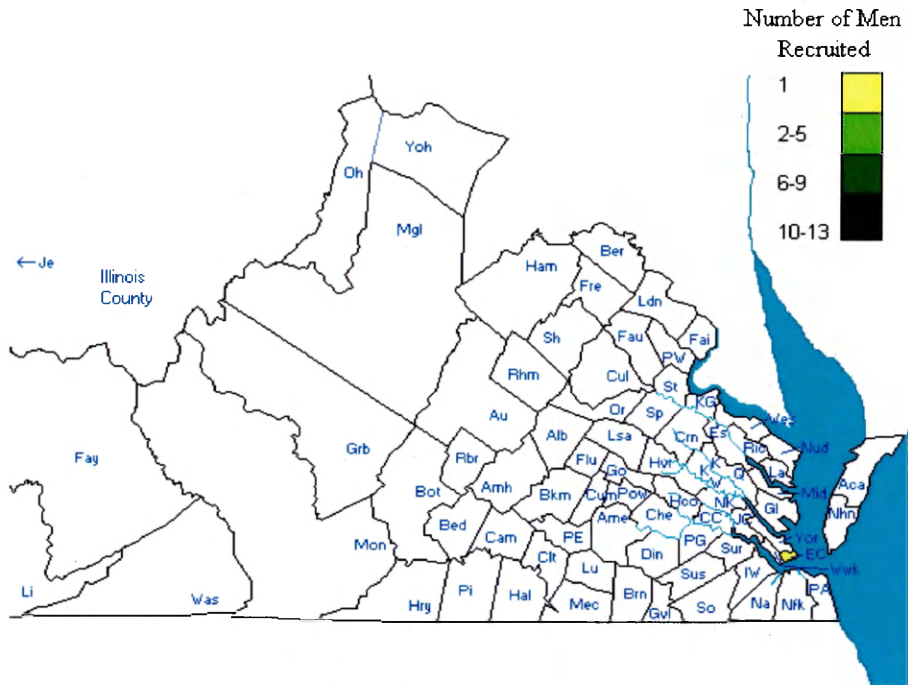


FIGURE 4x
 RECRUITING MAP: *PROTECTOR GALLEY*

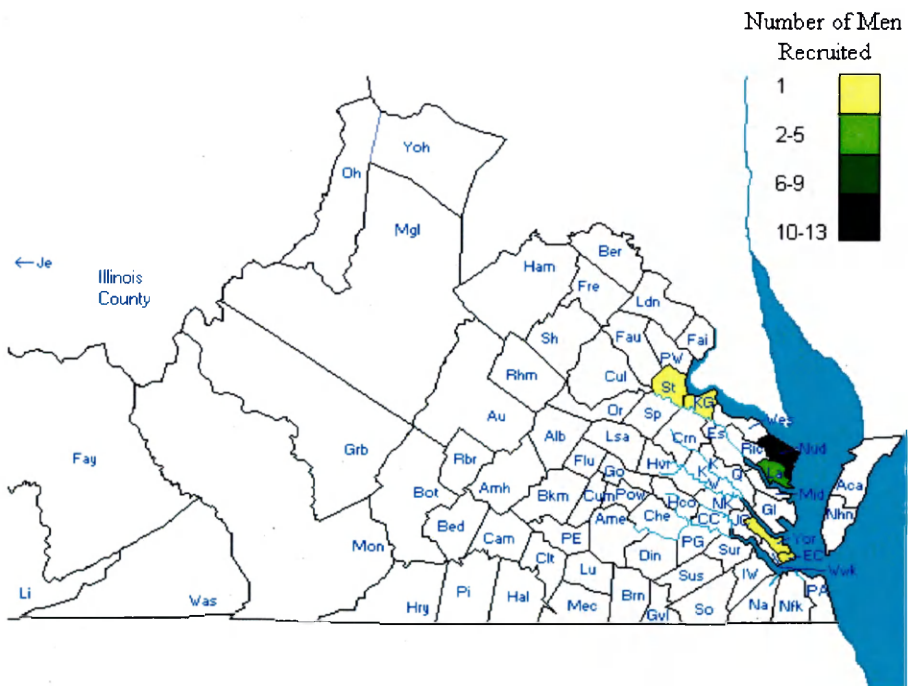


FIGURE 4aa
 RECRUITING MAP: FRIGATE *TEMPEST*

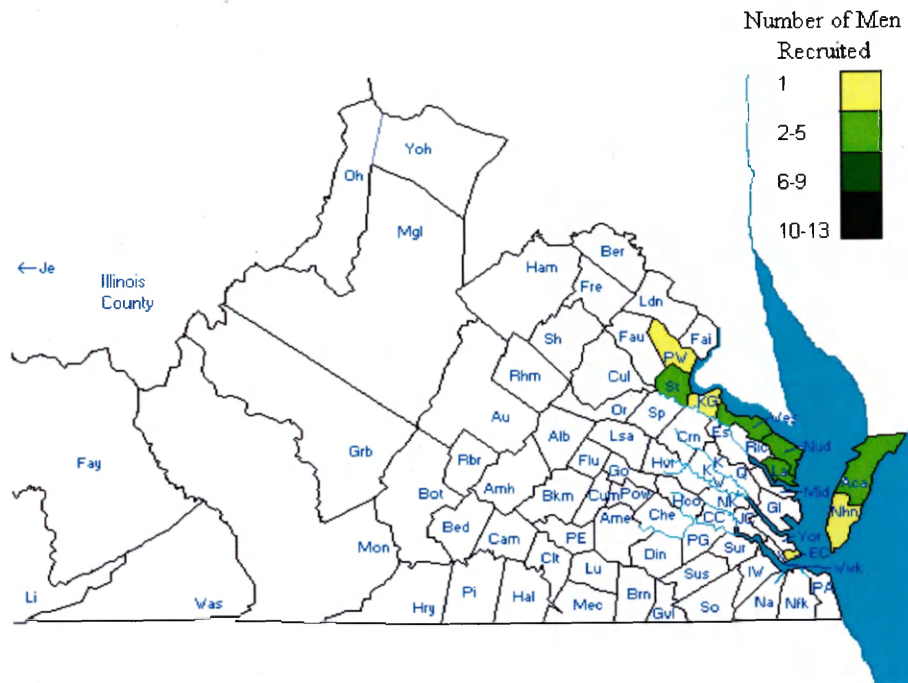


FIGURE 4ab
 RECRUITING MAP: FRIGATE *VIRGINIA*

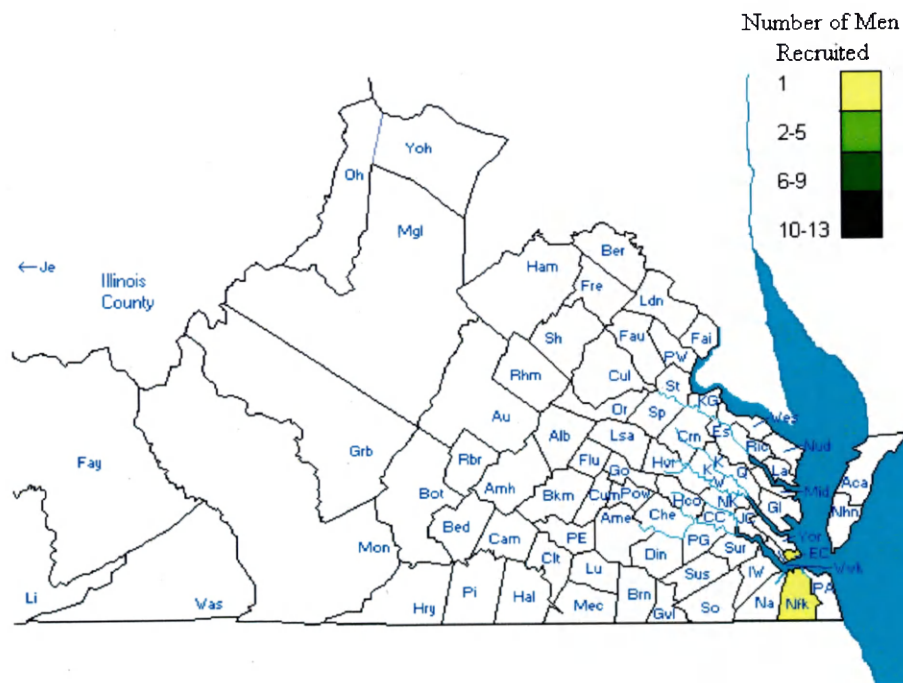


FIGURE 4ac
