

“The Art of Getting Drunk:”  
Martial Masculinity, Alcohol, and the  
British Army in the Canadas in the War of 1812

by

Jesse Abbott

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## Examining Committee Membership

The following served on the Examining Committee for this thesis. The decision of the Examining Committee is by majority vote.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| External Examiner        | Dr. Jennine Hurl-Eamon<br>Professor of History<br>Trent University                                       |
| Supervisor(s)            | Dr. Julia Roberts<br>Associate Professor of History<br>University of Waterloo                            |
| Internal Member          | Dr. Douglas Peers<br>Professor of History<br>University of Waterloo                                      |
| Internal-external Member | Dr. Fraser Easton<br>Associate Professor of English Language and<br>Literature<br>University of Waterloo |
| Other Member(s)          | Dr. Jane Nicholas<br>Professor of History<br>St. Jerome's University<br>University of Waterloo           |
|                          | Dr. Susan Roy<br>Associate Professor of History<br>University of Waterloo                                |

## **Author's Declaration**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## **Abstract**

This thesis argues that alcohol consumption, both real and perceived, played a key role in the construction and negotiation of masculine identities within the British army in the Canadas during the early nineteenth century. Officers in particular proved their manliness and constructed their dual gentleman-officer identity not only by fighting well, but also by socializing and drinking well; by demonstrating what the famous moral essayist, Dr. Samuel Johnson, called “skill in inebriation,” or the “art of getting drunk.” An officer’s capability or skill in drinking with his fellow gentlemen-officers denoted manliness, while habitual or public drunkenness had the opposite effect. His polite consumption in both public and private social settings defined him as a gentleman, while his strong consumption on the battlefield fortified his constitution and facilitated his performance as a warrior. His heavy consumption with peers established his place within a hierarchy of manliness, and his condemnation of the propensity for drink and the drunken comportment of his perceived social inferiors established his position atop larger gendered, classed, and racialized hierarchies in colonial society. Officers constructed their own masculine identity in direct relation to those with whom they interacted, specifically enlisted soldiers (and NCOs), Indigenous allies, and American enemies, and these constructions were heavily informed by early nineteenth century perceptions of alcohol.

## Acknowledgements

*“Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance” – Dr. Samuel Johnson*

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“An alcoholic is someone you don’t like who drinks as much as you do.”

-Dylan Thomas



## Introduction

Except in the expectation of a sudden attack, the officers were permitted to sleep out of the block-house, and a small unfinished house was taken for their residence. The captain and senior lieutenant being, as Bardolph hath it, better accommodated than with wives, we, that is the junior lieutenant and myself, gave up our share of the quarters to them, and established ourselves in what had been a blacksmith's shop, for our winter quarters. In the ante-room to this enviable abode, a jobbing tailor had formed his shop-board, and his rags and shapings [sic] proved highly useful in caulking its seams against the wind. By means of a roaring fire kept up on the forge, and a stove in the outer room, we managed to keep ourselves tolerably comfortable during an unusually rigorous winter; and it being on the road side, and a halting station in the woods, we were often visited by friends coming or going, who partook with great goût of our frozen beef—which had to be cut into steaks with a hand-saw. Being on the banks of a fine stream, we never were at loss for ducks, and in the surrounding pine woods the partridges were abundant, and the Indians brought us venison in exchange for rum, so that we had at least a plentiful, if not an elegant table, and we were enabled to pass the winter nights as pleasantly over our ration rum as ever I did in a place with much more splendid "appliances and means to boot." We passed the remainder of the winter as officers are obliged to do in country quarters. We shot, we lounged, we walked and did all the flirtation that the neighborhood of a mill, a shop, a tavern, with two farm houses within a reasonable forenoon's walk, could afford. We were deprived, however, of the luxury of spitting over a bridge, which Dr. Johnston [sic] says is the principal amusement of officers in country quarters, for though we had a bridge close at hand, the stream beneath it was frozen. Early in spring we were relieved by two companies of another Regiment, and having received orders to join, we joined accordingly.<sup>1</sup>

This passage is taken from William "Tiger" Dunlop's *Recollections of the American War*. In it, Dunlop, an Assistant Surgeon in the 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, describes how he and a fellow lieutenant passed the winter of 1813-1814 in a blacksmith's shop near Fort Wellington, in modern day Prescott, Ontario.<sup>2</sup> He remarks upon (relatively) good food and drink, abundant

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<sup>1</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1905), 29-30.

<sup>2</sup> For a biography of Dunlop, see A.H.U. Colquhoun's brief biographical sketch in the introduction to the above work, or the Dictionary of Canadian Biography: [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dunlop\\_william\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dunlop_william_7E.html)

opportunities for hunting, and polite social interactions with fellow officers, local gentlemen and ladies, and Indigenous peoples. He shows the role which drink played in these interactions; as currency for trade, as associated with Indigeneity, as rationed by the army, and as a component of rituals of polite sociability in both private country quarters and public taverns. And, in general, he depicts himself and his fellow lieutenant as true gentlemen socialites of the first rate and order, in addition to being military officers at war. In this way, the passage highlights themes of masculinity, class, race, and drink which are present throughout Dunlop's account, and others like his.

This passage, and Dunlop's account of the war in general, remind us that many Napoleonic era army officers passed the bulk of their time in the Canadas in non-combat-related interactions. Dunlop had joined the War of 1812 (1812-1815)<sup>3</sup> in the Canadas in the summer of 1813, fresh out of medical school. Fort Wellington, "a clumsy, ill-constructed unflanked redoubt," as he described it, was his first posting.<sup>4</sup> It was there that he saw his first action of the war, following the Battle of Crysler's Farm in November of 1813. Dunlop spent several weeks at a makeshift army hospital tending to the wounded from both sides. He passed the remainder of the winter of 1813-1814 quartered in a local blacksmith's shop, as described above. In the Spring, Dunlop's detachment was relieved by two companies of another regiment and re-quartered in the nearby town of Cornwall. He remained there, socializing, dancing, and

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<sup>3</sup> A conflict fought between the fledgling United States and the British Empire (and allied Indigenous groups) in which American forces attempted to seize colonies in British North America.

<sup>4</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 20.

drinking with the “highest circles,” until finally moving on to the Niagara frontier in late June.<sup>5</sup> Once arrived, he experienced some of the heaviest fighting of the war at Lundy’s Lane in July of 1814, and at Fort Erie in August. By December, however, the war was all but over. Dunlop spent his second winter in the Canadas working on a road-cutting party attempting to link Lake Simcoe to Georgian Bay, before shipping out with his Regiment in June of 1815.<sup>6</sup> He had been two years in the Canadas at war, and much of that time far from a battlefield. Consequently, Dunlop’s recollections, and other accounts like his, provide historians with much more than a mere accounting of battles or military actions.<sup>7</sup> Passages such as these reveal the lived experience of officers who served during the War of 1812. In doing so, they provide a social, and gendered history of the war. They show that the British army of the era was host to a multiplicity of martial masculinities, some expressed in combat, and others in quarters. They raise important questions about how officers perceived themselves, and others, and the role which alcohol played in informing perceptions – a particularly important consideration given that much of what we know about the people of this period comes from the writings of these men. The way in which officers wrote about themselves and others – especially

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<sup>5</sup> The term “highest circles” is used somewhat tongue-in-cheek here. Dunlop notes that Cornwall was at the time quite small, boasting no more than twenty houses. He argued, however, that high social circles existed “in all societies, and the smaller the society, the more distinctly is the circle defined.” Dunlop, *Recollections*, 30-31.

<sup>6</sup> The final battle of the conflict, at New Orleans, would be fought January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1815.

<sup>7</sup> Other notable accounts include: John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993); William Hamilton Merritt, *Journal of Events Principally on the Detroit and Niagara Frontiers During the War of 1812* (St. Catharines: Historical Society, B.N.A., 1863); Major (John) Richardson, *War of 1812. First Series. Containing a Full and Detailed Narrative of the Operations of the Right Division, of the Canadian Army* (Brockville: n.p., 1842).

“drunken” enlisted soldiers, Irishmen, and “Indians” – has not only informed but indelibly coloured our modern perceptions.

### **Thesis.**

This thesis argues that alcohol consumption, both real and perceived, played a key role in the construction and negotiation of masculine identities within the British army in the Canadas during the early nineteenth century. Officers in particular proved their manliness and constructed their dual gentleman-officer identity not only by fighting well, but also by socializing and drinking well; by demonstrating what the famous moral essayist, Dr. Samuel Johnson, called “skill in inebriation,” or the “art of getting drunk.”<sup>8</sup> An officer’s capability or skill in drinking with his fellow gentlemen-officers denoted manliness, while habitual or public drunkenness had the opposite effect. His polite consumption in both public and private social settings defined him as a gentleman, while his strong consumption on the battlefield fortified his constitution and facilitated his performance as a warrior. His heavy consumption with peers established his place within a hierarchy of manliness, and his condemnation of the propensity for drink and the drunken comportment of his perceived social inferiors established his position atop larger gendered, classed, and racialized hierarchies in colonial society. Officers constructed their own masculine identity in direct relation to those with whom they interacted, and these identities were heavily informed by early nineteenth century perceptions of alcohol. The “manly,” “genteel,” “civilized” drinker was constructed in relation to the “savage,”

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *Life of [Samuel] Johnson* (New York: Oxford University Press, [1791] 2008), 1022.

“bestial” or “childlike” drunkard. In this case, officers fashioned a united White British elite identity in relation to the enlisted men under their command, to their American enemies, and to their Indigenous allies in the Haudenosaunee and Shawnee Confederacies.<sup>9</sup> In the post-war period, martial identities established during wartime were further reinforced, as veterans who published accounts of their experiences came to dominate the narrative and attempted to set the martial masculine standard. Their promotion of hard-drinking and skill in inebriation as the measure of a man increasingly came into conflict, however, with martial masculine ideals advanced by temperance-minded army reformers.

### **Historiography**

Histories of the British army in the War of 1812 or larger Napoleonic period are by no means new. Up until recently, however, gendered approaches to the topic were quite rare.<sup>10</sup> In a 2005 review of scholarship on the history of masculinity, circa 1650-1800, Karen Harvey noted that few studies had adequately explored the relationship between masculinity and war in this period, despite it being “clear [...] that military and naval campaigns had considerable impact on discussions of masculinity and politeness in particular.”<sup>11</sup> Leo Braudy’s *From*

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<sup>9</sup> The term “White,” used here, is understood as a social and cultural construction. The term “British” here refers to a collective national identity held by officers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, including Scotch, Irish, Welsh and English. Internally, officers from these various groups recognized each other as distinctly different. But when serving abroad, they saw themselves as representatives of the British Empire and defined a collective British identity in relation to their national rivals, military adversaries, and allies.

<sup>10</sup> The bulk of the scholarship has focused on traditional military-history themes and lines of enquiry; how operations were conducted, how the army functioned, and who had “saved Canada.”

<sup>11</sup> Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005), 308; Notable exceptions include Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes; British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994); Stefan Dudink and Karen Hagemann, eds., *Masculinities in Politics*

*Chivalry to Terrorism* (2003) had convincingly demonstrated that concepts of masculinity changed over time and by place, most especially in response to the demands of war.<sup>12</sup> But Braudy's focus was not limited to Britain, nor to a particular time period. He examined martial masculinities represented throughout Western literature, from antiquity to present day. Thus, it was not until 2010 that historians took up Harvey's call to study the relationship between masculinity and the British military of the long eighteenth century in earnest.

Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall's 2010 edited collection, *Gender, War and Politics* represents one of the first major works in the field.<sup>13</sup> The collection, building upon R. W. Connell's theory of multiple masculinities, and work by historians such as John Tosh, convincingly demonstrated that multiple martial masculinities existed within the British army – and indeed across all European armies of the era – that these masculinities varied by historical context (location, class, religion, race), and were continuously negotiated by current and former members of the military.<sup>14</sup> This foundational argument has since been adopted and forwarded by numerous other historians in the field.<sup>15</sup> The British army of eighteenth and early

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*and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: Was and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, [2003] 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, xiii.

<sup>13</sup> Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall, eds., *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, [2010] 2011).

<sup>14</sup> R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); R. W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (2005): 829-859; John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family, and Empire* (London: Routledge, [2005] 2016); See also Michèle Cohen and Tim Hitchcock, eds., *English Masculinities, 1660-1800* (New York: Longman, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Including Matthew McCormack, "Dance and Drill: Polite Accomplishments and Military Masculinities in Georgian Britain," *Cultural and Social History* 8, no. 3 (September 2011): 315-330; Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, eds., *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Gavin Daly, *The British Soldier in the Peninsular War: Encounters with Spain and Portugal, 1808-1814* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Kevin

nineteenth century has come to be recognized as “a particularly appropriate context for exploring the relationships of power and subordination which are intrinsic to the history of masculinity.”<sup>16</sup>

One sustained area of interest has been the relationship between civilian and martial masculinities. Scholars have questioned whether the two were inherently incompatible. For example, as Jennine Hurl-Eamon has shown, historians such as David Kent had argued that those men who enlisted in the King’s service were deserting their wives and families – an argument that operates under the assumption that these men could not fulfil both their domestic and martial masculine roles simultaneously.<sup>17</sup> Recent scholarship, however, has revealed significant continuities between the civilian and martial masculine identities, and Hurl-Eamon has challenged Kent’s findings in particular.<sup>18</sup> She has demonstrated that many men instead used military service “as a way to fulfill husbandly duties, not to avoid them.”<sup>19</sup> Louise Carter and Helen Metcalfe have similarly shown that military service did not necessarily prohibit the

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Linch and Matthew McCormack, eds. *Britain’s Soldiers: Rethinking War and Society, 1715-1815* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014); Jennine Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army in the Long Eighteenth Century: ‘The Girl I Left Behind Me,’* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service, Manhood in the King’s: Reaching Adulthood in the Eighteenth-Century British Army,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 163-190; Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack, “Wellington’s Men: The British Soldier of the Napoleonic Wars,” *History Compass* 13, no. 6 (June 2015): 288–296; Matthew McCormack, “Boots, Material Culture and Georgian Masculinities,” *Social History* 42, no. 4 (October 2017): 461–479; Michael Brown, Anna Maria Barry, and Joanne Begiato, eds., *Martial Masculinities: Experiencing and Imagining the Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> As argued by Kennedy and McCormack, *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> See Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives? Revisiting the Martial Character of Marital Desertion in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Journal of British Studies* 53, no. 2 (April 2014): 356-377.

<sup>18</sup> Hurl-Eamon, “Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives?”; Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*; Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service”; Julia Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife: Writing the History of the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 97, no. 3 (Sept. 2016): 315-345.

<sup>19</sup> Hurl-Eamon, “Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives?”, 356.

maintenance of familial connections, or the fulfilment of a patriarchal role, and that many common soldiers' and officers' notions of manhood indeed remained rooted in the domestic sphere.<sup>20</sup> Julia Roberts reveals that officers were particularly conscious “of the balance to be maintained between [their] duties and responsibilities as a family man and those to be embodied as a military man.”<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, historians Matthew McCormack, Catriona Kennedy, and Gavin Daly, among others, have shown that the elite civilian culture of politeness continued to dominate the social lives of gentlemen once they became officers, and that these men were fully expected to embody a dual gentleman-officer masculine identity as well.<sup>22</sup> This thesis reveals a similar continuity between civilian and martial spheres, and further explores the dual identity of the gentleman-officer in particular. It argues, in-line with Braudy's argument, that in many wartime situations, the latter identity took precedence over the former. Furthermore, this thesis suggests a continuity or flow of ideals in the inverse direction as well. While civilian ideals certainly had an impact on martial definitions of manhood, martial ideals also had an impact on civilian definitions during periods of war – and even in some post-war contexts.

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<sup>20</sup> Louise Carter, “Brothers in Arms? Military Masculinities and Family Feeling in Old Soldiers' Memoirs, 1793-1815,” in *Martial Masculinities: Experiencing and Imagining the Military in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Michael Brown, Anna Maria Barry, and Joanne Begiato (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 35-57; Helen Metcalfe, “Recalling the Comforts of Home: Bachelor Soldiers' Narratives of Nostalgia and the Re-Creation of the Domestic Interior,” in *Martial Masculinities*, 58-81.

<sup>21</sup> Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern's Wife,” 337.

<sup>22</sup> McCormack, “Dance and Drill”; Catriona Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle: Military Masculinity and the British Army Officer during the Napoleonic Wars,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hageman, Gisela Mettele and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 127-146; Gavin Daly, “Liberators and Tourists: British Soldiers in Madrid during the Peninsular War,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 117-135; Matthew McCormack, “Stamford Standoff: Honour, Status and Rivalry in the Georgian Military,” in *Britain's Soldiers: Rethinking War and Society, 1715-1815*, eds. Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014), 77-92.



Recent scholarship has come to focus on how various martial masculine identities – whether patriarchal, gentlemanly, or soldierly – were constructed, classed, and raced, and how the tension between competing masculinities, such as those rooted in the civilian vs the martial sphere, was negotiated when multiple identities were held simultaneously. Catriona Kennedy, for example, demonstrates how Napoleonic-era British army officers, particularly subaltern<sup>23</sup> officers of non-aristocratic origins fighting in the Peninsular War (1807-1814)<sup>24</sup> struggled to be “at once a gentleman, a soldier and an exemplar of British independence.”<sup>25</sup> She argues that they not only had to negotiate between competing masculine identities, but also found it challenging to fulfil romanticized expectations of martial manhood in face of the harsh realities of war. This thesis will demonstrate that officers stationed in the Canadas during the War of 1812 – subaltern and senior alike – faced similar expectations and challenges. It will also demonstrate, however, that their negotiation of masculine identities, and the reality of the Canadian situation, was uniquely different. Officers in the Canadas faced significantly different climate and terrain, were quartered in different conditions, interacted with different local populations, had different allies, and even fought a different enemy.

Recent scholarship, influenced by developments in the adjacent field of gender and empire, has also demonstrated that multiple competing martial masculine identities were often successfully negotiated or reconciled by constructing a united White British masculine identity

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<sup>23</sup> Junior officers below the rank of captain (ensigns and lieutenants).

<sup>24</sup> A theatre of the larger Napoleonic wars in which combined British, Spanish, and Portuguese forces fought to liberate the Iberian Peninsula from the French Empire.

<sup>25</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 142.

in relation to racialized and colonized “others.”<sup>26</sup> In colonial settings such as British India or North America, White British manliness was constructed in relation to, and as superior to, the imagined, racialized, and colonized “other,” and this dichotomy underpinned colonial rule.<sup>27</sup> For example, Mrinalini Sinha argues that in nineteenth century British India, the “manly” Englishman was constructed in relation to the “effeminate” Bengali.<sup>28</sup> Cecilia Morgan has examined the role which racial “othering” played in identity construction in this period in the Canadas, but her focus is on post-war civilian society.<sup>29</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, Catriona Kennedy and Gavin Daly – who have built upon Linda Colley’s foundational work on British national identity during this period – provide a more useful framework with their study of British officers’ “othering” of Iberians.<sup>30</sup> White British officers stationed on the

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<sup>26</sup> See Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The “Manly Englishman” and the “Effeminate” Bengali in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Philippa Levine, ed., *Gender, and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Erica Charters, “Making Bodies Modern: Race, Medicine and the Colonial Soldier in the Mid-Eighteenth Century,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 46, No. 3-4 (2012): 214-231; Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1837-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

<sup>27</sup> Kathleen Wilson, “Empire, Gender, and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 14-45; Catherine Hall, “Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century,” in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 46-76; Cecilia Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue in a Colonial Context: The War of 1812 and Its Aftermath in Upper Canada,” in *Gender, War and Politics*, 307-324; Gregory T. Knouff, “Masculinity, Race and Citizenship: Soldiers’ Memories of the American Revolution,” in *Gender, War and Politics*, 325-342; See also Harald Fischer-Tiné, “‘The Drinking Habits of our Countrymen’: European Alcohol Consumption and Colonial Power in British India,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 3 (September 2012): 383-408.

<sup>28</sup> Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 1-2.

<sup>29</sup> Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue in a Colonial Context”; Cecilia Morgan, “Remembering 1812 in the 1840s: John Richardson and the Writing of the War,” *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 29 (Autumn 2014): 39-69.

<sup>30</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle”; Gavin Daly, “‘Barbarity More Suited to Savages’: British Soldiers’ Views of Spanish and Portuguese Violence During the Peninsular War, 1808-1814,” *War and Society* 35, No. 4 (October, 2016): 242-258.