 RECRUITING MAP: WASHINGTON GALLEY

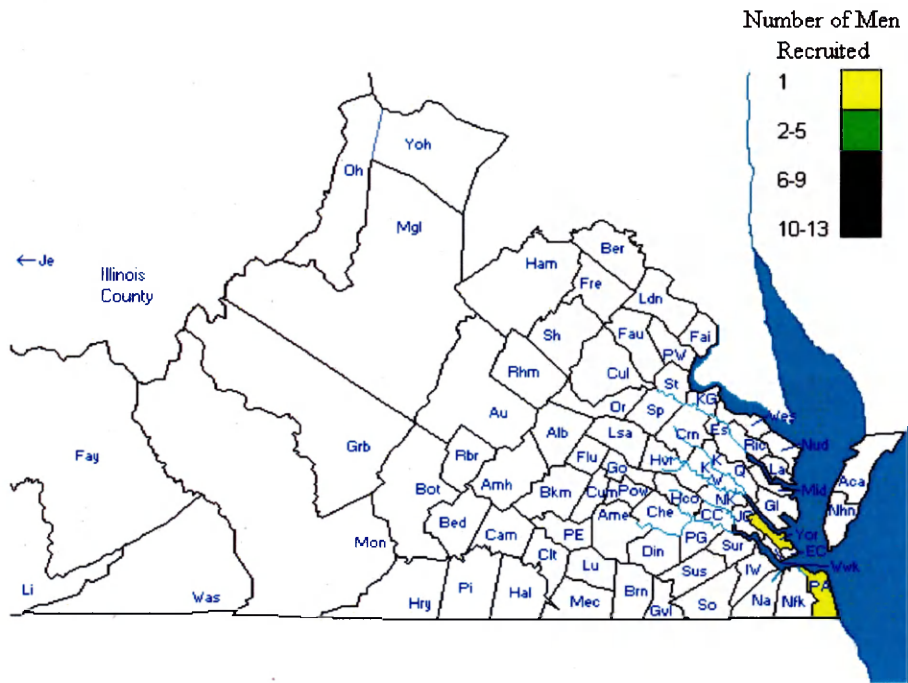


FIGURE 5
 LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF NAVY MEN BY STATE

- Last Known State**
- Virginia
 - Kentucky
 - Pennsylvania
 - New York
 - West Indies
 - Maryland
 - Georgia
 - Tennessee
 - Delaware
 - South Carolina
 - North Carolina
 - Massachusetts