Peninsula deployed racialized tropes and constructed their own sense of self in relation to their Spanish and Portuguese allies in much the same fashion as they did with their Indian allies in British India, or their Indigenous allies in British North America. By focusing on the North American theatre of war, this thesis builds upon those studies by providing a novel analysis of White British officers' perceptions of their American enemy, rather than the French, and their Indigenous allies in British North America, rather than their Iberian allies on the Peninsula. Morgan's work has already shown that Indigenous veterans in Upper Canada were denied access to post-war definitions of manhood. My work adds to hers by exploring wartime constructions (and denials) as well.

A number of historians have already provided excellent studies of Upper Canadian civilian masculinities in the pre-Confederation period.<sup>31</sup> Catharine Wilson, for example, has examined how rural masculinities were constructed in competitive plowing matches.<sup>32</sup> Other historians of Upper Canada such as Nancy Christie, Cecilia Morgan, and Julia Roberts have similarly explored how domestic masculinities, religious masculinities, and public masculinities were constructed in spaces such as the home or colonial tavern.<sup>33</sup> But few have

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<sup>31</sup> Including Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women*; Kevin B. Wamsley and Robert S. Kossuth, "Fighting it Out in Nineteenth-Century Upper Canada/Canada West: Masculinities and Physical Challenges in the Tavern," *Journal of Sport History* 27, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 405-430; Lynne Marks, "Railing, Tattling, and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender, and Church Regulation in Upper Canada," *The Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (September 2000): 380-402; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Nancy Christie, *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Nancy M. Forestall, Kathryn M. McPherson and Cecilia Louise Morgan, eds., *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> Catharine Wilson, "A Manly Art: Plowing, Plowing Matches, and Rural Masculinity in Ontario, 1800-1930," *The Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 2 (June 2014): 157-186.

<sup>33</sup> See Christie, *Households of Faith*; Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women*; Roberts, *In Mixed Company*.

examined martial masculinities, even though current and former army officers made up a significant portion of the Upper Canadian population and played a major role in influencing societal and cultural norms.<sup>34</sup> This thesis will contribute to the Upper Canadian historiography by providing a study of officers, among them numerous prominent Upper Canadians such as William Dunlop, William Hamilton Merritt, and John Richardson.

In terms of source material and approach, recent scholarship on wartime martial masculinities in the Napoleonic period has focused predominately on socio-historical approaches, and the use of soldiers' writings to study their lived experiences and understandings of manhood. Catriona Kennedy, Gavin Daly, Neil Ramsey, and Jennine Hurl-Eamon have all demonstrated the value of using both officers and enlisted soldiers' journals, diaries, memoirs, and other writings for this purpose.<sup>35</sup> Ramsey and Daly, in particular, note that the 1820s and 30s saw a "revolution in soldiers' writings," much of it from Peninsular War veterans.<sup>36</sup> Lynch and McCormack, as well as historians of masculinity such as John Tosh, have argued that more socio-historical approaches such as these are needed to complement existing cultural approaches.<sup>37</sup> Tosh highlights that the benefit of such approaches is that they

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<sup>34</sup> Notable exceptions include Roberts, "John Galt and the Subaltern's Wife"; Morgan, "Remembering 1812 in the 1840s"; Renée Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate': Drink and Soldiering on Niagara's Wartime Frontier (1812-14)," *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013), 5-36.

<sup>35</sup> Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle"; Catriona Kennedy, "'True Brittons and Real Irish': Irish Catholics in the British Army During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars," in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 37-57; Daly, "Liberators and Tourists"; Neil Ramsey, "'A Real English Soldier': Suffering, Manliness and Class in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Soldiers' Tale," in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 136-155; Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*; Hurl-Eamon, "Youth in the Devil's Service."

<sup>36</sup> Ramsey, "'A Real English Soldier,'" 152; Daly, *The British Soldier*, 6.

<sup>37</sup> Kennedy and McCormack, *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 12; John Tosh, "The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?" In *What is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, eds. John H. Arnold and Sean Brady (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 25.

permit historians to assess what men considered to be manly in their own words, noting that there is often a discrepancy between cultural representations and lived experiences.<sup>38</sup> Cultural and literary studies of martial masculinity such as those undertaken by Cecilia Morgan, Neil Ramsey, and Julia Roberts are still common – some historians, such as Matthew McCormack, Karen Harvey, and Joanne Begiato have even begun to examine material culture – however, most authors now argue for combination of both social and cultural approaches.<sup>39</sup> This thesis will combine both socio-historical and cultural approaches, focusing primarily on the wartime and post-war writings of officers who served in the War of 1812. These writings have received considerably less attention than those by Peninsular War officers but hold similar value for historians of martial masculinity.

Recent scholarly interest in common soldiers' lived experiences has done much to correct stereotypes about British military men of the era. For example, the contemporary (mis)perception that common enlisted soldiers were the “dregs of society,” recruited exclusively from the urban poor. Edward Coss, Jennine Hurl-Eamon, and Renée Lafferty, however, have revealed that these men were often respectable and responsible family men,

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<sup>38</sup> Doug Peers, for example, has demonstrated that in British India, men did not always conform to gendered and racialized expectations of appropriate male sexual conduct. Douglas M. Peers, “Privates off Parade: Regimenting Sexuality in the Nineteenth-Century Indian Empire,” *The International History Review*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Dec. 1998): 791-1072.

<sup>39</sup> Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue in a Colonial Context”; Ramsey, “‘A Real English Soldier’”; Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife”; McCormack, “Boots, Material Culture and Georgian Masculinities”; Karen Harvey, “Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past & Present* 214, no. 1 (February 2012): 165-203; Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760–1900: Bodies, Emotion, and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

drawn from working class backgrounds.<sup>40</sup> Coss' study of enlistment records shows that many were labourers or other skilled tradesmen rather than criminals fleeing imprisonment. Hurl-Eamon has argued that many were "responsible patriarchs," rather than licentious bachelors.<sup>41</sup> Lafferty has demonstrated that these soldiers were not problematic inebriates, enlisted for drink, but rather were immersed in a culture which saw regular tipping as normal. This thesis engages with these various stereotypes, and considers their impact upon constructions of martial masculine identity. It reveals that British officers' perceptions of those whom they regarded as social (and racial) inferiors were inherently gendered and classed, and directly informed their self-perception.

This thesis also considers racialized stereotypes of Indigenous peoples, specifically the Haudenosaunee and Shawnee allies of the British who fought in the War of 1812. Renée Lafferty and Julia Roberts have addressed the stereotype of the "drunken Indian" in their own analyses, but more work is needed.<sup>42</sup> This thesis seeks to challenge British officers' characterizations of their Indigenous allies as "drunken" and "savage," by exposing the hypocrisy behind these racialized constructions. It will demonstrate that these descriptions of Indigenous warriors reveal more about British officers' perceptions of self and of others, than any reality about Indigenous peoples.

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<sup>40</sup> Edward Coss, *All for the King's Shilling: The British Soldier under Wellington, 1808-1814* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015); Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*; Hurl-Eamon, "Youth in the Devil's Service"; Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate.'"

<sup>41</sup> Hurl-Eamon, "Youth in the Devil's Service," 183-184.

<sup>42</sup> Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate,'" 31, fn. 12; Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 101-119.

## Methodology

This thesis takes a unique approach to the history of British martial masculinity by considering the role which alcohol consumption and contemporary drink culture played in the construction and negotiation of martial masculine identities. It argues, as Michael Brown, Joanne Begiato, and Anna Barry have argued, that martial masculinities in this period were reinforced through everyday performance and situates drinking as a particular performance of martial masculine identity.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, this thesis regards drinking between officers as primarily a homosocial performance, in which quantity of consumption, self-control, and drunken comportment were key.<sup>44</sup> Michael Kimmel, John Tosh, and Philip Carter have argued that it is in homosocial performances where men primarily construct their masculine identity, in relation to other men, and heavy drinking within the Napoleonic-era British army was indeed an almost exclusively male activity.<sup>45</sup>

Scholars from various disciplines have already shown the value of using drink as a lens through which to study the history of masculinities.<sup>46</sup> Social anthropologist Dimitra Gefou-

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<sup>43</sup> Brown and Begiato, "Introduction," in *Martial Masculinities*, 32.

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of drunken comportment, see Craig MacAndrew and Robert B. Edgerton, *Drunken Comportment: A Social Explanation* (Clinton Corners, N.Y.: Percheron Press, [1969] 2003).

<sup>45</sup> Michael S. Kimmel, *The History of Men: Essays on the History of American and British Masculinities* (New York: University of New York Press, 2005), 7; Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, 5-6; Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001), 5.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Dietler, "Alcohol: Anthropological/Archaeological Perspectives," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35, no. 1 (2006), 235-236; Susanne Schmid and Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp, eds., *Drink in the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, [2014] 2016); Dimitra Gefou-Madianou, ed., *Alcohol, Gender and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Brian P. Hinote and Gretchen R. Webber, "Drinking Toward Manhood: Masculinity and Alcohol in the Former USSR," *Men and Masculinities* 15, no. 3 (2012): 292-310; Craig Heron, "The Boys and Their Booze: Masculinities and Public Drinking in Working-class Hamilton, 1890-1946," *The Canadian Historical Review* 86, no. 3 (September 2005): 411-452; Charles Ludington, "'Claret is the Liquor for Boys; Port for Men': How Port Became the 'Englishman's Wine,' 1750s to 1800," *Journal of British Studies* 48,

Madianou's edited collection *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, for example, convincingly demonstrates that what one drank, how they drank it, with whom, and where, were all factors which influenced gendered identity construction.<sup>47</sup> Within the collection, an article by fellow social anthropologist Adrian Peace argues that rural Irish fishermen in Clontarf made "competitive bids" to prove themselves tough and manly through the consumption of alcohol with other male fishermen in local bars.<sup>48</sup> Another by cultural anthropologist Henk Driessen similarly notes that rural Spanish men in Andalusia in the 1970s drank competitively in homosocial gatherings to assert their identity as men and power over women.<sup>49</sup> Gefou-Madianou's own article argues that rural Greek men in Messogia drank heavily, often to the point of drunkenness, in coffeehouses and wine cellars in order to establish their masculine identity and assert their power over women, who were only permitted to drink sweet, lower-strength wine, and not "manly" retsina.<sup>50</sup> In a more recent contribution, sociologists Brian Hinote and Gretchen Webber have shown that Soviet-era Russian men of the working class expressed their manhood, asserted power over women and inferior men, and reaffirmed their working-class identity through heavy drinking, particularly in the workplace.<sup>51</sup> Roberts argues

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no. 2 (April 2009): 364-390; Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

<sup>47</sup> Gefou-Madianou, "Introduction: Alcohol Commensality, Identity Transformations and Transcendence," *Alcohol, Gender, and Culture*, 1-34; See also Schmid and Schmidt-Haberkamp, *Drink in the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century*, 1.

<sup>48</sup> Adrian Peace, "No Fishing Without Drinking: The Construction of Social Identity in Rural Ireland," in *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, 167-180

<sup>49</sup> Henk Driessen, "Drinking on Masculinity: Alcohol and Gender in Andalusia," in *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, 71-79.

<sup>50</sup> Dimitra Gefou-Madianou, "Exclusion and Unity, Retsina and Sweet Wine: Commensality and Gender in a Greek Agrotown," in *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, 108-136.

<sup>51</sup> Hinote and Webber, "Drinking Toward Manhood," 292.



that men did so similarly in Upper Canadian taverns, with rituals of “treating” binding men together through a common sense of masculinity and enhancing their social power to exclude “others,” including women.<sup>52</sup> This thesis also considers the exertion of power over women as a central aspect of martial manhood, however, given the demographics of the military in this period, it is primarily concerned with men exerting power over other men, and how they defined their manhood relative to one another.

Craig Heron has demonstrated that the consumption of alcohol was an important part of creating and defining groups and classes within Canadian history as well; that drinking “has long been part of the process of constructing distinct masculine identities and practices, and it has been a symbol of patriarchal privilege in the public sphere.”<sup>53</sup> For example, Heron argues that public drinking spaces such as the saloon or beverage room were primary sites of working-class masculine identity construction and negotiation in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Hamilton, and that within these spaces men established their manhood by drinking together with other men.<sup>54</sup> He also argues, as does Lafferty, that this was a manhood rooted in responsible domesticity, and that moderation characterized consumption, rather than drunkenness. The same can be said of working-class soldiers who served in the War of 1812, despite characterizations to the contrary. Officers, on the other hand, often drank to the point of drunkenness as a demonstration of elite masculine privilege and power. Charles Ludington provides an analysis of the class-specific drinking habits of elite British men in both public and

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<sup>52</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 87-88.

<sup>53</sup> Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 6-9, 15.

<sup>54</sup> Heron, “The Boys and Their Booze,” 411.

private settings in eighteenth-century Britain.<sup>55</sup> He demonstrates, for example, that the consumption of particular types of wine denoted “aristocratic, gentle, and middling social status,” in public settings, and that “the willingness and ability to drink a great deal of alcohol was proof of one’s masculinity,” in more private, homosocial settings.<sup>56</sup> As this thesis demonstrates, this was also the case with gatherings of gentlemen-officers during the War of 1812.

Alcohol has also been shown to have played a key role in the establishment of racialized gender identities and hierarchies in Canadian history. Craig Heron, for example, notes that White settlers of European backgrounds characterized Indigenous men’s drinking as drunkenness, and took this as evidence of racial and masculine inferiority.<sup>57</sup> This label validated the restriction of Indigenous peoples’ access to alcohol, effectively creating rigid racial hierarchies within Canadian society.<sup>58</sup> Julia Roberts has considered how these racial hierarchies were negotiated in the public space of Upper Canadian taverns, both through the consumption and restriction of alcohol.<sup>59</sup> But neither Roberts, nor Heron, nor Ludington have examined the role which alcohol played in the construction and negotiation of classed and raced martial masculine identities within the British army stationed in the Canadas.

Renée Lafferty has considered the relationship between alcohol and masculinity in the British army during the War of 1812. Her 2013 article, published in the *Journal for the Social*

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<sup>55</sup> Ludington, “Claret is the Liquor for Boys”; Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*.

<sup>56</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 183; See also Erica Wald, “Governing the Bottle: Alcohol, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century India,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46, no. 3 (2018), 407.

<sup>57</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 11.

<sup>58</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 11.

<sup>59</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 101-119.

*History of Alcohol and Drugs*, entitled “The Vice of Cold Climates: Drink and Soldiering on Niagara’s War-Time Frontier (1812-14),” argues that liquor was not a “uniformly destructive or disruptive force,” as has often been assumed,<sup>60</sup> but rather that the moderate consumption of alcohol was an integral part of military life, medicine, ritual, and culture in this period.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, Lafferty demonstrates that the consumption of liquor was, in certain contexts, a means by which soldiers established their martial manhood – and conversely, that habitual or problematic drunkenness had the opposite effect.<sup>62</sup> This thesis builds upon her work by undertaking a more extensive gendered analysis. It considers recent developments and scholarship within the field and provides more discussion of officers and codes of politeness, answering Harvey’s call. It also gives greater consideration to racialized identities and stereotypes of Indigenous allies, which are rooted in early nineteenth-century perceptions of alcohol. Finally, it will extend the scope of the analysis to also consider the immediate post-war period, during which most officers’ accounts of the war were published. This analysis will reveal how martial masculinities shifted in response to the demands of both war, and peace.

Research for this thesis began where most Canadian studies of the War of 1812 begin, with the official documentation pertaining to the war such as general orders, official correspondence, and records of courts-martial. This documentary evidence is widely available

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<sup>60</sup> For example, in Martin R. Howard, “Red Jackets and Red Noses: Alcohol and the British Napoleonic Soldier,” *Journal of The Royal Society of Medicine* 93, no. 1 (January 2000): 38-41; Paul E. Kopperman, “‘The Cheapest Pay’: Alcohol Abuse in the Eighteenth-Century British Army,” *Journal of Military History* 60, no. 3 (July 1996): 445-470; Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398-399; Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012): 815-56.

<sup>61</sup> Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate,’” 6-7.

<sup>62</sup> Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate,’” 6-7.

through Library and Archives Canada, and in published collections by Ernest Alexander Cruikshank and William Wood.<sup>63</sup> These documents have been used extensively by military historians for traditional military history purposes such as the study of particular military actions – but they provide other value as well. Within the documentary evidence we can see the transmission and negotiation of gendered ideals. General orders, for example, directives which were read and explained to men of all regiments by their respective commanding officer “at three successive parades after such orders [were] given,” transmitted certain expectations set by military command.<sup>64</sup> These orders promoted certain desired behaviours, such as an adherence to duty or bravery in combat as particularly manly qualities for soldiers to embody. For example, a General Order read to the troops at Chippewa in 1813 prior to the raid on Black Rock and Buffalo, which reminded them that “intoxication in the presence of an Enemy, let it be remembered, is not only the most disgraceful, but the most dangerous crime which a soldier can commit – the man who wilfully disqualifies himself from meeting his Enemy, by whatever means, cannot be considered as a brave man.”<sup>65</sup> In this way, general orders effectively enforced a particular code of masculine conduct.

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<sup>63</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, *General Regulations and Orders for the Army*, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1811 (London: W. Clowes, 1811); *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series). Library and Archives Canada; E. A. Cruikshank, ed. *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier...*, 8 Vols. (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1896-1908); William Wood, ed., *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, 3 vols. (Publications of the Champlain Society, 13-15, 17. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920-28).

<sup>64</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, *General Regulations and Orders for the Army*, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1811 (London: W. Clowes, 1811), 98.

<sup>65</sup> “General Order. Head Quarters, Chippewa, 28th December 1813,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, Vol. II, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920), 508-509.

This was especially the case with the findings of general courts-martial, which were included in the general orders of the Horse Guards. The Horse Guards served as the primary military authority in this period under the Commander-in-Chief, and their office kept an accounting in each case of the name of the offender, the charges brought against them, the findings of the court, and comments on sentencing. A number of these summaries are available through Library and Archives Canada.<sup>66</sup> This dissertation examined over one hundred of these records across five volumes, covering general courts-martial held between 1790 to 1818. Thirty-six relevant Canadian cases were identified, five of which featured drink related offences. An additional two Canadian cases were located in *Canadiana* archival holdings online, and another eighteen within an edited collection published in 1820 by contemporary military author Charles James.<sup>67</sup> James provided a selection of cases from across the Empire, which he intended to be representative of typical cases and instructive for new officers.<sup>68</sup> These cases reveal not only the transmission of masculine ideals, but also negotiation on the part of all involved.

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<sup>66</sup> *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series). Library and Archives Canada. Vol. 164, (1790-1810), Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2773. Vol. 164a [165], (1811-1814), Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2773. Vol. 166, (1814-1815), Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774. Vol. 167, (1815), Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774. Vol. 168, (1816-1818), Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774; See also Tom Fournier, "Regimental Court Martials – A Sample from the 103rd Regiment in 1812," *Forty-First Regiment Blog* (Accessed October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>67</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial, Holden at Quebec, for the Trial of Lieutenant Benoit Bender, of the 41st Regiment of Foot, in July, 1815*. CIHM/ICMH microfiche series; no. 10896. Montreal: Printed by J. Lane ..., 1817. <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/ocihm.10896>; *Proceedings of a Court Martial, [Holden] at Montreal, in March, 1809*. CIHM/ICMH microfiche series; no. 92392. [Montréal? : s.n., 1809?]. <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/ocihm.92392>; Charles James, ed., *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority...* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820).

<sup>68</sup> James, *A Collection of the Charges*, x, xvi.

There were three levels of courts-martial within the army at this period; regimental, district or garrison, and general.<sup>69</sup> Each had different levels of authority, dealt with different types of cases, and issued different types of punishments. Minor crimes committed by enlisted soldiers, such as drunkenness or disorderly conduct, were typically tried by regimental courts-martial. District or garrison level courts-martial had the authority to charge non-commissioned officers (NCOs)<sup>70</sup> in addition to privates<sup>71</sup>, and typically dealt with more serious crimes such as insulting or striking an officer. General courts-martial dealt exclusively with crimes by officers, or offences by enlisted and NCOs which warranted major punishments such as transportation to a penal colony, or capital punishment.<sup>72</sup> Alcohol consumption was a common factor in cases at all levels.<sup>73</sup>

General courts-martial were presided over by no less than thirteen senior officers from various regiments, and a judge advocate. Final authority rested, however, with the commander-in-chief, who had to confirm (or reject) both the findings and the sentence before it was carried out.<sup>74</sup> In the findings of the court, in their recommendations for sentencing and possible clemency, and in the commentary by the commander-in-chief upon his own decision, we can

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<sup>69</sup> For a detailed explanation of courts-martial, see Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 411; John R. Grodzinski, "'Bloody Provost': Discipline During the War of 1812," *Canadian Military History* 16, Iss. 4, Art. 3, (April 2012): 25-32; Douglas M. Peers, "Discipline and Publish: Military Law, Punishments, and the Negotiation of Order and Honour in the Company Era," (Unpublished, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

<sup>70</sup> Corporals and Sergeants, men who had been promoted from the ranks to positions of leadership but were still subordinate to commissioned officers.

<sup>71</sup> The rank of common enlisted soldiers.

<sup>72</sup> For example, desertion under arms.

<sup>73</sup> As noted by Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate,'" 17-18; Holmes, *Redcoat*, 413; Peers, "Discipline and Publish," n.p.

<sup>74</sup> He could reduce the punishment, but could not increase it, nor could he overrule a finding of not guilty, although he could send the case back to the court to be reconsidered.

see the negotiation of martial masculine ideals. Just as in other general orders, certain behaviours were praised or deemed acceptable, and others were condemned. By this process, class-specific expectations of what it meant to be a gentleman and an officer were defined, and through the general orders transmitted to the army as a whole. Douglas Peers has demonstrated the value of using courts-martial records in his work on nineteenth-century British India.<sup>75</sup> Eamon O’Keefe has done so similarly for the Canadian records from the Napoleonic era, but as of 2016 noted that they were still widely underutilized by historians, “despite their promise as historical sources.”<sup>76</sup>

In addition to the official documentary evidence pertaining to the war, this thesis examines writings by officers who served, specifically commissioned officers.<sup>77</sup> This includes correspondence, wartime journals and diaries, post-war memoirs, and other publications. Of primary importance are Dunlop’s published *Recollections*, the wartime diary of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, which has been transcribed and published by historian Donald Graves, and the post-war writings of Upper Canadian soldier-turned-novelist “Major” John Richardson.<sup>78</sup> Other notable works include Assistant Surgeon John Douglas’ *Medical Topography of Upper*

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<sup>75</sup> See Peers, “Discipline and Publish,” n.p.

<sup>76</sup> Eamonn O’Keefe, “‘Such Want of Gentlemanly Conduct:’ The General Court Martial of Lieutenant John de Hertel,” *Canadian Military History* 25, no. 2 (2016), 24.

<sup>77</sup> As opposed to non-commissioned officers (corporals and sergeants), who, like enlisted men, rarely wrote accounts of their service.

<sup>78</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*; Richardson, *War of 1812*; John Richardson, *A Canadian Campaign; by a British Officer* (London: Henry Colburn, 1826-1827); Major John Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada; Embracing a Review of the Administrations of Lords Durham and Sydenham, Sir Chas. Bagot, and Lord Metcalfe; and Including Numerous Interesting Letters from Lord Durham, Mr. Chas. Buller, and other Well-Known Public Characters* (Montreal: H. H. Cunningham, 1847); [John Richardson], “Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment,” *The United Service Magazine* no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1846); John Richardson, *Operations of the Right Division of the Army of Upper Canada, During the American War of 1812* (Brockville, 1842).

*Canada*, which documents the experiences of his regiment in the Canadas during the war, Militia Captain William Hamilton Merritt's wartime journal, and an edited collection of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock's correspondence, compiled and published by his nephew, Ferdinand Brock Tupper.<sup>79</sup> Brock's correspondence, along with correspondence between a number of senior officers can also be found in the official documentary evidence of the war, as compiled and edited by E. A. Cruikshank and William Wood, respectively.<sup>80</sup>

As noted, primary accounts from officers who served in the Peninsular War have been well-utilized by historians of martial masculinity for the study of lived experiences and understandings of manhood. In comparison to writings from Peninsular War officers, however, there are relatively few accounts from officers who served in the War of 1812 (and even fewer from enlisted men).<sup>81</sup> Those accounts which have survived, however, are particularly rich in depth. They include not only descriptions of military actions, but of the experiences of these men in general; their interactions with and assumptions about colonial society, their American enemies, and Indigenous allies. The accounts reveal what was considered heroic and manly in the colonial Canadian context specifically. For example, we see that men stationed in the

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<sup>79</sup> John Douglas, *Medical Topography of Upper Canada* (London: Burgess and Hill, 1819); Merritt, *Journal of Events*; Ferdinand Brock Tupper, ed. *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845; Project Gutenberg eBook #14428, 2004); See also Janet Carnochan, *Reminiscences of Niagara*, (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 11); E. A. Cruikshank, ed. *Records of Niagara 1812 to 1813* (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 43, Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Historical Society, n.d.)

<sup>80</sup> E. A. Cruikshank, ed. *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier*, 8 Vols. (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1896-1908); William Wood, ed., *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, 3 vols. (Publications of the Champlain Society, 13-15, 17. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920-28).

<sup>81</sup> One notable exception is Shadrach Byfield, *A Narrative of a Light Company Soldier's Service in the Forty-First Regiment of Foot, 1807-1814*, (Bradford: John Bubb, 1840; Reprinted by William Abbatt, 1910).



Canadas more often expressed their manhood by writing about non-combat feats of strength and endurance, rather than their achievements on the battlefield.

It is important to recognize, however, that using these types of sources can be deceptively problematic. The prejudices, assumptions, and anxieties of these British officers infect their writing, often invisibly. When discussing alcohol and drunkenness, in particular, they utilize language which assumes that their social inferiors are people who must be managed and controlled, people whose characters and natures are somehow inherently inferior. The gendered, classed, and racialized context within which these accounts were written must therefore be carefully considered, as well as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century perceptions of alcohol. Once this is accomplished, the sources are particularly revealing of how officers constructed, maintained, and understood their own masculine identity, especially in relation to others.

### **Chapter Outline.**

The first chapter of this dissertation examines continuities of civilian masculinities within the martial sphere. Specifically, it considers to what degree military men (including enlisted men, NCOs, and commissioned officers) were beholden to domestic ideals of masculinity. It asks, how did they construct or maintain their identity as husbands, fathers, and brothers while in service, far from home? And, given that heavy drinking was antithetical to domestic ideals of responsible manhood, how much did common soldiers actually drink? Why were they perceived as habitual drunkards? To answer these questions, Chapter One explores officers' characterizations of the enlisted men under their command found in correspondence,

diaries, memoirs, and other accounts, and compares these with official army records, general orders, and officer accounts in order to get a sense of how much soldiers were actually drinking. It explains why these soldiers were generally cast as problematic inebriates and licentious, adolescent “bachelors,” despite ample evidence to the contrary. Finally, it highlights ways in which men were able to achieve responsible adult manhood while in service, including by regulating their own consumption of alcohol or the consumption of those under their command.

Chapter Two also examines continuities of civilian masculinities within the martial sphere but focuses on commissioned officers specifically (NCOs did not have the same claim to refinement or gentility). It considers to what degree these officers were beholden to class-specific ideals of gentlemanly masculinity. It asks, were all officers considered to be or expected to act as gentlemen? How did they construct or negotiate their polite, refined, gentlemanly identity while at war? What role did alcohol consumption play in establishing that identity? To answer these questions, Chapter Two explores officers’ descriptions of social engagements which they attended while in service in the Canadas, found in their correspondence, memoirs, and other accounts. It evaluates their polite social performances in public with local gentlemen and ladies, in rituals of conspicuous consumption, as well as heavy drinking among peers in the private space of the officers’ mess. It considers how officers presented and perceived themselves, their fellow officers, and the local “high society” with whom they mingled.

Chapter Three focuses on martial masculinity within the martial sphere exclusively. It considers how gentlemen-turned-officers, as well as husbands-turned-soldiers, constructed their martial masculine identity as “warriors” during periods of war. It asks, what qualities

were valued by men at war? Did this warrior identity take precedence over other masculinities by necessity to successfully wage war? Did this identity conflict with domestic and gentlemanly ideals? And, as ever, what role did alcohol consumption play in forging and maintaining this identity? To answer these questions, Chapter Three explores what qualities were broadcast to the troops as particularly soldierlike and manly through General Orders and Courts-Martial, and which qualities were praised by officers in their writings. Also, conversely, which qualities were undesired and condemned by military authorities as particularly unsoldierlike, or unbecoming an officer. It considers how alcohol recruited desired qualities, such as courage, and facilitated manly performances in the harsh conditions faced by soldiers stationed in the Canadas. But also, how public or habitual displays of drunkenness were readily associated with male weakness.

Chapter Four returns to themes of “othering” and perceptions of drunkenness raised in the first chapter. But rather than focus on the othering of British (and Irish) enlisted soldiers, it considers how officers constructed their racialized masculine identity as White, British Christians in relation to their American enemies, and especially their Indigenous allies in Upper Canada. It asks, how are characterizations of the two groups similar, and how are they different? Why are Indigenous peoples more often described as “savage,” and “drunken”? What does this tell us about how officers perceived themselves, and their own drinking habits? To answer these questions, Chapter Four explores descriptions of “Indians” found in the writings of British officers and compares these with descriptions of American soldiers and officers, as well as the Portuguese and Spanish allies of the British in the Peninsular War. It also examines writings from Upper Canadian civilians and militiamen who directly refute

negative characterizations made by officers regarding an assumed “Indian” propensity for drink and drunkenness. It considers how British officers constructed their own racialized martial masculine identity as White, “civilized,” and superior, by denigrating the racialized “other.”

The fifth and final chapter wraps up by exploring how martial masculine ideals and understandings of manhood within the army, and British-Canadian society in general, shifted in the post-war period. It considers how a host of factors, including the onset of peace, the rapid professionalization of the army, the rise of the middle-class, and the growth of the Temperance movement all impacted officers’ perceptions of self, and of others. Did warrior-like definitions of martial manhood which had become dominant in wartime lose sway in peacetime? Did the once exclusively aristocratic officer ranks continue to be penetrated by men of lower and lower station? Were officers still expected to act as gentlemen? How did this new breed of officers view the old, and vice versa? Did they drink as conspicuously, as heavily? Did temperance ideologies have an impact on military culture and martial definitions of manhood? To answer these questions, Chapter Five explores the post-war writings of officers who served in the Canadas during the War of 1812, including memoirs, recollections, and other accounts written later in life, as well as contributions to *The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine* (USJ). Many of these provide useful reflections upon how the army had changed from their time in service, and how military men had changed along with it. This chapter considers, in particular, how perceptions of alcohol shifted in the post-war period, and how those perceptions impacted martial masculine performances of conspicuous or heavy drinking.

But first, we must look back to the “rum ration”<sup>82</sup> mentioned by Dunlop at the outset of this introduction, and turn our attention to a consideration of the drinking habits of regular soldiers stationed in the Canadas during the war...

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<sup>82</sup> A daily allowance of rum given to soldiers in the British army.

## Chapter 1 - Enlisted Soldiers

Sir Arthur Wellesley,<sup>1</sup> speaking of the army under his command in the Peninsular War, famously (or perhaps infamously) remarked that it was “composed of the scum of the earth – the mere scum of the earth. The British soldiers are fellows who have enlisted for drink—that is the plain fact—they have all enlisted for drink.”<sup>2</sup> Historians have recently challenged Wellington’s sweeping indictment of the men under his command, pointing to its classed and racialized assumptions.<sup>3</sup> Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack have specifically noted that the quote is often taken out of context, and that while the former comment was indeed a reference to the “humble social origins” of common soldiers, Wellington went on to boast that the army had made them “fine fellows.”<sup>4</sup> Many of Wellington’s fellow officers, however, were not as generous. Colonel David Roberts of the 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot, for example, wrote that:

This [characterization of soldiers] is a melancholy truth. The immorality of the British Soldier is disgusting, and it is only by strict attention and severe discipline it is at all kept within bounds [...] For the purpose of getting Liquor, the invincible British Soldier will commit every species of depredation: he will rob a House,

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<sup>1</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Wellington, who commanded the British army during the Napoleonic Wars.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Wellesley, “Letter from Portugal, 1811,” in *The Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations*, ed. Robert Heintz (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> For example, Edward J. Coss and Jennine Hurl-Eamon have challenged the perception that common soldiers were drawn from, or acted like, the scum of the earth: Edward J. Coss, *All for the King’s Shilling: the British Soldier Under Wellington, 1808-1814* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 3; Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives? Revisiting the Martial Character of Marital Desertion in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Journal of British Studies* 53, no. 2 (April 2014), 357; Renée Lafferty has challenged the idea that they enlisted for drink: Renée Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate:’ Drink and Soldiering on Niagara’s Wartime Frontier (1812-14),” *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013), 13.

<sup>4</sup> Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack, “Wellington’s Men: The British Soldier of the Napoleonic Wars,” *History Compass* 13, no. 6 (June 2015): 289.

plunder a Church, steal from his Comrade, and strip his own Officer in the midst of death and slaughter.<sup>5</sup>

This perception of the common British soldier as “drunken” or prone to drink was commonly held by officers not just on the Peninsula, but across the Empire.<sup>6</sup> In Upper Canada, for example, we find similar characterizations. Captain Charles Roberts of the 10<sup>th</sup> Royal Veterans Battalion, writing from Michilimackinac in 1812, noted that: “The men I have here, tho' always ready to obey my orders are so debilitated and worn down by unconquerable drunkenness that neither the fear of punishment, the love of fame or the honor of their Country can animate them to extraordinary exertions.”<sup>7</sup> But how accurate are these representations of soldiers? A critical analysis of primary documents pertaining to the war, such as General Orders, records of Courts-Martial, and official correspondence, reveal that the idea of the “drunken soldier” was a social and cultural construction held by officers, and was not representative of the enlisted men who served in the Canadas during the War of 1812. Instead, these characterizations reveal more about the officers expressing them, than the soldiers being characterized.

The first half of Wellington’s assessment of common soldiers, that they were the “scum of the earth,” has been largely disproven by historians of the British army in recent years.<sup>8</sup> For

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<sup>5</sup> David Roberts, *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome. With an Account of his Campaign on the Peninsula and in Pall Mall* (London: Methuen and Co., [1816] 1904. Project Gutenberg eBook #44201, 2013), fn. 37, 21.

<sup>6</sup> For example, Erica Wald has shown that European soldiers in India were perceived by military and medical authorities as “constitutionally predisposed to drink”: Erica Wald, “Governing the Bottle: Alcohol, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century India,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46, no. 3 (2018), 398-399.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Roberts, “Roberts at Michilimackinac to Glegg at - Fort Michilimackinac, 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1812,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. I, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society, 13 (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920), 440.

<sup>8</sup> See Kevin Linch, *Britain and Wellington’s Army: Recruitment, Society and Tradition, 1807–1815* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 90; Linch and McCormack, “Wellington’s Men,” 289-290.

example, Edward Coss' study of enlistment and regimental records has demonstrated that a significant number of soldiers were drawn from the artisan classes and respectable trades, rather than the labouring poor. He argues that "the British ranker's need to belong, not his base nature" drove his actions.<sup>9</sup> Jennine Hurl-Eamon has presented a similarly positive image of the British soldier in the long eighteenth century. She argues that a significant number of British soldiers were responsible, dedicated family men, rather than rogues and licentious bachelors as they were oft perceived and portrayed.<sup>10</sup> With regards to the second half of Wellington's assessment, however, that British soldiers had "enlisted for drink," historians of the British army have more often supported this claim than challenged it.<sup>11</sup> Paul Kopperman, for example, offers Wellington's claim as evidence that in the British army of the period "alcohol abuse was

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<sup>9</sup> Coss, *All for the King's Shilling*, 28.

<sup>10</sup> See Hurl-Eamon, "Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives?"; Jennine Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army in the Long Eighteenth Century: 'The Girl I Left Behind Me,'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Jennine Hurl-Eamon, "Youth in the Devil's Service, Manhood in the King's: Reaching Adulthood in the Eighteenth-Century British Army," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 163-190; See also, Donald E. Graves, *Red Coats & Grey Jackets: The Battle of Chippawa, 5 July, 1814* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996), 34.

<sup>11</sup> Beginning with C.W.C Oman, *Wellington's Army, 1809-1814* (London: Edward Arnold, 1913), 212-217; See also, Michael Snape, *The Redcoat and Religion: The Forgotten History of the British Soldier from the Age of Marlborough to the Eve of the First World War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 81-82; Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldiers and War in the Americas, 1755-1763* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 105; With a notable exception being Lafferty, "The Vice of a Cold Climate,"<sup>13</sup> Lafferty notes that anecdotal stories of drunken soldiers are found throughout histories of the War of 1812, including Pierre Berton, *The Invasion of Canada and Flames Across the Border* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980, 1981); Donald Graves, *Where Right and Glory Lead! The Battle of Lundy's Lane, 1814*, Revised Edition (Montreal: Robin Brass Studios, 1997); Donald Graves, *Fields of Glory: The Battle of Chrysler's Farm, 1813* (Montreal: Robin Brass Studios, 1999); Donald Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Jon Latimer, *1812: War With America* (London: Belknap Press, 2007); Robert Malcomson, *A Very Brilliant Affair: The Battle of Queenston Heights* (Montreal: Robin Brass Studios, 2003); Wesley Turner, *The War of 1812: The War That Both Sides Won*, Second Edition (Toronto: Dundurn, 2000); Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010).



the rule, sobriety the exception,” and that “most soldiers were habitual drunkards.”<sup>12</sup> Even Hurl-Eamon notes that “alcoholism was endemic in the corps of the British army, recognized by officers and civilians alike as something to which soldiers were particularly susceptible.”<sup>13</sup> War of 1812 historian, John Latimer, notes that “drunkenness – long the bane of the British army – was another chronic problem,” in the Canadas specifically.<sup>14</sup>

As argued by Craig Heron and Renée Lafferty, however, when we examine soldiers’ drinking in this period, we must first consider our own historical bias.<sup>15</sup> Heron notes that “it is difficult to make definitive statements about ‘normal,’ ‘acceptable,’ or ‘excessive’ levels of drinking,” because “across time among different social groups, people have had such different understandings about when, where, and how much to drink that their judgements have to be situated carefully in time.”<sup>16</sup> He notes that “understandings of the ‘appropriate’ place of alcohol in society and what constituted ‘respectable’ consumption” were heavily dependent “on a range of overlapping divisions of race, class, caste and gender.”<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Lafferty reminds us that our modern perceptions of alcohol have been significantly influenced by

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<sup>12</sup> Paul E. Kopperman, “‘The Cheapest Pay’: Alcohol Abuse in the Eighteenth-Century British Army,” *Journal of Military History* 60, no. 3 (July 1996), 449, 460; As does Martin R. Howard, “Red Jackets and Red Noses: Alcohol and the British Napoleonic Soldier,” *Journal of The Royal Society of Medicine* 93, no. 1 (January 2000), 38.

<sup>13</sup> She adds that “military culture probably just reflected civilian culture in its alcoholism.” Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 207-208, 209.

<sup>14</sup> Jon Latimer, *1812: War with America* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 2009), 36.

<sup>15</sup> Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate,’” 6-8, 9-11; Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 13-14, 48; see also Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 88.

<sup>16</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 13.

<sup>17</sup> Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398.

nineteenth-century temperance and prohibition movements, and the presumption “that alcohol was a uniformly destructive and disruptive force.”<sup>18</sup>

Prior to the 1820s, however, North American colonists widely held that moderate consumption of alcohol was beneficial, and most consumed it as a part of normal daily life. Historian Julia Roberts estimates that the average North American adult male drank slightly more than a gill (~4oz) per day, and that men were perfectly sober after a couple glasses.<sup>19</sup> Early nineteenth-century British naval physician, Thomas Trotter, reported even higher amounts; that the average “sober American laborer” drank two gills of rum before breakfast, three before dinner, and another three by the time the day’s work was done, in addition to “what he drinks in porter houses, clubs, and other meetings in the evening.”<sup>20</sup> The medical community, especially Trotter, whose work was one of the first to highlight the negative health effects of habitual drunkenness, did recognize that excessive consumption of distilled spirits could be potentially harmful to ones’ health.<sup>21</sup> However, wine and liquor were simultaneously

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<sup>18</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 6.

<sup>19</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 89-90; See also Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 10-11; Heron, *Booze*, 51; Rev. M. A. Garland and J. J. Talman, “Pioneer Drinking Habits and the Rise of the Temperance Agitation in Upper Canada Prior to 1840,” in *Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Ontario: Essays Presented to James J. Talman*, eds. F. H. Armstrong, H. A. Stevenson, J. D. Wilson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 172.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Trotter, *An Essay, Medical, Philosophical, and Chemical, on Drunkenness: And Its Effects on the Human Body* (Boston: Published by Bradford & Read; and A. Finley, Philadelphia, 1813), 160; Lafferty, citing W.J. Rorabaugh, notes that by the late 1820s the average American adult male drank nearly half a pint (8oz) of spirits per day. Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 10.