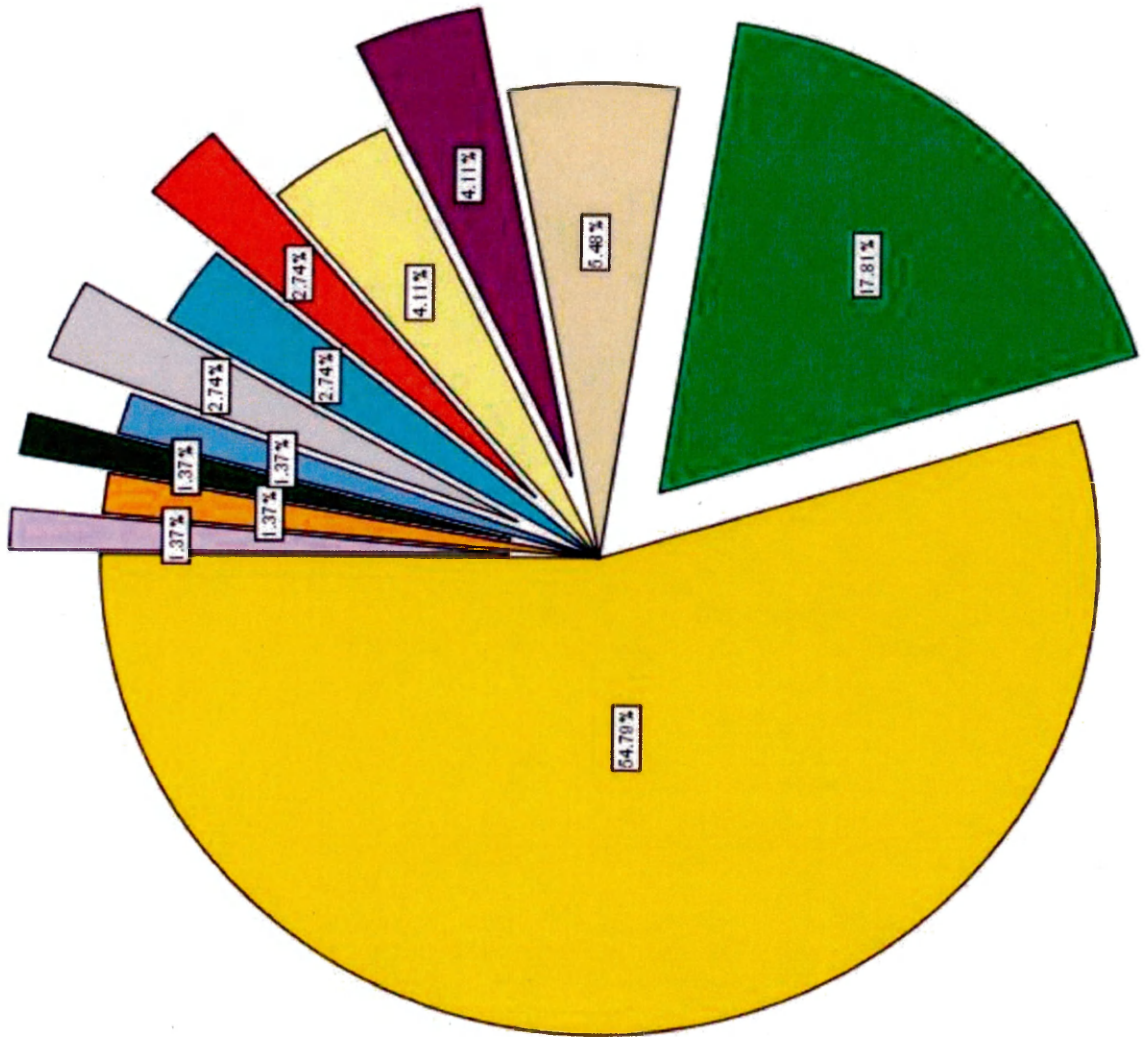
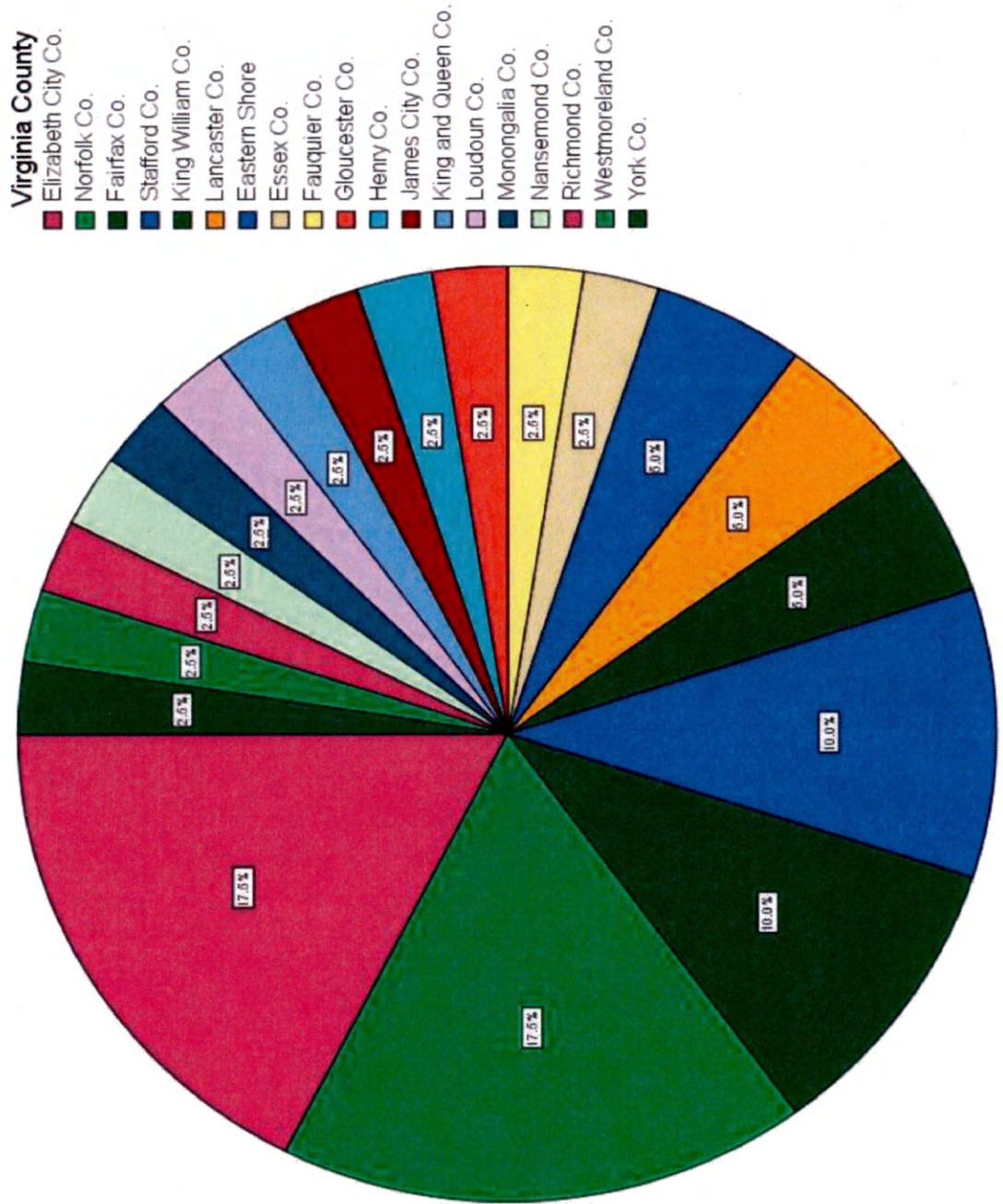


FIGURE 7
 LAST KNOWN VIRGINIA LOCATION OF NAVY MEN



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