<sup>21</sup> For Trotter’s work, see above. For secondary sources, see Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 452-53, 464; Howard, “Red Jackets and Red Noses,” 39-40; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 25-27; Heron, *Booze*, 9-10; Johnathan Reinartz and Rebecca Wynter, “The Spirit of Medicine: The Use of Alcohol in Nineteenth-Century Medical Practice,” in *Drink in the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century*, eds. Susanne Schmid and Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp (New York: Routledge, [2014] 2016), 131-133.

prescribed to treat a variety of ailments.<sup>22</sup> As Historian William J. Rorabaugh notes, “distilled spirits were viewed as foods that supplemented limited and monotonous diets, as medications that could cure colds, fevers, snakebites, frosted toes, and broken legs, and as relaxants that would relieve depression, reduce tension, and enable hard-working labourers to enjoy a moment of happy, frivolous camaraderie.”<sup>23</sup> And members of the upper classes generally regarded the consumption of wine as essential to maintaining good health.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, whereas today we consider alcohol itself to be an inherently addictive substance, in the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century the blame was placed on the drinker for his compulsion, rather than the drink.<sup>25</sup> It was thought that a man’s own weakness, immorality, or depravity led him to drink to excess (and doubly the case with women).<sup>26</sup> Sociologist Marianna Valverde has characterized this contemporary understanding of drunkenness as a “disease of the will,” and indeed her definition closely mirrors Trotter’s own description, that “the habit of drunkenness is a disease of the mind.”<sup>27</sup> Men who failed to

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<sup>22</sup> Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 448, 462, 464, 466; Howard, “Red Jackets and Red Noses,” 38-39; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 23-25; Heron, *Booze*, 9-10; Reinartz and Wynter, “The Spirit of Medicine,” in *Drink in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 129-131.

<sup>23</sup> W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

<sup>24</sup> Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 407.

<sup>25</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 48; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 19; For an excellent discussion of changing perceptions throughout history of drinkers and their perceived reason for drinking see: Marianna Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>26</sup> See Tanya M. Cassidy, “Stereotypical Depiction of Alcoholics,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol: Social, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Scott C. Martin (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2015): 1205-07; Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, 52-59; Heron, *Booze*, 41; Dana Rabin, “Drunkenness and Responsibility for Crime in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 3 (July 2005), 466; Gefou-Madianou, “Introduction,” *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, 16; See also Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, “‘Oh, Lord, Pour a Cordial in her Wounded Heart’: The Drinking Woman in Victorian and Edwardian Canada,” in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993): 70-91.

<sup>27</sup> Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, 2; Trotter, *An Essay*, 174.

exercise their will (to control their drinking) might have been considered habitual or confirmed “drunkards,” but not “alcoholics” who “abused” alcohol as in the modern sense. Thus, characterizations that “alcohol abuse was the rule,” or that “alcoholism was endemic,” are as inaccurate as characterizations that common soldiers “all enlisted for drink.” Alcohol played a complex and multifaceted role in the lives of soldiers (and settlers), one which can only be understood if it is placed within the proper historical context.

Next, it is important to recognize is that these characterizations of soldiers found in the source material, and accounts of the war in general, come almost exclusively from officers, and, as such, were heavily informed by class, racial, and power dynamics. Officers in this period were generally members of the aristocracy and gentry, whereas common soldiers were recruited from the labouring classes. This class division was further reinforced within the military hierarchy. Enlisted men began at the lowest rank of private and were subordinate to all others. Men of greater means were able to purchase a higher rank, that of ensign or lieutenant, which placed them above privates and non-commissioned officers in the military hierarchy.<sup>28</sup> These commissioned officers’ own conceptions of class, race, and the way in which they constructed their own gendered masculine identity all informed the way they perceived and wrote about those under their command.

When we consider soldiers’ drinking in the British army in the War of 1812 in the proper historical context, we see that enlisted men were not all “alcoholics” or even “enlisted

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<sup>28</sup> An officers’ purchased rank was known as a “commission.” Privates could be promoted to non-commissioned officer ranks (and even receive a commission in special circumstances), but still occupied a distinctly different class than commissioned officers. This will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

for drink.” A different image of the British redcoat is revealed; not that of a drunken knave or rogue, but rather a soldier for whom moderate, regulated, and ritualized drinking was a normal part of military service. Officers constructed common soldiers as “drunken” or prone to drink based on their perceived class status, race, marital status, age, and a host of other factors. But, in reality, common soldiers’ daily consumption was not in excess of contemporary norms or civilian standards of moderate consumption.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, we find that during the war, soldiers’ and officers’ access to alcohol was significantly limited by supply issues. Soldiers’ drinking was also strictly regulated by military authorities, which limited opportunities for drunkenness. Furthermore, any man caught drunk on duty faced severe punishment, which deterred future wrongdoing. Officers maintained these ideas about soldiers’ propensity for “drunkenness,” however, because by doing so they established their own martial masculine identities. In comparison to the common soldier, prone to drink (and of questionable origins) the officer was an ideal husband, father, and patriarch, even if only to his men; he was a member of the social elite, characterized by restraint and self-control, and justified in his control over others. His elevated position in the martial, masculine, and racial hierarchy of the British army was reinforced, in part, by his ability to drink freely, and to drink well, while restricting the access of others. For early nineteenth-century British officers, drinking thus played a key role in the construction and negotiation of martial masculine identities.

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<sup>29</sup> J. Roberts argues that “the consumption of a gill of liquor a day was commonplace in Upper Canada and must have served as a benchmark against which to measure ‘excess’ consumption.” For a discussion of consumption rates and norms in civilian colonial society, see: Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 89-91; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 10-11; Heron, *Booze*, 49-51.

## Officers' Perceptions of Soldiers' Drinking

The British public in this period generally held a low opinion of soldiers. They distrusted standing armies as a potential threat to liberty and saw soldiers as particularly brutish figures.<sup>30</sup> As Jennine Hurl-Eamon has demonstrated, it was widely held in the eighteenth century that common soldiers in the British army enlisted in the army to flee their wives, children, and domestic responsibilities.<sup>31</sup> It was assumed that they did so in order to engage in an adolescent army “bachelor culture,” characterized by activities such as heavy-drinking and womanizing, which were antithetical to civilian domestic codes of behaviour.<sup>32</sup> Recruiting practices in the early nineteenth century exacerbated this negative image of the common soldier.<sup>33</sup> As the army increased rapidly in size, recruiters looked for any able-bodied male to enlist, regardless of social standing.<sup>34</sup> Recruiters frequently looked for men in taverns and plied them with alcohol.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, many of the men drawn in were looked down upon by officers and society at large as rogues and inebriates, driven by “the compulsion of destitution.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Peter Burroughs, “Crime and Punishment in the British Army, 1815-1870,” *English Historical Review* 100 (1985), 548-549.

<sup>31</sup> See Hurl-Eamon, “Did Soldiers Really Enlist to Desert Their Wives?,” 356-377.

<sup>32</sup> Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 166; See also, Dianne Graves, *In the Midst of Alarms: The Untold Story of Women and the War of 1812* (Montreal: Robin Brass Studio, 2007), 156.

<sup>33</sup> See Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 13.

<sup>34</sup> Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 247-250; J. Mackay Hitsman and Donald E. Graves, *The Incredible War of 1812: a Military History*. Rev. ed. updated by Donald E. Graves (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1999), 33; Edward M. Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980), 41.

<sup>35</sup> Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 460; Philip J. Haythornthwaite, *The Armies of Wellington* (London: Arms and Armour, 1994), 51; Spiers, *The Army and Society*, 41.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 203.

Officers in the British army saw common soldiers as “drunkards” and “prone to drink” first and foremost because of their social standing as members of the labouring classes.<sup>37</sup> As noted, British soldiers came from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from rural labourers to skilled artisans and tradesmen; however, they were generally lumped together by the social elite as one collective entity; the “lower orders,” or what would later be called, pejoratively, “the great unwashed.” Members of the social elite characterized members of the “lower orders” as dirty and indolent, driven by their basest impulses like children or animals, and thus prone to violence, disease, and, of course, drunkenness.<sup>38</sup> This characterization suggested that the labouring classes were in need of guidance from their social “betters,” effectively validating the elevated social standing of the ruling class.

The perception that the “lower orders” were prone to drunkenness also stemmed, in large part, from the eighteenth century “gin craze,” a period which saw rapid increase in the production and consumption of cheap gin amongst the urban poor in England, specifically London. As Historian Dana Rabin explains, their public drunkenness became associated with crime and social disorder, and seemingly posed a threat to public security, political stability, the economy, traditional gender roles, the structure of the family, and ultimately the health of the nation – all of which was depicted in William Hogarth’s famous 1751 print, *Gin Lane* (Figure 1).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> See Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398-399.

<sup>38</sup> Rabin, “Drunkenness and Responsibility for Crime,” 457, 465; Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 6-7; Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398.

<sup>39</sup> Rabin, “Drunkenness and Responsibility for Crime,” 457, 465.

GIN LANE.



*Gin* cursed Fiend, with Fiery draught,  
Makes human Bites a Prey,  
It enters by a deadly Draught,  
And steals our Life away.

Virtue and Truth, driv'n to Despair,  
By *Pigs* compels to fly,  
But *cherishes* with bellish Care,  
Theft, Murder, Perjury.

Damn'd Cup! that on the Vitals preys,  
That liquid Fire contains  
Which Madness to the Heart conveys,  
And rolls it thro' the Veins.

Figure 1: A syphilitic mother neglecting her child is displayed prominently in the foreground of the print. In the background, people are pawning their wares, fighting dogs for scraps, starving to death,



*feeding gin to the young and old alike, committing suicide, and burying the dead. One man parades around with an impaled infant on a spike. Only the pawnbroker, gin seller and undertaker are working, and the buildings are falling down.*

Members of the social elite held that they alone possessed the requisite self-control to manage their drinking, and that their perceived social inferiors among the labouring classes and urban poor did not.<sup>40</sup> Their superior upbringing, education, wealth, and general sense of refinement would, in their minds, allow them to conquer any state of intoxication. Common soldiers, however, whom officers saw as drawn from the “lower orders” of society, were presumed to be unable to control themselves. Consequently, officers across the Empire came to view the common enlisted British soldier as “constitutionally predisposed to drink.”<sup>41</sup>

Race, especially Irishness (and, in Upper Canada, Indigeneity) further affected officers’ assumptions about their soldiers’ propensity for drunkenness.<sup>42</sup> During the Napoleonic era, roughly one-third of British soldiers were Irish.<sup>43</sup> The Irish were a heavily racialized group in Britain and North America, persistently stereotyped as “drunken” or prone to drink (whiskey

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<sup>40</sup> As Nicole Eustace has shown, this not only included drinking, but also extended to matters of language and emotion. See Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 196.

<sup>41</sup> Erica Wald, for example, has shown that this was the case in India: Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398-399.

<sup>42</sup> While Irishness is addressed here, Indigeneity is discussed at length in Chapter 4. For a discussion of drinking and racial identity, see Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 101-119; Heron, *Booze*, 11, 43-45; Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 397; Cassidy, “Stereotypical Depiction of Alcoholics,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia*, 1208.

<sup>43</sup> Catriona Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle: Military Masculinity and the British Army Officer during the Napoleonic Wars,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hageman, Gisela Mettele and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 129; Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, eds., *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 9; Catriona Kennedy, “‘True Brittons and Real Irish’: Irish Catholics in the British Army During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 38; Gavin Daly, “‘Barbarity More Suited to Savages’: British Soldiers’ Views of Spanish and Portuguese Violence During the Peninsular War, 1808-1814,” *War and Society* 35, No. 4 (October, 2016), 244.

in particular).<sup>44</sup> Samuel Morewood, for example, a nineteenth-century English collector of excise in Dublin, noted that the “characteristic habits of these people” was to drink whiskey, and that some “are seldom sober during the whole year.”<sup>45</sup> This stereotype was tied to English characterizations that the Irish were lazy and unreliable, and in need of England’s paternal guidance; a characterization which validated English imperial rule.<sup>46</sup> The “drunken Irishman” remained a pervasive construct in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century British and North American culture, and significantly influenced how the Irish were viewed across the British Empire, including in the Canadas. Militia officer Ely Playter, for example, noted that St. Patrick’s Day in York in 1802 “occasioned a number of Drunken Irishmen in town.”<sup>47</sup> His capitalization of the words, and deliberate mention of this suggests that the trope of the “drunken Irishman” was well-established in Upper Canada in the early nineteenth century.

Comments from the aforementioned Colonel Roberts reveal that this stereotype was firmly established in the minds of Napoleonic-era British officers as well. Roberts pokes fun at the perceived inebriety of the Irish in his satirical poem *The Military Adventures of Johnny*

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<sup>44</sup> See Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Richard Stivers, *Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and Its American Stereotype* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976); Cassidy, “Stereotypical Depiction of Alcoholics,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia*, 1206-07.

<sup>45</sup> Samuel Morewood, *A Philosophical and Statistical History of the Inventions and Customs of Ancient and Modern Nations in the Manufacture and Use of Inebriating Liquors* (Dublin: William Curry, Jun. and Company, and William Carson, 1838), 262.

<sup>46</sup> Cassidy, “Stereotypical Depiction of Alcoholics,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia*, 1206.

<sup>47</sup> Ely Playter, “Extracts from Ely Playter’s Diary - March 17th 1802,” in *The Town of York 1793-1815: A Collection of Documents of Early Toronto* (Publications of the Champlain Society, Ontario Series, 5, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962), 244.

*Newcome*, with his character Teague O'Connor. Teague is the protagonist's batman,<sup>48</sup> and is always trying to sneak a drink when possible:

Poor Teague, esteem'd by all a hearty fellow,  
With parting Glass had got a little mellow:  
A trifling failing here I must disclose,  
Teague swore 'twas for the honour of his Nose,  
Whose lovely size, and colour, to his thinking,  
Could only be maintained by hearty drinking.  
[...]  
Teague hearing now his Master snore profound,  
With great composure squatted on the ground;  
Then with the Brandy filled the largest Cup—  
'Here's to good luck!' said he, then drank it up.  
Again replenish'd, down again it goes,—  
'And that's,' said Teague, 'in honour of my Nose.'  
Another filled, Teague thought it mighty clever,  
Though last, not least, 'twas 'Ireland for ever.'<sup>49</sup>

Illustrations accompanying the poem depict Teague's nose as large and red.<sup>50</sup> In this period, the red or boil-ridden nose was the physical mark of a drunkard.<sup>51</sup> Roberts plays upon this idea, having Teague humorously attempt to shift the blame for his drunkenness onto his nose, when Roberts' readership would have recognized that Teague's inebriety was racially inevitable (and indeed the real cause of his large red nose). In another scene, Teague cannot help but drink and fight with his fellow Irish soldiers upon again being left alone by his officer, Johnny Newcome:

'I'll get him snug on Board, and then I think,  
'I'll to my Friends, and to take a hearty drink.'

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<sup>48</sup> A batman, referred to in the text simply as a "servant," was a soldier who served a commissioned officer directly. His duties could range from taking care of the officer's horse, to carrying his baggage, preparing meals, etc.

<sup>49</sup> Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, 38, 49-50.

<sup>50</sup> A choice has been made not to include these illustrations as reproducing them, even in critical fashion, runs the risk of perpetuating harmful caricatures and stereotypes. This issue of representation will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Four.

<sup>51</sup> Philip Howell, "The Drunkard's Nose: Making and Unmaking the Person in Trollope's 'The Spotted Dog,'" *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 32, no. 1 (December 1, 2018): 64.

Now John by Teague was safely stow'd on Board,  
And Teague got staggering drunk to keep his word.  
Next morn by times, to Johnny's great surprize,  
Teague had a broken Nose, and two Black Eyes.  
Teague thought by some excuse to make amends—  
'I *tuck* a Drink, your Honour, with some Friends.'  
'With Friends,' said John, 'no, Teague, you mean your Foes;  
'The Devil's in't, if Friends would break your Nose.'  
'Ah no, your Honour,' says Teague, 'twas Friends for *sartin*—  
'We drank like Friends, *but had a fight at parting*.'  
'O! aye,' said John, 'you Paddies like a joke,  
'So friendly-like, you took a parting Stroke.'<sup>52</sup>

Historian Catriona Kennedy notes that “the quarrelsome and amorous Irish soldier” was another stock figure in Georgian era dramas.<sup>53</sup> Clearly, this racialized image of Irish soldiers was widely held by British officers such as Roberts, as well as his readership.<sup>54</sup>

As with the rest of the army, many of the regiments stationed in the Canadas during the War of 1812 were predominately Irish.<sup>55</sup> Accordingly, they developed a reputation among officers for their “excessive drinking” and other “wild” behaviour. For example, the 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment, whom Isaac Brock described as a “wild Irish regiment,” which had “been ten years in this country, drinking rum without bounds.”<sup>56</sup> Or William “Tiger” Dunlop’s 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment, whom Dunlop affectionately referred to as a group of “wild tremendous Irishmen,” who “rarely

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<sup>52</sup> Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, 89-91.

<sup>53</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 135.

<sup>54</sup> Neil Ramsey notes that the poem was popular enough to warrant a second printing, and was widely emulated by later authors, see Neil Ramsey, “The Comic View of Johnny Newcome’s Military Adventures,” in *Visual Culture and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars*, eds. Satish Padiyar, Philip Shaw, and Philippa Simpson (New York: Routledge, 2018), 164.

<sup>55</sup> Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, 33.

<sup>56</sup> Isaac Brock, “Brigadier Brock to his brother Irving, Niagara, February 19, 1811,” in *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock*, ed. Ferdinand Brock Tupper (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845; Project Gutenberg eBook #14428, 2004), n.p.; Isaac Brock, “Major-General Brock to his brother Savery. Fort George, September 18, 1812,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

went to bed without a respectable quorum of them getting, a leetle to the lee side of sobriety.”<sup>57</sup> There was also the newly raised 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which was recruited primarily in Northern Ireland and given the title the “Prince Regent’s County of Dublin Regiment.”<sup>58</sup> Speaking of the 100<sup>th</sup>, Brock wrote that “being nearly all Irish, [they] are of all others the most volatile and easily led astray. Should they, therefore, hereafter be seduced by the various temptations by which they are surrounded, I hope to escape the imputation of judging too hastily and partially.”<sup>59</sup> He feared that their assumed proclivity for drink would lead to drunkenness and unsoldierlike conduct, which would reflect poorly on his leadership and ability to control his men. Similar fears would be expressed regarding the propensities of Indigenous warriors under Brock’s command, as will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Brock’s comments about “various temptations by which they are surrounded,” further highlights that service in the Canadas, like other colonies, also carried assumptions about liquor. Military physicians such as Thomas Trotter theorized that “drunkenness prevails more in cold climates than in warm,” and Upper Canada was certainly recognized as a cold climate.<sup>60</sup> Metropolitan observers saw the colony as rife with cheap liquor and populated by people of questionable moral character.<sup>61</sup> Drunkenness was thought to be inevitable under these

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<sup>57</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1905), 27-28.

<sup>58</sup> Isaac Brock, “Brigadier Brock to his brother Irving, Niagara, February 19, 1811,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.; Dunlop, *Recollections*, 27-28.

<sup>59</sup> Isaac Brock, “Colonel Brock to the Adjutant-General of His Majesty’s Forces. Quebec, March 17, 1807,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>60</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 139.

<sup>61</sup> For an excellent discussion on metropolitan views of Upper Canadian drinking, see Heron, *Booze*, 38-39; and Glenn J. Lockwood, “Temperance in Upper Canada as Ethnic Subterfuge,” in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 46-48; Lockwood highlights that many inhabitants had recently immigrated from the United States or Ireland. Jane Errington adds that British

conditions. For example, the Scottish gentleman John Howison, who traveled to Upper Canada shortly after the war, complained that:

All sorts of people are detestable when under the influence of ardent spirits, but the Americans<sup>62</sup> particularly so [...] the influence of liquor only serves to draw forth their natural coarseness, insolence, and rankness of feeling, and to make them as it were caricatures of themselves. Whoever wishes to attain a just conception of the enormity which the human character assumes when unchecked by restraint, unrefined by education, and unmodelled by dependence, should spend an hour in the bar-room of some low tavern in Upper Canada, when a party of common farmers are drinking together.<sup>63</sup>

Howison's comments emphasize that civility, education, and self-control were characteristics which separated refined British gentlemen, in their own minds, from Upper Canadian colonists who frequented the many taverns, inns and public houses which dotted the colonial landscape.<sup>64</sup> These assumptions about colonial society only compounded officers' fears about

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born officials viewed the United States as "the quintessence of disloyalty, rebellion and betrayal," and feared American influence in Upper Canada. Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, [1987] 2012), 7; As Nancy Christie and Adele Perry have demonstrated, Britain's attempts to foster British institutions and culture within the periphery colony met with mixed success. Nancy Christie, "Introduction: Theorizing a Colonial past: Canada as a Society of British Settlement," in *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas, Institutions, and Social Experience in Post-Revolutionary British North America*, ed. Nancy Christie (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 3-44; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 17.

<sup>62</sup> Americans, in this context, referring to North Americans, particularly those people whom Howison encountered on his travels in Upper Canada (many of whom had indeed immigrated from south of the border not long before).

<sup>63</sup> John Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada, Domestic, Local, and Characteristic: To Which are Added, Practical Details for the Information of Emigrants of Every Class; and some Recollections of the United States of America* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, High-Street, 1821), 209-210.

<sup>64</sup> For more on colonial taverns, see Roberts, *In Mixed Company*; David Conroy, *In Public Houses: Drink & the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, N.C: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia by the University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Sharon Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Peter Thompson, *Rum Punch & Revolution: Taverngoing & Public Life in Eighteenth Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999). For further discussion of the social and cultural dynamics between the Upper Canadian periphery and British metropole, see: Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada*; Christie, *Transatlantic Subjects*; Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*.

their soldiers' propensity for drink. Speaking of the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Brock expressed concern that it was so dispersed and surrounded by "evils" like cheap liquor that despite the "zeal and intelligence" of the commanding officers, the "discipline and morals of the men" would sooner or later be compromised.<sup>65</sup> He was confident, however, that the older, more experienced men of the 41<sup>st</sup> (a predominately English regiment) could be better trusted to resist "evils" like intemperance than the wild Irishmen of the 49<sup>th</sup>.<sup>66</sup>

Brock's consideration of the age of his men highlights yet another factor which contributed to the idea that the soldiers in the Canadas were particularly prone to drink; their youth and inexperience. Military historians of the War of 1812 have often characterized British regulars in the Canadas as "aging veterans," or "hardened veterans," who were "well disciplined [...] and trained;" however, this was not the contemporary perception.<sup>67</sup> Dunlop, for example, complained that "one of the great drawbacks of the service in Canada was that we got the rubbish of every department in the army. Any man whom The Duke deemed unfit for the Peninsula was considered as quite good enough for the Canadian market."<sup>68</sup> Speaking of the recruits he saw landing at Quebec, he noted that most "were mere boys."<sup>69</sup> Other

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<sup>65</sup> Isaac Brock, "Colonel Brock to the Adjutant-General of His Majesty's Forces, Quebec, July 1, 1807," in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>66</sup> Brock, "Colonel Brock to the Adjutant-General of His Majesty's Forces, Quebec, July 1, 1807," in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>67</sup> This view is likely reflective of historiographic efforts to determine who won the war and how that side achieved victory – a victory which many British and Canadian historians credit to the skill of British soldiers and the leadership of their officers, primarily in comparison to the unorganized and poorly led American forces. For example, see Pierre Berton, *The Invasion of Canada, 1812-1813* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, [1980] 2001), 22, 24; Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, 34; Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812*, 319; D. Graves, *Red Coats & Grey Jackets*, 34; Charles Prestwood Lucas, *The Canadian War of 1812* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 257.

<sup>68</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 62-63.

<sup>69</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 6.

historians of the British army support this view. Philip J. Haythornthwaite, for example, argues that “the average age of soldiers was indeed quite young.”<sup>70</sup> He notes that the British army of the era typically recruited soldiers between the ages of 18 and 30; however, when desperate for manpower, they also recruited boys as young as 13.<sup>71</sup> John Richardson was one such recruit; he volunteered to serve with the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment at the age of fifteen.<sup>72</sup> These soldiers’ youth and inexperience, whether real or simply perceived, reinforced notions that the men were adolescent “bachelors,” childlike, unable to regulate their impulses, and thus prone to inebriety. Historian Erica Wald has shown that this perception of the European soldier as young and immature directly informed military and medical proposals for dealing with alcohol-related illnesses in the army stationed in India.<sup>73</sup> This was arguably the case in Upper Canada as well. For example, Assistant Surgeon in the King’s 8<sup>th</sup>, John Douglas, who served in the Canadas during the War of 1812, observed that “the young soldier being often addicted to intemperance,” was more prone to violent inflammation.<sup>74</sup>

This assumption that young inexperienced soldiers were unable to regulate themselves was further compounded by the lack of experienced officers available to lead them. Some historians of the War of 1812, such as Wesley B. Turner, argue that the strength of the British

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<sup>70</sup> Haythornthwaite, *The Armies of Wellington*, 50

<sup>71</sup> Haythornthwaite, *The Armies of Wellington*, 50; this is confirmed by Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, 33; Erica Wald lists 15 to 19. Wald, “Governing the Bottle, 404.

<sup>72</sup> For a biography, see David R. Beasley, “Richardson, John (1796-1852),” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003),

[http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/richardson\\_john\\_1796\\_1852\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/richardson_john_1796_1852_8E.html).

<sup>73</sup> Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012), 824.

<sup>74</sup> John Douglas, *Medical Topography of Upper Canada* (London: Burgess and Hill, 1819), 49.



army in the Canadas was “regulars commanded by good officers.”<sup>75</sup> General Isaac Brock was certainly regarded as one. Brock himself, however, while in command of the armed forces in the Canadas, frequently remarked upon the lack of quality officers available to him. Speaking of the 41<sup>st</sup>, he famously complained to his brother Savery that it was “an uncommonly fine regiment, but wretchedly officered” – a comment which drew the ire of John Richardson in later life, who recalled fondly his time with the 41<sup>st</sup>.<sup>76</sup> But Brock was not picking on the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment. He similarly noted that the 49<sup>th</sup>, his own Regiment, had “five captains in England, and two on the staff in this country, which leaves it bare of experienced officers.”<sup>77</sup> This was also the case with the young 103<sup>rd</sup>, their commanding officer Hercules Scott frequently away on staff duties.<sup>78</sup> In the early years of the war at least, there was a very real shortage of experienced field officers assigned to regiments stationed in the Canadas.

This lack of available experienced officers contributed to perceptions that the enlisted men were more prone to drunkenness because officers held that they alone possessed the ability to restrain their drinking (and the drinking of men under their command). Military authorities

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<sup>75</sup> Wesley B. Turner, *The War of 1812: The War That Both Sides Won* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2000), 32; Louis L. Babcock similarly praises the British military leadership and troops, claiming the deciding factor in winning the war was that leadership was given carte blanche orders to win at any cost. Louis L. Babcock, *The War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier* (Cranbury, NJ: Scholar’s Bookshelf, 2005); Others, such as Pierre Berton, highlight “lacklustre leadership, incompetent planning, timidity and vacillation,” on both sides: Berton, *The Invasion of Canada*, 22.

<sup>76</sup> Isaac Brock, “Major-General Brock to his brother Savery. Fort George, September 18, 1812,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.; See [John Richardson], “Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment,” *The United Service Journal* (1846) no. 1 (London: H. Colburn, 1846).

<sup>77</sup> Officers “on the staff” were at headquarters doing administrative work rather than leading men in the field. Isaac Brock, “Major-General Brock to his brother Savery. Fort George, September 18, 1812,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>78</sup> “General Order, Adjutant General’s Office, Quebec, 19th March, 1814,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. I, 13-14.

assumed that without quality officers present, the natural habits of the enlisted men would not be adequately kept in check. With regards to the 103<sup>rd</sup>, for example, a General Order dated 19 March, 1814, decreed that their “most disgraceful Conduct,” in a series of recent incidents, “which has sullied the Soldiers Character,” was the result of a failure on the part of their officers to properly inculcate “a good system of interior Discipline,” rather than the enlisted men.<sup>79</sup> In another instance, involving drunkenness among soldiers from the Canadian Fencible Regiment, their commanding officer Captain M’Queen was similarly chastised by military authorities for failing to “exert his authority, to prevent the improper use of liquor in the guard-room.”<sup>80</sup> Ironically, military officials generally held that, “where regularity and good order prevail among Officers, especially among the Captains of troops and companies—who are the main springs of discipline—the private soldier is seldom guilty of insubordination and misbehaviour.”<sup>81</sup>

### **Soldiers’ Drinking, in Reality**

When we consider how much soldiers actually drank, we find that officers’ characterizations of soldiers as “drunken” do not align with reality. Enlisted men were typically granted a daily ration of one gill (~4oz) of spirits, usually rum, diluted with water.<sup>82</sup> This

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<sup>79</sup> “General Order, Adjutant General’s Office, Quebec, 19th March, 1814,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. I, 13-14.

<sup>80</sup> “Lieutenant Joseph Peters. 1810,” in *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority* ed. Charles James (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820), 351.

<sup>81</sup> James, *A Collection of the Charges*, xv.

<sup>82</sup> For primary source evidence, see: “District General Orders, Headquarters, Fort Amherstburg, August 15th, 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 462; For secondary source evidence, see Heron, *Booze*, 32; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 9-10; Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 90; Rod Phillips, *Alcohol: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 163; Carol M. Whitfield, *Tommy Atkins: The British Soldier in*

amount was not enough to make a typical soldier drunk, and indeed was roughly on par with daily consumption rates for adult males in civilian society.<sup>83</sup> The amount of rum granted to soldiers was also considerably less than was given to sailors serving on the Great Lakes, which in 1813 amounted to “half a pint of Rum,” closer to 10oz.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, a soldier’s rum ration could be increased or decreased at the discretion of their commanding officer. Additional field rations were often given before battles and after victories, to mark special occasions such as the King’s birthday, to men performing labour duties, or as a reward for good conduct.<sup>85</sup> But rations were also decreased or discontinued as punishment for misbehaviour, or to combat intemperance.

As noted, in colonial postings like the Canadas, additional alcohol was sometimes provided to help the men cope with the climate.<sup>86</sup> This stemmed from prevailing medical theories at the time regarding alcohol, as previously discussed. For example, General Gordon

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*Canada, 1759-1870* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, 1981), 43; Oliver R. Jones and E. Ann Smith, *Glass of the British Military, 1755-1820* (Ottawa: Studies in Archaeology Architecture and History, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, 1985), 11; John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 65; Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812*, 343.

<sup>83</sup> For a discussion of civilian consumption rates, see Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 89-90; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 10-11; Heron, *Booze*, 51; Garland and Talman, “Pioneer Drinking Habits,” 172.

<sup>84</sup> A British pint is 20 fluid ounces; A General Order issued June 1813 raised the ration of seamen on the Great Lakes to match that of the Royal Navy. “General Order, Kingston 2d, June 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 755-756.

<sup>85</sup> A private from the Newfoundland Regiment related that they were given a half-pint of whiskey as they prepared to defend the shore from an American attack. “Fort Erie, 20th March, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813* (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1902), 124; Andrew Kemp recalled how he used to sell rum to the troops on labour duty, that they each “got two gills extra to work on.” Andrew Kemp, “Recollections of a Boy of 1812,” in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, ed. Janet Carnochan (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 11), n.p.; see also Phillips, *Alcohol*, 163; Heron, *Booze*, 32; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 20-21.

<sup>86</sup> For a discussion of this same practice in British India, see Wald, “Governing the Bottle,” 398-399, 408.

Drummond allotted an extra allowance of “half a gill of spirits” to his troops camped in the siege lines outside of Fort Erie in the Summer of 1814, to which he attributed their uncommon health.<sup>87</sup> But, as Drummond went on to note, his supplies of spirits were quickly running out, and he feared that “if that should unfortunately be the case the health of the troops must, (particularly if they remain in the field,) suffer, and the diseases of last campaign may again thin our ranks.”<sup>88</sup> As we will see, this was a common complaint from officers.

During the War of 1812, spirits frequently ran out. Even during the first winter of the war major restrictions were already being imposed due to inadequate grain harvests and dwindling supplies. In March of 1813, an Act was passed in Provincial Parliament to “prohibit the exportation of grain and other provisions, and also to restrain the distillation of spirituous liquors from grain,” in order to conserve it for military use.<sup>89</sup> As a result, the men were not receiving their full ration. By springtime, the young John Richardson, then a volunteer in the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment, remarked that rum and whiskey “were extremely scarce with us, and were prized accordingly.”<sup>90</sup> Records indicate that in June of 1813, the army was requisitioning whiskey from local civilians to supply itself.<sup>91</sup> By August, Upper Canadian politician Thomas

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<sup>87</sup> Gordon Drummond, “Lieut.-Gen. Drummond to Sir Geo. Prevost,” in *Documentary History...1814, Part I and II*, 185.

<sup>88</sup> Drummond, “Lieut.-Gen. Drummond to Sir Geo. Prevost. Headquarters, Camp Before Fort Erie, 21st Aug., 1814,” in *Documentary History...1814, Part I and II*, 185.

<sup>89</sup> Gordon Drummond, “Proclamation. Province of Upper Canada,” in *Documentary History...1812=4, Vol. IX*, 107.

<sup>90</sup> Major (John) Richardson, *War of 1812. First Series. Containing a Full and Detailed Narrative of the Operations of the Right Division, of the Canadian Army* (Brockville: n.p., 1842), 85.

<sup>91</sup> Thank you to Jake Breadman for brining this file to my attention, “Damages Done to Geo. Adams by His Majesty’s Troops Stationed at the 12 Mile Creek Since the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, 1813,” in *War of 1812: Board of Claims for Losses, 1813-1848*, RG 19, E5A, Mikan record: 139215, Microform: t-1127 (Library and Archives Canada), 134.

Ridout, who worked in the Commissariat Department,<sup>92</sup> noted that the army was now “two days out of whiskey,” which had led to “a good deal of ague among the men.”<sup>93</sup> Even though spirits were seen as essential to the men’s health, they were often difficult to procure in sufficient quantity. Abundant grain harvests in the fall of 1813 permitted a ration increase to one half-gill, but some posts remained without.<sup>94</sup> That winter, the men in winter quarters received “the usual Treasury Ration of Provisions” but “without Rum.”<sup>95</sup> Only those on Frontier Piquets, or occupying “Posts of Observation, and on Stations not affording the Comfort and accommodation of Regular Barracks” continued to receive a rum ration.<sup>96</sup> This supply shortage was not alleviated until the summer of 1814, when liquor imports permitted restrictions to be relaxed.<sup>97</sup>

In July of 1814, the Board of Officers finally deemed it “expedient and advisable that Rum should be issued to the Troops serving in the Canadas, at the rate of one Gill to each effective Regimental Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer & Private per day [...] to afford to the Soldier every comfort which the arduous duties of the Service may require.”<sup>98</sup> However, a report from Lieutenant-General Drummond to Prevost dated 21 August 1814, indicates that

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<sup>92</sup> The department in charge of provisioning the army.

<sup>93</sup> “Ague” was a common description for illnesses which produced fever, likely malaria or typhus. Military authorities held that drinking spirits helped to stave it off. Thomas G. Ridout, “From Thomas G. Ridout to Thomas Ridout at York. St. David’s, 30th August, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part III*, 87.

<sup>94</sup> Gareth Newfield, “Drink Up! Alcohol and the British Soldier in the Canadas during the War of 1812,” *Access Heritage*, Accessed May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. <http://www.warof1812.ca/drinkup.htm>

<sup>95</sup> “Montreal 27th November 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 461.

<sup>96</sup> “Montreal 27th November 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 461.

<sup>97</sup> Newfield, “Drink Up!”, n.p.

<sup>98</sup> Sidney Beckwith, W. H. Robinson, Noah Freer, “[Endorsement] Report of the Board of Officers, Montreal, 12 July, 1814,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. III, Part I, 339-341.

there were still significant shortages.<sup>99</sup> Drummond reported that, “by the beginning of next month we are likely to begin to experience the most alarming deficiency, even in the grand essential of flour. Spirits also, I fear, will by that time fail.”<sup>100</sup> In January of 1814, a province-wide ban on distillation was once again enacted due to shortages of grain, made effective until March of that year.<sup>101</sup> In sum, the average soldier stationed in the Canadas during the War of 1812 rarely received his full ration, and for much of the conflict he went without. If soldiers did indeed “enlist for drink,” they would have been sorely disappointed by their time in Upper Canada.

Further evidence suggests that as the war dragged on, scarcity not only impacted the enlisted men drinking, but officers as well. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, 1814, Lieutenant John Le Couteur was invited to dine with Captain McMillan of the Glengarry Light Infantry, who treated him to port wine, which Le Couteur noted “was all expended in the 104<sup>th</sup> long since.”<sup>102</sup> A letter from Lieutenant-General Gordon Drummond to Governor Prévost dated 21<sup>st</sup> August 1814, confirmed the same. Drummond reported that “by the beginning of next month we are likely to begin to experience the most alarming deficiency, even in the grand essential of flour. Spirits also, I fear, will by that time fail [...] I have also found it necessary to authorize the daily issue of the ration of spirits to the staff officers, who have no greater means in the present

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<sup>99</sup> Drummond, “Lieut.-Gen. Drummond to Sir Geo, Prevost. Headquarters, Camp Before Fort Erie, 21st Aug., 1814,” in *Documentary History...1814, Part I and II*, 185.

<sup>100</sup> Drummond, “Lieut.-Gen. Drummond to Sir Geo, Prevost. Headquarters, Camp Before Fort Erie, 21st Aug., 1814,” in *Documentary History...1814, Part I and II*, 185.

<sup>101</sup> Gordon Drummond, “Proclamation. Province of Upper Canada,” in *Documentary History...1812=4, Vol. IX*, 108.

<sup>102</sup> The last time he noted having some was the previous winter when stationed in Kingston. Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 192.

state of this division of procuring wine, &c, than the regimental officers.<sup>103</sup> Officers typically preferred wine over rum, as will be discussed in the next chapter, and staff officers (primarily adjutants and administrative types) would have had an easier time procuring wine than most because of their supply connections and their position behind the front lines. In this dire situation, however, even they were reduced to drinking the meagre rum ration.

It is worth noting that the official rum ration was not the only alcohol that soldiers had access to. There were also, as noted, outside “temptations.” Soldiers were given an allowance to purchase beer with, which, in addition to their regular pay, gave them disposable income to spend.<sup>104</sup> Being stationed near local civilian centres, soldiers often used their pay and beer money to purchase alcohol, including distilled spirits, in taverns and inns, or from sutlers (civilians who were licensed to sell provisions to the troops). Scholarship has suggested that purchases were small in quantity, frequent, and for immediate consumption.<sup>105</sup> But soldiers such as Shadrach Byfield of the 41<sup>st</sup> were also in the habit of gambling or trading their alcohol amongst each other.<sup>106</sup> Byfield, who had his arm amputated after the battle of Conjocta Creek in 1814, gleefully recalled that shortly after his arm healed, he was “able to play a game of

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<sup>103</sup> Gordon Drummond, “Lieut.-Gen. Drummond to Sir Geo, Prevost. Headquarters, Camp Before Fort Erie, 21st Aug., 1814,” in *Documentary History...1814, Part I and II*, 185.

<sup>104</sup> There is some debate as to whether troops stationed in North America were given beer money, as elsewhere in the Empire post-1800, or rations of spruce beer. Likely a mix of both, depending on available supply. See Newfield, “Drink Up!”, n.p.; Heron, *Booze*, 32; Whitfield, *Tommy Atkins*, 43; Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 462.

<sup>105</sup> Jones and Smith, *Glass of the British Military*, 7.

<sup>106</sup> Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 450.

fives for a quart of rum.”<sup>107</sup> Clearly, the quart of rum in question (~32oz.) was not given as a daily ration.

Officers, however, made frequent attempts to restrict enlisted men’s access to outside sources of alcohol.<sup>108</sup> In doing so, they reinforced existing power dynamics and their own relative privilege to drink freely. In November of 1812, a District General Order was issued at Fort George forbidding such practices as gambling for spirits: “It having been reported that soldiers when on fatigue are in the habit of giving over their allowance of spirits to each other, by which means several of the men had been frequently intoxicated, the Major-General positively forbids a further continuance of this baneful practice.”<sup>109</sup> In October 1812, Major-General Roger Hale Sheaffe exerted his authority over the civilian population of the Niagara region as well, forbidding all “Merchants, Inn-keepers, and Sutlers, and all other Persons, licensed, or unlicensed to sell Spirituous Liquors of any sort or description whatsoever, within one Mile distance of the respective Military Posts,” unless under specific orders from Lieut. Col. Clark or William Dickson, on pain of fine and imprisonment.<sup>110</sup>

That these proclamations had to be issued at all, however, is telling, and suggests that many sutlers were indeed selling alcohol to soldiers illegally, and that soldiers were indeed in the habit of gambling spirits to each other. As Renée Lafferty has noted, officers’ attempts at regulation and restriction “while firm in language and often fervently attempted, were easily

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<sup>107</sup> Shadrach Byfield, *A Narrative of a Light Company Soldier’s Service in the Forty-First Regiment of Foot, 1807-1814*, (Bradford: John Bubb, 1840; Reprinted by William Abbatt, 1910), 91-92.

<sup>108</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 28; Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 455-456.

<sup>109</sup> “District General Order, Fort George, November 9th, 1812,” in *Documentary History...1812, Part II*, 188.

<sup>110</sup> Roger Hale Sheaffe, “District of Niagara. Niagara to War,” *The Bee Newspaper* I, no. 13, (October 1812): n.p.



circumvented” in practice.<sup>111</sup> Indeed, there is considerable evidence to suggest that individual enlisted soldiers did, at times, procure enough to become drunk.<sup>112</sup> But what is important to recognize in this context, is that the behaviour of one or two individuals in isolated incidents was not representative of all common soldiers. Just as Hurl-Eamon notes in her study, there were some soldiers who behaved as licentious, irresponsible, womanizing bachelors, but there were also a significant number who prided themselves on being responsible husbands, fathers, and brothers, and who felt that they had been shaped for the better by their time in service.<sup>113</sup> Thus neither characterization accurately represents the soldiery as a whole. In this case, we see that soldiers did sometimes get drunk; but they were not, as a group, “drunken,” nor inherently prone to drink as suggested by their officers.

It is also worth noting that while some restrictions may have been easily circumvented, the strict punishments meted out to soldiers who were caught drunk on duty operated as a significant deterrent.<sup>114</sup> Those men fortunate enough to be dealt with informally would have had their liquor ration reduced or revoked, received hard labour, or extra sentry duty. Those brought before Courts-Martial at either the Regimental or Garrison level, however, faced imprisonment or, worse yet, flogging.<sup>115</sup> Soldiers sentenced to be flogged by Regimental Courts-Martial were struck on the bare back up to three hundred times – or one thousand times

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<sup>111</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 28-29; Both she and Kopperman argue that these efforts were not particularly effective. Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 458-59, 470.

<sup>112</sup> Not only in the accounts of officers and third parties, but also, for example, in records of Courts-Martial.

<sup>113</sup> Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 183-184.

<sup>114</sup> Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 456-457.

<sup>115</sup> For a detailed explanation of courts-martial, see Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 411; John R. Grodzinski, “‘Bloody Provost’: Discipline During the War of 1812,” *Canadian Military History* 16, Iss. 4, Art. 3, (April 2012): 25-32.

at the Garrison level – with a leather whip, known colloquially as the cat o’ nine tails, in full view of their Regiment.<sup>116</sup> This was a particularly brutal punishment, and at times even life threatening.<sup>117</sup> But because officers viewed soldiers as like animals, they felt that harsh physical punishment was necessary to keep them in line.<sup>118</sup>

The accompanying shame that a man brought upon himself and his Regiment by this very public process would have further deterred wanton drunkenness. As Lafferty notes, “as in rituals of shaming, the behaviour of a few – or even of a single man, if the conduct was considered serious enough – reflected on the entire company, and every man shared in the punishment.”<sup>119</sup> In the army, and even more so within a particular regiment, a soldier’s individual identity was subsumed by the group; all shared in glory and dishonour, in reward and punishment.<sup>120</sup> No Regiment or man wanted to earn the reputation of being drunken or disorderly, or have existing ideas about their penchant for drinking be reinforced. The martial masculine image to aspire to, as advertised by military authorities, was instead “the *good soldier*, who prides himself equally on his correct deportment in quarters as on his bravery before the enemy.”<sup>121</sup> Indeed the “Household” troops of the British army, who were considered

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<sup>116</sup> For example, as in the case of Privates John Camfield and Johnathan Harlington of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, who were sentenced to “One thousand Lashes on the bare back,” as stated in “General Orders. Montreal 27<sup>th</sup> October 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. I, 338; See also D. Graves, ed. in Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 10.

<sup>117</sup> For example, see Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 79-81.

<sup>118</sup> Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour,” 849-851.

<sup>119</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 21.

<sup>120</sup> For a discussion, see also Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack, “Defining Soldiers: Britain’s Military, c. 1740-1815,” *War in History* 20, no. 2 (2013), 156-158.

<sup>121</sup> “District General Order. Fort George, 20th October, 1812,” in *Documentary History...1812, Part II*, 141.

to be the most senior or elite men among its ranks, were said to be distinguished by their superior “Discipline, good Conduct, *Sobriety* [sic], Zeal, and Gallantry.”<sup>122</sup>

While there are a number of records from the War of 1812 which present a less than favourable image of individual soldiers, it is important to read these sources alongside the many others which instead reinforce assessments like Le Couteur’s; that enlisted soldiers were generally men of “fair character.” For every story of soldiers’ drunkenness or poor discipline, there is another of soldiers behaving well. Brock, for example, speaking of the 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment, that group whom he noted were “all Irish,” and, “of all others the most volatile and easily led astray,” also noted in March of 1807 that “the winter has nearly passed without a single instance of neglect or misconduct having occurred among the 100th regiment [...] so exemplarily have the men behaved, that, even regimentally, only one corporal punishment has been inflicted for the last three months.”<sup>123</sup> The 100<sup>th</sup> were repeatedly praised for their good behaviour both before and during the war, specifically for demonstrating “honest and Soldierlike Conduct.”<sup>124</sup> In May of 1814, General Drummond reported similar sentiments to Governor Prévost regarding the entire armed forces under his command, that “to the high honor of both branches of the service [...] not a single Soldier or Sailor is reported missing; nor did

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<sup>122</sup> Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, fn. 96.

<sup>123</sup> Isaac Brock, “Colonel Brock to the Adjutant-General of His Majesty's Forces. Quebec, March 17, 1807,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>124</sup> Isaac Brock, “Colonel Brock to the Adjutant-General of His Majesty's Forces. Quebec, March 17, 1807,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.; “Three Rivers, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1812,” in *British Military and Naval Records*, RG 8, C Series, Vol. 164a [165], 1811-1814, Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2773 (Library and Archives Canada), 1057-1058; “Special Session of the Justices of the Peace, Three Rivers, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1812” in *British Military and Naval Records*, RG 8, C Series, Vol. 164a [165], 1811-1814, Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2773 (Library and Archives Canada), 1059-1060.

I observe one of either Service in a state of intoxication, altho surrounded by temptation.”<sup>125</sup>

But these positive descriptions, and soldiers’ lack of drinking during the war, were (and are) often overlooked.

### **Perceptions and Masculine Identities**

So why did officers continue to view enlisted soldiers as problematic inebriates, in the face of so much evidence to the contrary? Why were individual instances of good conduct and sobriety not taken as representative of the whole, just as individual instances of drunkenness were? Because by constructing an identity for soldiers, officers were also constructing their own. If soldiers were “scum” or rogues, officers were respectable; if soldiers were animals, officers were civilized men; if soldiers were children, officers (even teenagers such as Le Couteur)<sup>126</sup> were adult men; if soldiers were poor husbands and fathers, officers were magnanimous patriarchs; if soldiers were dependent and restricted, officers were independent and autonomous; if soldiers were problematic inebriates, officers were tolerant, manly drinkers. By denying soldiers’ manhood, officers emphasized their own.

Numerous historians have argued that adult manhood in this period was realized by getting married, forming a household, and providing for a family.<sup>127</sup> Soldiers in the British

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<sup>125</sup> “From Drummond off Oswego to Prevost at --. Lake Ontario, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1814,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. I, 55.

<sup>126</sup> Le Couteur received his first commission at 16, as did John Richardson. Many subaltern (junior) officers would have been younger than the enlisted men under their immediate command.

<sup>127</sup> Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 163; Eustace, *Passion is the Gale*, 111-112; John Tosh, “The Old Adam and the New Man: Emerging Themes in the History of English Masculinities, 1750–1850,” in *English Masculinities, 1660–1800*, eds. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), 223; Herbert Sussman, *Masculine Identities: The History and Meanings of Manliness* (California: Praeger, 2012), 81-82; Lynch and McCormack, “Defining Soldiers,” 154-155.

army, however, were restricted in their ability to do so.<sup>128</sup> According to 1811 military regulations, only “six women and their children per troop or company” were permitted to accompany their husbands, and up to twelve when in stationary garrison.<sup>129</sup> Infantry Regiments typically had one or two Battalions, each consisting of up to one thousand men, split into ten companies. Thus, only six wives per roughly one hundred men would be permitted to accompany their husbands. Furthermore, Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack note that although wives were common in military garrisons, they were often discouraged because the army feared that too many would be a drain on resources.<sup>130</sup> Only the legal wives and children of soldiers (those on the list) were entitled to rations, and even then wives were to receive only one-half of a man’s ration, and children one-third.<sup>131</sup> Despite these restrictions, and assumptions to the contrary, many soldiers did seek to maintain domestic relationships while in service and strive to be “responsible patriarchs,” as Hurl-Eamon has shown was the case for soldiers in the previous century.<sup>132</sup> Byfield, for example, relates that when his Regiment arrived at Fort Malden, “there was a general muster of our men’s wives, anxious to learn whose husbands were amongst the killed and wounded.”<sup>133</sup> But soldiers were simply less able to keep up these relations as compared to officers.

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<sup>128</sup> For a full discussion of marriage in the British army, see Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*; and Graves, *In the Midst of Alarms*.

<sup>129</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, *General Regulations and Orders for the Army*, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1811 (London: W. Clowes, 1811), 255; “Adjutant General’s Office Quebec 17th March 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 762-763.

<sup>130</sup> Linch and McCormack, “Defining Soldiers,” 154-55.

<sup>131</sup> “Adjutant General’s Office Quebec 17th March 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 762-763.

<sup>132</sup> Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 91; Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 166-167.

<sup>133</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 75.

Commissioned officers were permitted to bring their wives with them at their own discretion (although they would have to provide for them, which some junior officers were unable to do).<sup>134</sup> Some men, such as Lieutenant-Colonel John Maule of the 104<sup>th</sup> Regiment, or Lieutenant-Colonel John Murray of the 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment, did so, and others did not, however the choice was theirs.<sup>135</sup> Many senior officers elected to bring their wives to the Canadas, but to leave them in the relative safety of city centres such as Montreal. The women who did join the garrison, despite being few in number, exerted a significant domestic influence.<sup>136</sup> Julia Roberts argues that even putatively masculine spaces, such as the wartime garrison at Kingston, were, in reality, shared gender spaces, defined not only by the activities of officers and soldiers, “but also by the genteel domesticity orchestrated by the subaltern’s wife.”<sup>137</sup> By bringing their wives along, officers continued to fulfil their domestic masculine role as husbands and patriarchs.

When officers’ wives and families were not present, many officers (and soldiers) kept up their domestic relations through correspondence instead. Louise Carter and Helen Metcalfe have argued that correspondence with family members was a primary means by which Napoleonic era soldiers maintained domestic and familial attachments when far from home.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Graves, *In the Midst of Alarms*, 69-71.

<sup>135</sup> Graves, *In the Midst of Alarms*, 135, 139.

<sup>136</sup> Julia Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife: Writing the History of the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 97, no. 3 (Sept. 2016), 330-333; Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 91, 112-114, 141; Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 179-180; Graves, *In the Midst of Alarms*, 136-137.

<sup>137</sup> Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife,” 330-332.

<sup>138</sup> Louise Carter, “Brothers in Arms? Military Masculinities and Family Feeling in Old Soldiers’ Memoirs, 1793-1815,” in *Martial Masculinities: Experiencing and Imagining the Military in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Michael Brown, Anna Maria Barry, and Joanne Begiato (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 35-57; Helen Metcalfe, “Recalling the Comforts of Home: Bachelor Soldiers’ Narratives of Nostalgia and the Re-Creation of the Domestic Interior,” in *Martial Masculinities*, 58-81.

Carter in particular argues that soldiers saw the “the mantle of son, father, husband and brother as equally vital and integral components of martial and manly identity.”<sup>139</sup> There is considerable evidence to suggest that soldiers, and especially officers serving in the War of 1812 did so also. Lieutenant MacEwen of the Royal Scots, for example, wrote frequently to his wife at Montreal, no matter where he found himself.<sup>140</sup> Militia Captain Charles Askin sent his love and affection for the whole family in letters to his father.<sup>141</sup> Brock, although not married, wrote frequently to his younger brothers Savery and Irving. These officers did not forego their domestic identity as husbands and brothers when they donned the uniform. They continued to negotiate their masculinity within the domestic realm as in the martial, and likely did not see the two identities as contradictory.<sup>142</sup> For example, when William Hamilton Merritt gave descriptions of the officers with whom he was held prisoner during the war, he spoke highly of men such as Captain Thompson, who embodied this dual identity. Merritt described Thompson as “a man of most exemplary morals, a mild, good temper, and possessed of more

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<sup>139</sup> Carter, “Brothers in Arms?”, 51.

<sup>140</sup> “Lieut. MacEwen, Royal Scots, to his Wife at Montreal. Kingston, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part II*, 92; “Lieut. MacEwen to his Wife, at Montreal. Carrying Place, 23d June, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part II*, 93; “Lieut. MacEwen, Royal Scots, to his wife at Montreal. Woods, 12 Miles from Fort George, 3d July, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part II*, 174-175; “Lieut. MacEwen, Royal Scots, to his Wife at Montreal. Camp. 4 Miles from Fort George, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part II*, 279-280.

<sup>141</sup> “Charles Askin to John Askin, various dates,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part II*, 193-198; “Charles Askin to John Askin. St David’s, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1813,” in *Documentary History...1813, Part III*, 32-33.

<sup>142</sup> Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife,” 337; Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 177; See also Carter, “Brothers in Arms?”, 35-57; Helen Metcalfe, “Recalling the Comforts of Home: Bachelor Soldiers’ Narratives of Nostalgia and the Re-Creation of the Domestic Interior,” in *Martial Masculinities*, 58-81.

fortitude than generally falls to the lot of mankind; is a true and affectionate husband; in short, I think he has not a bad quality about him.”<sup>143</sup>

Historians of the period have further noted that officers not only maintained domestic connections with the civilian sphere, they also recreated paternal and fraternal relationships within the martial sphere.<sup>144</sup> Carter argues that soldiers constructed surrogate family relationships within their regiments, and in some cases even took on domestic responsibilities such as watching over the orphaned child or widow of a deceased comrade.<sup>145</sup> This was the case with soldiers and officers who served in the War of 1812 as well. For example, Dunlop recalled fondly his “brother officers [...] a more honest-hearted set of fellows never met round a mess table. No private family ever lived in more concord or unanimity than did ‘Our Mess.’”<sup>146</sup> Le Couteur expressed similar sentiments about his regimental comrades.<sup>147</sup>

Officers also constructed themselves as paternal figures to the men under their command. Like a parent, they were often involved in every aspect of a young soldiers’ life:

In quarters their every motion is under the surveillance of their officers—the Captain and Subaltern of the day visit them each twice a day, and the Commanding Officer and one or other of the Majors frequently, to say nothing of the Surgeon and the Captain of their Company [...] It must be certified that their room is duly swept and cleaned, their bedding regularly made up and folded, their meals properly dressed, and it is not even left to their own discretion to eat them when dressed, but an officer must see and certify that fact. Their shaving, their ablutions, their cleaning their shoes and clothes, all come under the same strict supervision, so that at last they get into the notion that their comfort, cleanliness, feeding and

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<sup>143</sup> William Hamilton Merritt, *Journal of Events Principally on the Detroit and Niagara Frontiers During the War of 1812* (St. Catharines: Historical Society, B.N.A., 1863), 77-78.

<sup>144</sup> Carter, “Brothers in Arms?”, 46-48; Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 168, 177; Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 118.

<sup>145</sup> Carter, “Brothers in Arms?”, 46, 41.

<sup>146</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 27-28.

<sup>147</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 154.



clothing, all are the duty and business of their officers, they having no interest in the matter, and that what they are not ordered to do for their own relief they may leave undone.<sup>148</sup>

The role of the commissioned officer was to set a good example for their young troops, to teach them skills and bring them to maturity, just as a father would. This included teaching soldiers how to moderate their drinking, so that their daily consumption of alcohol would not render them drunk.<sup>149</sup> Dunlop recognized that “the result of all this excessive care and attention is that you make men mere children.”<sup>150</sup> By constructing themselves as manly patriarchs, officers constructed enlisted soldiers as children, which, in turn, fed notions that they were prone to drunkenness and other moral failings.

Paradoxically, these paternal and fraternal relationship were often established through shared alcohol consumption.<sup>151</sup> Before battles, in celebration, or in moments of repose, officers would often take a drink with their men. These types of interactions were similar to rituals of “treating” in civilian society. In taverns or similar settings, an individual would “treat” their fellows by buying a round for each man at the bar, which would then be repaid in turn.<sup>152</sup> Early historians of Upper Canada problematized treating as one of the chief factors contributing to widespread intemperance, but more recent historians of alcohol in the pre-Temperance era

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<sup>148</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 59-61.

<sup>149</sup> In civilian society, young boys were thought to need “seasoning” to help them develop the requisite tolerance to drink on a regular basis without succumbing to drunkenness. This same process played out in the army. Hurl-Eamon, for example, notes that “Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Moore was very conscious of the need to teach the men of the 51st Foot how to moderate their drinking.” Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 176.

<sup>150</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 58-61.

<sup>151</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 12-15; Heron, *Booze*, 36, 40.

<sup>152</sup> For a discussion of treating in Upper Canadian taverns, see Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 86-88; also, Kevin B. Wamsley and Robert S. Kossuth, “Fighting it Out in Nineteenth-Century Upper Canada/Canada West: Masculinities and Physical Challenges in the Tavern,” *Journal of Sport History* 27, no. 3 (Fall 2000), 417.

have emphasized the ritual's cohesive power.<sup>153</sup> As J. Roberts explains, treating carried a variety of meanings; it created social bonds between tavern-goers, whether friends, enemies, or old acquaintances, and was also common in master-servant relationships, where it reinforced the relative social position of the two parties.<sup>154</sup> Historians now highlight the role which treating played in binding men together through a common sense of masculinity and fraternity.<sup>155</sup>

In martial settings, treating functioned similarly, and there are numerous examples from the War of 1812 which bear this out. Richardson, for example, recalled a night, likely before the battle of Fort Meigs, in which officers joined the artillerymen, and “pointed the guns – a favor on the part of the artillerymen, which was generally repaid by a glass of rum or whiskey.”<sup>156</sup> A young Stephen Jarvis recalled another night, when, on sentry, Lieutenant Nathaniel FitzPatrick “a generous, openhearted Irishman [...] made me partake of the contents of his Canteen of Brandy.”<sup>157</sup> Le Couteur recalled that on his gruelling winter march from Fredericton to Kingston in the Winter of 1813, that “the lads would often come and sit with us, drink our Brandy and water and sing us to sleep.”<sup>158</sup> Situations such as these, in which spaces were less defined and traditional structures were not in place – or in which men suffered

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<sup>153</sup> For example, see Garland and Talman, “Pioneer Drinking Habits,” 174; For a discussion, see Ashleigh Hardin, “History of Alcohol Abuse in Bars,” in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol: Social, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Scott C. Martin (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2015), 216; for newer interpretations see following notes.

<sup>154</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 86.

<sup>155</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 87-88; Wamsley and Kossuth, “Fighting it Out,” 417.

<sup>156</sup> Sighting the guns was usually a job for junior officers or NCOs; Richardson, *War of 1812*, 85.

<sup>157</sup> Colonel Stephen Jarvis, “The Narrative of Colonel Stephen Jarvis,” *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada*, ed. James J. Talman (Publications of the Champlain Society, 27. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1946), 160-161.

<sup>158</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 109.

together communally – would have made this more permissible. Richardson, for example, recalled how on campaign,

the same fire warmed their feet, and the same laugh was provoked by the quaint and characteristic tales of those who passed the midnight hours in stirring the embers of the dying fire, and relating what they thought would afford amusement to their officers. Here was a fellowship – a companionship which, without one moment losing sight of the relative positions of the parties, blended all in cheerful concord.<sup>159</sup>

Clearly rank was still important, but many of the typical social mores were overlooked in these types of situations.

This homosocialization over alcohol consumption and officers' attention to soldiers' care often endeared men to their commanding officers. As Coss argues, "the psychological and physiological experiences of campaign and combat bonded the common British soldier to the men with whom he lived, suffered, and fought. Their ongoing desperation strengthened the bonds that connected them."<sup>160</sup> Captain Charles Askin, for example, in a letter home to his father, praised his commanding officer Colonel Bishopp for his attempts to alleviate the sickness and suffering of the ill-equipped militia camped outside Fort Erie, at his own expense.<sup>161</sup> Askin called him "a most Gallant Young Officer," and noted that by providing this aid, "[Bishopp] has already ingratiated himself in their favor and he is as much liked by them

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<sup>159</sup> Major John Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada; Embracing a Review of the Administrations of Lords Durham and Sydenham, Sir Chas. Bagot, and Lord Metcalfe* (Montreal: H. H. Cunningham, 1847), 75-77.

<sup>160</sup> Coss, *All for the King's Shilling*, 7.

<sup>161</sup> Charles Askin, "Mountain Near Queenston, Dec. 11th, 1812," in *Records of Niagara 1812 to 1813* (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 43, Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Historical Society, n.d.), n.p.; Linch and McCormack note that officers could largely spend Regimental funds how they thought best, and those who chose to spend it on their men were revered for it. Linch and McCormack, "Defining Soldiers," 156-158.

as General Brock was.”<sup>162</sup> That high praise was not insignificant, given how “very much beloved” Brock was by his men.<sup>163</sup>

But only officers, as patriarchs and adult men, were permitted to drink at will, or to share their canteen – soldiers were not. In civilian society in Britain and in Canada at the time, most adult white males would not have had their access to alcohol restricted in this way. But soldiers, whose adult status was in question, did not have the same right to drink. A General Order dated November 23, 1812, made it clear that:

“the issue of Rum to the Soldier is an act of grace, upon which he cannot found a right, therefore whenever it is judged proper it may be discontinued altogether or, only in part, at the discretion of the General Officer in Command [...] This Order to be read at the head of Companies and explained distinctly to the Men.”<sup>164</sup>

That such an order had to be issued at all suggests that enlisted men had indeed come to see the rum ration as their right, however, officers clearly disagreed. They were willing to discontinue the rum ration in order to reinforce their authority, even at the risk of mutiny – as Lafferty has shown was the case aboard a transport bound for Deal in March of 1812.<sup>165</sup> Le Couteur had attempted to modify the rum ration granted to a number of “disorderly” Peninsular War veterans under his command, and was nearly thrown overboard for it.<sup>166</sup> As Lafferty notes, “the men under Le Couteur’s command did not threaten to toss him into the sea because of a craving for alcohol, but because he had disrupted a central ritual of their experience – indeed,

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<sup>162</sup> Askin, “Mountain Near Queenston, Dec. 11th, 1812,” in *Records of Niagara*, n.p.

<sup>163</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 64.

<sup>164</sup> Baynes, “General Order. Chambly 23rd November 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. III, Part II, 737.

<sup>165</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 14-15.

<sup>166</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 56-57.

he was threatening something which many soldiers and sailors envisioned as a right.”<sup>167</sup> Even the young Le Couteur, however, at the time only seventeen and a junior officer, had the ability to deny those “two hundred Peninsular heroes” what they perceived as their “right.”<sup>168</sup> He promptly ordered “the most violent offenders seized – one to be well flogged, the other to look on.”<sup>169</sup> After this, Le Couteur proudly reported, “there was no more trouble – My troops were in hand.”<sup>170</sup>

This chapter has demonstrated that contrary to Wellington’s biased caricature, common soldiers drank as a regular part of the military experience, but not generally to excess, and certainly no more than their civilian counterparts. An analysis of the records from the War of 1812 does not reveal an image of the common soldier as a problematic inebriate. Rather, most of the sources present a narrative of scarcity, and an image of responsible, disciplined troops (who admittedly misbehaved on occasion). Our perception of common soldiers, however, has been indelibly coloured by officers’ characterizations of them as drunken, or prone to drink. What is important to recognize is that these characterizations tell us more about how officers perceived themselves than reveal any reality about the enlisted men under their command. Instead, they reveal that officers constructed themselves, in relation to soldiers, as responsible patriarchs and tolerant drinkers, in full control of themselves and those under their command.

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<sup>167</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 15.

<sup>168</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 55.

<sup>169</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 57-58.

<sup>170</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 57-58.

In the next chapter we will turn our focus to those officers and a discussion of their particular drinking habits.

## Chapter 2 - Gentlemen-Officers



*Figure 2: Portrait of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock*

Major-General Isaac Brock, one of the most iconic British army officers from the War of 1812, was described by one of his contemporaries as “exceedingly affable and gentlemanly, of a cheerful and social habit, partial to dancing, and although never married, extremely

devoted to female society.”<sup>1</sup> Another noted that Brock “blended the mildest of manners with the severity and discipline of a camp.”<sup>2</sup> These descriptions of Brock reveal that British army officers in this period were judged for more than their skill on the battlefield. The ideal officer was also a gentleman, denoted by his refined manners, skill in dancing, and capacity for polite social performance.<sup>3</sup> He was both “a gentleman and an officer.”<sup>4</sup> As historian Douglas Peers explains, these terms “were not synonymous nor was the expression ‘officer and gentleman’ merely repetitive.”<sup>5</sup> In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, British army officers embodied a true dual identity.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As described by John Richardson, who fought with the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment during the war, and had met Brock personally while in service. Major (John) Richardson, *War of 1812. First Series. Containing a Full and Detailed Narrative of the Operations of the Right Division, of the Canadian Army* (Brockville: n.p., 1842), 68.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Christie, *Memoirs of the Administration of the Colonial Government of Lower-Canada* (Quebec: [s.n.], 1818), 62.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Carter argues that masculinity was not just as a social but a sociable category in which gender identity was conferred, or denied, by men’s capacity for gentlemanly social performance. Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001), 209.

<sup>4</sup> “Conduct unbecoming a gentleman and an officer,” was a common charge in courts-martial cases in the period. See William Hough and George Long, *Practice of Courts Martial, Also the Legal Exposition and Military Explanation of the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War* 2nd Edition (London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1825), 293.

<sup>5</sup> Douglas Peers, “Discipline and Publish: Military Law, Punishments, and the Negotiation of Order and Honour in the Company Era” (Unpublished Manuscript, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020), n.p.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Spiers argues that this “officer-gentleman” tradition remained pervasive in the British army well into the nineteenth century. Edward Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980), 1; For further discussion of officers’ dual identity, see Matthew McCormack, “Dance and Drill: Polite Accomplishments and Military Masculinities in Georgian Britain,” *Cultural and Social History* 8, no. 3 (September 2011): 315–330; Catriona Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle: Military Masculinity and the British Army Officer during the Napoleonic Wars,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hageman, Gisela Mettele and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 127-146; Gavin Daly, “Liberators and Tourists: British Soldiers in Madrid during the Peninsular War,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 117-135; Gavin Daly, *The British Soldier in the Peninsular War: Encounters with Spain and Portugal, 1808-1814* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 12; Matthew McCormack, “Stamford Standoff: Honour, Status and Rivalry in the Georgian Military,” in *Britain’s Soldiers: Rethinking War and Society, 1715-1815*, eds. Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014), 77-92.



Historians of the British army have demonstrated that officers constructed their dual identity by cultivating and demonstrating skill in dancing, as well as through various aspects of elaborate uniforming.<sup>7</sup> As Catriona Kennedy argues, “to show their politeness in public engagements British officers endeavoured to dress well, be skilled in dancing, and versed in art, literature, and the latest fashions.”<sup>8</sup> Fewer historians, however, have considered the role which alcohol consumption played in constructing polite, gentlemanly identities.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Kennedy frames gentlemanly masculinities expressed in homosocial rituals such as hunting, gambling and drinking as inherently different from masculinities expressed in rituals of politeness.<sup>10</sup> This chapter argues that drinking was key to both.

In the long eighteenth century, what a gentleman or gentleman-officer drank – whether wine, punch, beer, cider, gin or even non-alcoholic drinks such as tea or coffee – as well as how he drank it, where and with whom, and how he tolerated the inebriating effects, all said a lot about him in the eyes of his peers in public society.<sup>11</sup> Perceptions of different types of alcohol and preferred modes of consumption were heavily influenced by social and cultural

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<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of the role of dress in constructing an officer’s polite gentlemanly identity, see Matthew McCormack, “Boots, Material Culture and Georgian Masculinities,” *Social History* 42, no. 4 (October 2017): 461–479; see also Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 60-62, 240-241; Kevin Linch and Matthew McCormack, “Defining Soldiers: Britain’s Military, c. 1740-1815,” *War in History* 20, no. 2 (2013), 156-158; Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 8-10; Jennine Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army in the Long Eighteenth Century: ‘The Girl I Left Behind Me,’* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 90-119; For a discussion of dance, see McCormack, “Dance and Drill,” 323, 326-327; William H. McNeill, *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History* (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 138.

<sup>9</sup> A notable exception being Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*.

<sup>10</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 137.

<sup>11</sup> Susanne Schmid and Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp, eds., *Drink in the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, [2014] 2016), page.

factors, and, as such, different beverages carried strong national, class, gender, and even racial connotations.<sup>12</sup> The consumption of wine in this period, for example, which took a considerable amount of time, care, and land to produce, denoted genteel status.<sup>13</sup> Claret wine from Bordeaux was particularly desired in polite company, but also problematically associated with Britain's imperial enemy, France. Port wine, on the other hand, was favoured for its manly strength and because it came from Britain's imperial ally, Portugal.<sup>14</sup> Rum punch was popular, as Karen Harvey has argued, because the drinking of punch celebrated the British Empire, with its varied ingredients supplied by Britain's overseas colonial possessions.<sup>15</sup> In this way, a gentleman's choice of beverage could broadcast patriotic loyalty, affirm class status, and assert (or potentially undermine) their manhood. Thus, as argued by Craig Heron, "for many men, drinking, especially public drinking, was less about consumption than sociability."<sup>16</sup> In the context of eighteenth and early nineteenth century polite sociability, the public consumption of fine wines conveyed gentlemen's privileged masculine status to their peers within the community. More private performances also asserted gentlemen's masculinity to each other.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 6-15, 382; Karen Harvey, "Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 214, no. 1 (February 2012), 180; Schmid and Schmidt-Haberkamp, *Drink in the Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century*, 1; see also Erica Wald, "Governing the Bottle: Alcohol, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century India," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46, no. 3 (2018), 407; Harald Fischer-Tiné, "'The Drinking Habits of our Countrymen': European Alcohol Consumption and Colonial Power in British India," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 3 (September 2012): 399.

<sup>13</sup> Harvey, "Ritual Encounters," 180; Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 183.

<sup>14</sup> For a detailed explanation, see Charles Ludington, "'Claret is the Liquor for Boys; Port for Men': How Port Became the 'Englishman's Wine,' 1750s to 1800," *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 2 (April 2009), 364-390.

<sup>15</sup> Harvey, "Ritual Encounters," 173-175.

<sup>16</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 382.

<sup>17</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 183, 187, 210; Both Hinote and Webber, and Heron, respectively, have also shown that this was also the case with Russian and Canadian working-class men in the space of the tavern, workplace, and pub. Brian P. Hinote and Gretchen R. Webber, "Drinking Toward Manhood: Masculinity

The important role which alcohol consumption played in the construction of officers' dual identity in public is revealed in the wartime diaries, journals, and memoirs of officers who served in the War of 1812. Especially, in the daily journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur. Le Couteur was born on the Channel Island of Jersey in 1794, the son of an army general, and a member of the minor gentry.<sup>18</sup> He attended the Royal Military College in 1808, where he excelled in his studies. Le Couteur graduated in 1810, at the age of sixteen. He would forever think of himself as a "gentleman cadet."<sup>19</sup> Upon graduation, Le Couteur was appointed an ensign in the 96<sup>th</sup> Foot, stationed in Jersey. This appointment was at the behest of his father, a well-respected General, who wanted his young son close to home. By 1812, however, Le Couteur had been fast-tracked to the rank of lieutenant, and desired to join the 77<sup>th</sup> Foot under Wellington in Spain. At his father's request, he transferred instead to the 104<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot stationed in the Canadas.<sup>20</sup> The Peninsular War was a more prestigious posting, but the North American conflict was thought to be safer. Le Couteur spent the summer of 1812 at the Army Depot on the Isle of Wight, before shipping out to join his new Regiment in New

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and Alcohol in the Former USSR," *Men and Masculinities* 15, no. 3 (2012): 292-310; Craig Heron, "The Boys and Their Booze: Masculinities and Public Drinking in Working-class Hamilton, 1890-1946," *The Canadian Historical Review* 86, no. 3 (2005), 411-452.

<sup>18</sup> For an excellent biography, see Donald Graves' introduction to John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 4-13.

<sup>19</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Originally raised as the New Brunswick Fencible Regiment in 1803, the 104<sup>th</sup> was the only Regiment of the line which had been recruited primarily outside of Britain. Fencible Regiments were better trained and equipped than local militias but were still only expected to serve within the Canadas in a defensive role. This Fencible Regiment, however, volunteered for general service in 1808, and again in 1810, when they were finally accepted. At the outbreak of the War they were posted in New Brunswick, and comprised a mix of British (mostly Scottish) and Canadian troops. They served primarily as a light infantry unit, and Le Couteur frequently referred to himself and his comrades as "Light Bobs."

Brunswick. Over the course of the war, Le Couteur saw considerable action, particularly on the Niagara frontier, but he also spent a significant amount of time socializing and drinking with the colony's social elite. His wartime diary, spanning the years 1812-1815 was unfortunately lost over time, but Le Couteur wrote a memoir in later years based on his diary which was published posthumously and has survived.<sup>21</sup> Le Couteur's diary, as well accounts from other officers such as William "Tiger" Dunlop, John Richardson, and William Hamilton Merritt, provide historians a window into the off-field actions of gentlemen-officers serving in the Canadas during the War of 1812.<sup>22</sup>

Rules of the officers' mess also provide valuable insight into gentlemen-officers' socialization behind closed doors. The mess was a space in which officers dined, drank, and socialized with one another. "Mess rules," or rules governing the conduct of officers dining in the mess, differed from regiment to regiment and from one group of officers to the next, but we do have several examples. The rules for the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment's officer's mess, approved at a meeting in Québec on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804, were captured along with Colonel Henry Proctor's personal papers during his infamous retreat in the Fall of 1813.<sup>23</sup> Given that Proctor had the rules with him at the time, they were likely still in effect. The early nineteenth-century military author, Major Charles James, also provides two examples of mess rules in his 1811 *Regimental*

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<sup>21</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 2.

<sup>22</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1905); Richardson, *War of 1812*; William Hamilton Merritt, "Misc Doc. A – Merritt's Journal," in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. III, pt. II, ed. William Wood (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1928).

<sup>23</sup> The author is very thankful to whomever transcribed and posted them, as access to the actual primary document (held in the U.S. National Archives) was restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. See "Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment," *Forty-First Blog* (Forty-First Regiment of Foot Military Living History Group), Accessed January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. <http://www.fortyfirst.org/transcripts-03-mess-rules.html>

*Companion*, which he included to serve as models for officers seeking to establish their own “mess of distinction.”<sup>24</sup> The first is taken from a Battalion of Highlander Fencible Infantry who served during the War of the First Coalition, and the second from an unnamed “Regiment of Light Dragoons.”<sup>25</sup> These rules governed every aspect of gentlemanly socialization in the mess, including the consumption of alcohol, and reveal how gentlemen-officers were expected, and indeed encouraged, to behave.

Taken together, these sources give us a sense of how gentlemen-officers behaved in both public and private settings, revealing how an officer constructed his “gentlemanly” identity. As this chapter argues, gentlemanliness in the British army in this period was both an indicator of class status and carried masculine connotations. It signified wealth and status – as officers of the previous era were drawn from the aristocracy and nobility and purchased their commission – but also a certain masculine deportment. Gentlemen, and gentlemen-officers, were distinguished by the way they carried and conducted themselves. Dictates of “politeness,” which governed gentlemanly conduct in civilian society in the eighteenth century, continued to exert an influence in the military in this period. Officers endeavoured to assert their gentlemanly identity through polite masculine social performance. During the War of 1812, aspiring gentlemen-officers mingled with the colony’s social elite, courted ladies, attended balls and dances, and drank fine wine. Even during the Canadian winter, they strove to live

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<sup>24</sup> For a brief biography of James, see Jacqueline Reiter, “The name’s James, Charles James: A Napoleonic Enigma,” *The Late Lord* online, Posted 18/06/2019, <https://thelatelord.com/2019/06/18/the-names-james-charles-james-a-napoleonic-enigma-part-1/>

<sup>25</sup> Charles James, *The Regimental Companion: Containing the Pay, Allowances and Relative Duties of Every Officer in the British Service*. Vol. II (London: C. Roworth, 1811), 337-345.

and socialize according to privileged social station. Their expensive spending habits and conspicuous consumption of alcohol, necessary to maintain social standing, played an important role in constructing their gentlemanly identity in the public eye. Behind closed doors, in the homosocial environment of the mess, officers also proved their gentlemanliness to each other. They dined together in very formal and genteel style – even while on campaign – governed by an established set of rules, which ensured that all men conformed to the gentlemanly ideal. A successful masculine performance in this space not only established an officers’ gentlemanly identity, it also established his place in an internal hierarchy of manliness. An officer was judged not only by how, where and with whom he consumed alcohol, but also, most importantly, how he bore its inebriating effects. A failure to perform adequately was embarrassing, and potentially emasculating. Gentlemen-officers were expected to exercise restraint at all times, even when imbibing heavily, and any display of drunkenness, especially in public, threatened to undermine officers’ gendered and classed assertions of superiority.

### **A Gentleman and an Officer**

To be a “gentleman” in British society in the eighteenth century, a man needed some combination of land-holdings, wealth, or aristocratic family ties. Gentlemanliness denoted gentility, and the officer corps of the era expressed this understanding of social precedence as it was primarily drawn from the nobility, aristocracy, and gentry. Both Isaac Brock and John Le Couteur, for example, came from prominent well-established Channel Island families, and were members of the landed gentry. Within the military, this civilian class dynamic and

deferential hierarchy was largely maintained by a system in which commissioned ranks were purchased.

The purchase system was complex, highly regulated, and ultimately meant to recreate and reinforce the civilian social hierarchy within the military sphere.<sup>26</sup> Men could obtain commissions by means other than purchase, but it was much more difficult to advance through the ranks by doing so. Would-be-officers without financial means had to apply to be entered into a register and wait to be appointed in turn. As historian Anthony Bruce notes, however, only the best and luckiest cadets (or those with influential family connections) made it through, as in peacetime demand exceeded supply.<sup>27</sup> Kennedy adds that emphasis was typically placed on personal comportment and gentility, rather than martial skill.<sup>28</sup> Would-be-officers with financial means, on the other hand, could purchase the entry level rank of ensign (or have it purchased for them), for roughly £450.<sup>29</sup> After two years in service as a subaltern (ensign or lieutenant), they were eligible to purchase a captaincy (if one was available), costing roughly £1,500, and so on up the ranks.<sup>30</sup> Purchasable promotions, which arose when a man retired or sold (or was forced to sell) his commission, were only offered by seniority and after a minimum period of service, however, seniority could be superseded if the next in line could not afford

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<sup>26</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the commission system, see Anthony Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army, 1660-1871* (Royal Historical Society, 1980); Alan James Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-63* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1985), 90-91; Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 213-221; See also Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle," 128-131.

<sup>27</sup> Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 43-46.

<sup>28</sup> Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle," 130.

<sup>29</sup> Adjusted for inflation, that would be roughly \$10,000 USD today. See Holmes, *Redcoat*, 213; John Grodzinski, "'Bloody Provost: Discipline During the War of 1812,'" *Canadian Military History* 16, no. 4 (October 2007): 27.

<sup>30</sup> Roughly \$30,000 USD today. See above note.

the regulated price of the offered commission. Consequently, purchase was the most common means of advancement prior to the war.<sup>31</sup> The high price of commissions effectively restricted access to the officer ranks – especially the senior officer ranks – to men of means. Furthermore, officers were expected to pay for their own uniform, rations, equipment, lodging, and lifestyle. This typically necessitated an outside source of income because an officer’s pay was rarely enough to cover their often-extravagant expenses.<sup>32</sup> Thus, holding an officer’s commission denoted and demanded a certain level of wealth and financial independence (a defining quality of adult manhood) and conferred gentlemanly status.

During the War of 1812 and the larger Napoleonic Wars, however, this intricate system of purchase and sale was largely bypassed out of necessity. Previously, men of lower birth or lesser means had to wait entire lifetimes for promotion by seniority into vacant positions, but “non-purchase” vacancies were rapidly being created as the size of the British army increased exponentially to wage war against Napoleon, and as serving officers died in the fighting. Many “non-gentlemen” were thus recruited to fill the officer ranks, and promoted much more quickly than usual.<sup>33</sup> As Le Couteur noted, “in those days of raging wars, all sorts of men obtained Commissions, some without education, some without means, some without either, and many

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<sup>31</sup> Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 46.

<sup>32</sup> The editor of Le Couteur’s diary, Donald Graves, breaks down his finances as a subaltern. After deductions, and even with an allowance from his parents, Graves notes that Le Couteur had as much disposable income “as a small farmer or minor clergyman.” This he was expected to spend on uniforms, equipment, rations, the mess fund, etc., which would have cost much more than his income if done according to gentlemanly dictates. Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 10; Scott Myerly notes that “by 1811, many officers could not meet their expenses without outside incomes.” Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*, 2; See also, Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 72-73, 90.

<sup>33</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 130.



of low birth.”<sup>34</sup> John Richardson, for example, enlisted as a volunteer in the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot in 1812, at the age of fifteen, and by the end of the war he was a lieutenant.<sup>35</sup> Le Couteur himself began the war at the rank of lieutenant, only two years after graduating from military college, and by 1817 was offered his much desired captaincy by non-purchase promotion.<sup>36</sup> Historians estimate that during the Napoleonic era, roughly 80 percent of all commissions in the British army were obtained by means other than purchase.<sup>37</sup> Consequently, the lower ranks of the officer corps were no longer dominated by men who had purchased their position, or who had been appointed to it based on their family name or social connections.<sup>38</sup>

As a result, as argued by Kennedy, the gentlemanly status of officers in this period, particularly subaltern officers, could be rather precarious.<sup>39</sup> As junior officers, they were often quite young and inexperienced. Both Le Couteur and Richardson, for example, received their first commission at sixteen, and Dunlop (who had attended medical school first) at twenty. Subalterns received limited pay, lacked any real authority (as they were almost always outranked in any given situation), and were tasked with a significant amount of work. Le Couteur noted that “subs, the pride and safeguards of the army, are jolly house keepers,” giving us an idea of the type of important, but less-than-prestigious, work that they were doing.<sup>40</sup> As Kennedy has shown, this subordinate position limited these men’s ability to achieve full

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<sup>34</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 54-55.

<sup>35</sup> Promotion from the ranks was not common, and usually only occurred during wartime, as with Richardson, see Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 74; David R. Beasley, “Richardson, John (1796-1852),” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> Graves, ed., in Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 19.

<sup>37</sup> Holmes, *Redcoat*, 213; Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 131; D. Graves, ed., in Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 11.

<sup>38</sup> The most senior positions remained quite aristocratic.

<sup>39</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 131.

<sup>40</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 109.

manhood while in service.<sup>41</sup> She argues that the harsh realities of the Peninsular War further complicated subalterns' ability to assert their status as polite gentlemen while on campaign.<sup>42</sup> As will be shown, however, subaltern officers who served in the War of 1812, such as Dunlop and Le Couteur, do not appear to have had as much difficulty with the latter.

The officers who fought in the War of 1812 were not, in large part, traditional gentlemen as in the previous era, and many did occupy subaltern roles. Dunlop, for example, who served as Assistant Surgeon<sup>43</sup> in the 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment, was the third son of a Scottish banker.<sup>44</sup> William Hamilton Merritt, Captain in the 1<sup>st</sup> Niagara Light Dragoons, a colonial militia unit, was born in New York State, the son of an army officer who settled in Upper Canada following the American Revolution and who later became sheriff of Lincoln County.<sup>45</sup> Richardson, who volunteered in the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment and later became an ensign in the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, was born in Niagara to a former army surgeon turned District Court Judge, and the daughter of prominent fur trader John Askin.<sup>46</sup> All three men enjoyed privileged access to education, family networks, and relative wealth, but were certainly not members of the landed gentry. Despite their varied backgrounds, however, the officers' commission which these men held denoted a certain level of gentlemanly status. As historian Alan Guy notes, "even if a man

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<sup>41</sup> Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle," 131-132.

<sup>42</sup> Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle," 141-142.

<sup>43</sup> Equivalent to the rank of lieutenant.

<sup>44</sup> For a biography, see the introduction by Arthur H. U. Colquhoun's in Dunlop, *Recollections*; See also, Gary Draper and Roger Hall, "Dunlop, William, Tiger Dunlop," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> For a biography, see J. J. Talman, "Merritt, William Hamilton (1793-1862)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>46</sup> For a biography, see David R. Beasley, "Richardson, John (1796-1852)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

was not a member of polite society, his commission gave him entry to it.”<sup>47</sup> Consequently, these young officers were expected to act as gentlemen, whether or not they would have been recognized as such outside of the service.

As gentlemen, officers were expected to conform to the dictates of “politeness.”<sup>48</sup> Politeness was a gendered code of conduct which governed social interactions between gentlemen and ladies in civilian high society. It was both gender inclusive, in that polite conversation among men could depend on women’s presence, but also gender distinct, with different codes of behaviour for men and women.<sup>49</sup> The prescription for polite gentlemen was good manners, restraint in emotional expression and indulgence in vice, and a penchant for polite conversation.<sup>50</sup> Polite gentlemen saw themselves as models of civility; their tastes were sophisticated and their dress elegant. Michèle Cohen and Philip Carter have argued that it was the polite and refined gentleman which represented the hegemonic masculine ideal in British society in the eighteenth century.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline*, 166.

<sup>48</sup> As argued by Daly, *The British Soldier*, 12; Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, “Introduction: New Histories of Soldiering,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 12; Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 137-138.

<sup>49</sup> Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005), 301-302; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 190-191; Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 137.

<sup>50</sup> For a discussion of emotional expression, see Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Harvey, “The History of Masculinity,” 301.

<sup>51</sup> Michèle Cohen, “‘Manners’ Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750–1830,” *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (April 2005), 312-314; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 209, 213; although some scholars, such as Harvey note that historians have increasingly begun to move beyond the hegemonic model, and place polite masculinity alongside numerous other legitimate styles of manhood. Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 170-171.

Army officers of the era, as gentlemen, were equally judged for their capacity for polite social performance.<sup>52</sup> Men such as Lieutenant-General James Henry Craig, who was described as both “strong and regular [...] severe and imposing, his deportment, manly and dignified,” but also “in society [...] polite, frank, and affable.”<sup>53</sup> Gentlemen-officers affirmed their dual-identity by engaging in polite conversation, accompanying ladies to balls, and showing off their skills in dancing. As Matthew McCormack has shown, the ball was an important ritual occasion in military life, one which reinforced polite and martial masculinities, and dancing played a key role in that ceremony.<sup>54</sup> But these events also gave gentlemen equal opportunity to flaunt their knowledge of and taste for fine wines, which had distinct polite and genteel connotations.

By the end of the eighteenth century, scholars agree that the hegemony of politeness was in decline.<sup>55</sup> As a code of masculine behaviour which closely resembled effete satirized forms such as the overrefined fop, and required the presence of women to be achieved most effectively, historians argue that politeness had always been in danger of lapsing into effeminacy.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, increased hostilities with the French, whom the British elite regarded as the masters of polite conversation, had serious implications for “Frenchified” polite

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<sup>52</sup> Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 209.

<sup>53</sup> Ferdinand Brock Tupper, ed., *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845; Project Gutenberg eBook #14428, 2004), n.p.

<sup>54</sup> McCormack, “Dance and Drill,” 315, 323.

<sup>55</sup> Cohen, “Manners' Make the Man,” 313-315, 324-329; Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 191; Harvey, “The History of Masculinity,” 304; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 11, 213.

<sup>56</sup> Cohen, “Manners' Make the Man,” 313-314; Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 334; Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 213; Harvey, “The History of Masculinity,” 302; Michèle Cohen, “Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England,” in *English Masculinities, 1660-1800*, eds. Michele Cohen and Tim Hitchcock (Ebook: Taylor & Francis, [1999] 2014), n.p.

British gentlemen.<sup>57</sup> As Linda Colley has shown, following the Seven Years War and the American Revolution, and especially with the onset of the Napoleonic Wars, British national identity was increasingly defined in opposition to their imperial rival, France.<sup>58</sup> Thus, any association with France, including engaging in polite socialization, or even drinking French claret, left British gentlemen open to criticism – particularly in the wake of military defeats in the campaign against Napoleon.<sup>59</sup> As Cohen argues, “politeness, conversation and the social spaces in which they were deployed came to be construed as French and effeminating.”<sup>60</sup>

Despite this shift in civilian society, however, there is evidence that politeness continued to govern gentlemanly social interactions within the military into the nineteenth century.<sup>61</sup> Kennedy argues that, “far from rejecting politeness because of its associations with the French,” as suggested by Colley, Cohen and others, “British army officers continued to value and even emulate this model of masculine behaviour.”<sup>62</sup> She notes that British officers on the Peninsula respected the (often-superior) martial prowess of their French counterparts, and thus saw nothing effeminate or weak about emulating them.<sup>63</sup> The conduct of British officers serving in the Canadas during the War of 1812 – continuing to drink French claret,

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<sup>57</sup> Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 5.

<sup>58</sup> See Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>59</sup> Hurl-Eamon notes that “concern with effeminacy in the army tended to peak at times of apparent military defeats or setbacks.” Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 97.

<sup>60</sup> Cohen, “Manliness, Effeminacy and the French,” in *English Masculinities*, n.p.

<sup>61</sup> Even though officers’ polite behaviour, their obsession with masculine concepts such as gallantry and chivalry, and their conspicuous dress continued to mark them as effeminate in the eyes of some outside observers. See Linch and McCormack, “Defining Soldiers,” 155; Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 241; Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army*, 97.

<sup>62</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 139.

<sup>63</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 137-139.

engaging in polite conversation, attending dances and balls, and courting women – confirms as much.

### **Public Performances**

Prior to, during, and immediately following the War of 1812, gentlemen-officers stationed in the Canadas frequently mingled with the local social elite. Officers regularly attended balls, dances, dinners, and other events – just as their Peninsular War counterparts did while stationed in Spain.<sup>64</sup> For example, long-time staff officer James Green gave this description of his time in Québec in the summer of 1810:

We have had nothing but feasting – and dancing and the like [...] General Brock gave a dinner to the two Governors today, and a Ball to as many Ladies as his room could conveniently contain -- they danced in two rooms to the Band of the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment - which unquestionably is the best Military Band I ever saw [...] Capt. Selby of the Owen Glendower gave a Superb dejeuner on board his Ship the day before, which was conducted in a superior Stile [...] Today the races begin -- dinner at the Bishops --- Play in the Evening -- Tomorrow races -- dinner at the Chateau to a Number of Ladies & Gentlemen -- and Race Ball at the Hotel in the evening.<sup>65</sup>

Both the guests at these events, and the events themselves, were expected to be as formal and genteel as possible, facilitating the performance of polite, gentlemanly masculinity. Fine wine, which had polite and genteel connotations, was a staple beverage. Social gatherings were less

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<sup>64</sup> See Gavin Daly, "Liberators and Tourists: British Soldiers in Madrid during the Peninsular War," in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 117-135; See also Kennedy, "John Bull into Battle," 137-138.

<sup>65</sup> James Green, "From James Green to William Claus, Quebec, 5 July, 1810," in *Records of Niagara 1805 to 1811*, ed. E.A. Cruikshank (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 43, Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Historical Society, 1931), n.p.

frequent during the lean years of the war, but they continued nonetheless, and towards the end of the war there is evidence that the social scene was thriving once again. Le Couteur spent much of the Fall and Winter of 1814-1815 dining and socializing with fellow officers and members of the colony's social elite.<sup>66</sup> In February 1815, Le Couteur noted that one assembly he attended, was "the most crowded I ever saw."<sup>67</sup>

The spaces in which these events took place were heavily gendered, classed, and racialized.<sup>68</sup> Gentlemen and ladies socialized exclusively with other gentlemen and ladies, while being waited on by those whom they perceived as their social and racial inferiors. For example, at meetings of the York Assemblies in 1814, subscribers paid \$10 each, which got them access to not only wine, madeira, and many other drinks, food and entertainment, but also female attendants, and "Charles (a black man) for waiting."<sup>69</sup> As historian Julia Roberts explains, "blacks" commonly worked in Upper Canadian taverns and similar spaces of mixed socialization as entertainers and service staff, and there was an expectation "that blacks deport themselves deferentially toward (white) 'gentlemen'" within these spaces.<sup>70</sup> Having gendered and racialized "others" serve in subservient roles reinforced preferred gender, class, and racial hierarchies. In this way, gentlemen's "white," "civilized," masculine identity was constructed in relation to the racialized, "black" "other."

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<sup>66</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 211-213.

<sup>67</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 216.

<sup>68</sup> For further explanation of how Upper Canadian public spaces were racialized, see Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 101-119.

<sup>69</sup> "I 43 General Account of Subscription Assemblies 1814 [P.A.P., J.B. Robinson Papers]," in *The Town of York, 1793-1815: A Collection of Documents of Early Toronto* (Publications of the Champlain Society, Ontario Series, 5, Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962), 325-326.

<sup>70</sup> Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 109-110, 118.

In the Canadas during the war, officers most commonly attended social events during the winter months. Le Couteur, for example, noted in December of 1812, that he had attended no less than “thirty-five dinners, evening parties, or balls since I came here on the 4th of September.”<sup>71</sup> Merritt similarly “spent the winter as pleasantly as possible, often having a dance at Shipman's, and at my father's, card parties, &c.”<sup>72</sup> During the winter months, both enlisted men and officers went into winter quarters, military exercises were limited, and very few actions were fought. Enlisted men continued to labour and practice their drill and were generally confined to the garrison. Officers, on the other hand, were left with a considerable amount of idle time, and often lodged off-site, as was common in the British army in this period.<sup>73</sup> Dunlop, for example, as noted in the introduction to this dissertation, spent the winter of 1813-1814 in a local blacksmith's shop near Kingston with a fellow junior lieutenant, passing the time shooting game, lounging, and socializing with local civilians – all hallmarks of gentlemanly class privilege in this era.<sup>74</sup>

Courting was another important element of polite masculine performance. Dunlop, and especially Le Couteur, wrote frequently about the local Canadian and American women whom they courted during (and immediately following) the war.<sup>75</sup> “What happy campaigning days,”

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<sup>71</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 78.

<sup>72</sup> Merritt, “Misc Doc. A – Merritt's Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 611.

<sup>73</sup> Dunlop noted that “except in the expectation of a sudden attack, the officers were permitted to sleep out of the block-house.” Dunlop, *Recollections*, 29; In February of 1813, officers were even granted an additional lodging allowance to aid them in finding suitable accommodations. Adjutant General Edward Baynes, “General Order. Quebec 6th February 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 739-740.

<sup>74</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 29-30; For a discussion of shooting and hunting as sports of the upper classes, see Mike Huggins, “Sport and the British Upper Classes c.1500-2000: A Historiographic Overview,” *Sport in History* 28, no. 3 (2008): 364–388.

<sup>75</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 25-26; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 72-78, 150-152, 157-158.



Le Couteur reflected, “for a young Soldier of fortune thrown upon a distant, new world a short time back – to be in the cheering Society of an amiable circle of young gentlewomen, all soundly educated in the useful pursuits of life, all intimate by relationships, with the lively frankness of American manner, all of singular piety with perfect cheerfulness.”<sup>76</sup> These gatherings offered ladies an opportunity to demonstrate their public politesse as well, and, as Le Couteur relates, they were not the type to have their ambitions thwarted by poor weather. On the night of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1815, Le Couteur noted that “the heavy rain seemed likely to spoil the chance of a good assembly this evening, but the ladies of Kingston like small difficulties to show their spirit in surmounting them.”<sup>77</sup> Despite being at war, courting appears to have occupied a significant amount of Le Couteur’s time – and interest; and he was not alone. Merritt noted in his journal that he frequently invited local American women from Pittsfield and Pittsford to attend their Regimental dances while a prisoner of war, much to the chagrin of the local American men.<sup>78</sup>

Comments from Le Couteur reveal, however, that gentlemen typically outnumbered ladies at these events. Le Couteur recalled a party in December of 1814 at which “twenty-four ladies and one hundred Gentlemen,” were in attendance, which led him to exclaim “Girls up! Market high!”<sup>79</sup> Clearly, he was used to parties with even fewer women. Consequently, we see that, at times, thin, handsome young men such as Le Couteur dressed as ladies at social

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<sup>76</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 150.

<sup>77</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 212.

<sup>78</sup> Merritt, “Misc Doc. A – Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II (Publications of the Champlain Society, 17; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1928), 643-648.

<sup>79</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 211.

events.<sup>80</sup> For example, at a masquerade ball and supper given by Lieutenant-Colonel George Hay, the Marquis of Tweeddale, in Montréal in March of 1815, Le Couteur was dressed as the wife of Jean Baptiste, wearing “a nice pair of stays” and “well-hauled, as a Sailor would say,” with white makeup powder and rouge, darkened eyebrows and “a beautiful wig” displaying “a profusion of flowing curls under a lace cap decorated with gay ribbons.”<sup>81</sup> “What a delightful Ball” he recalled, “we had seven hundred persons, from the Devil to his darling [...] My rather saucy manner tickled the men amazingly, several asked me to dance two or three times.”<sup>82</sup> Le Couteur’s comrades felt that he did such a good job in his feminine role that afterwards, when plays were held at the Garrison, they demanded that he play the role of the heroine, which he did several times, noting that it was “great fun behind the Scenes dressing in Women’s clothing.”<sup>83</sup> Merritt similarly noted that at their Saturday night concerts and balls, Lieutenants “Spilsbury and Humphreys take the part of ladies.”<sup>84</sup> Interestingly enough, this behaviour did not impact Merritt’s assessment of Humphreys as “a perfect ladies’ man.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> There has been some scholarly study on soldiers dressing as women in the First and Second World War, and scholars suggest that the practice dates back to the early 1800s, however, nobody has addressed Napoleonic era soldiers specifically. See Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990); David A. Boxwell, “The Follies of War: Cross-Dressing and Popular Theatre on the British Front Lines, 1914-18,” *Modernism / Modernity* 9, no. 1 (2002): 1-20; Laurel Halladay, “A Lovely War: Male to Female Cross-Dressing and Canadian Military Entertainment in World War II,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 46, no. 3-4 (2004): 19–34.

<sup>81</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 222.

<sup>82</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 222.

<sup>83</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 223-224.

<sup>84</sup> Merritt, “Misc Doc. A – Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 643.

<sup>85</sup> Merritt, “Misc Doc. A – Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 643. Limited scholarship on this topic suggests that this was on account of the nearly all-male demographics of the group. Laurel Halladay argues that in the Second World War, soldiers cross-dressing for plays and the like was not associated with homosexuality or seen as problematic until large numbers of women were recruited into the Canadian military. See Laurel Halladay, “A Lovely War: Male to Female Cross-Dressing and Canadian Military Entertainment in World War II” *Journal of Homosexuality* 46, no. 3-4 (2004): 19–34.

Gentlemen-officers also sought out the company of other gentlemen in order to facilitate their polite performances. On the surface, however, this too presented somewhat of an issue in the Canadas. Elite, European-born gentlemen generally regarded their colonial counterparts as their social inferiors. They thought that colonial gentlemen (and ladies) lacked the same capacity for polite socialization; that their manners were not as refined, their dress not as fashionable.<sup>86</sup> Nicole Eustace argues that “colonists frequently found themselves placed at the literal and figurative periphery of British life, their attempts to master the emotional subtleties of British-style gentility mocked by those in the metropolis.”<sup>87</sup> John Howison, a Scottish doctor who traveled to the Canadas in 1818, indeed commented that Upper Canadian society was “rather hostile to the cultivation and advancement of manners.”<sup>88</sup> Gentlemen-officers stationed in North America expressed similar opinions. Le Couteur, speaking of New York immediately following the war, noted that the parties were “filled with well-dressed women,” whose “style was an attempt at French but a gauche imitation of it, the girls were not well got up.”<sup>89</sup> The dinners he similarly critiqued as “very handsome, good, profuse, but hurried over, not the English social meal.”<sup>90</sup> Dunlop, remarking upon his own interactions with colonial – especially “Yankee” gentlemen – concluded that “the word gentleman on this side

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<sup>86</sup> Regarding colonial ladies, Brock’s friend Colonel J.A. Vesey wrote to him from the Royal Hampton Court Park in 1811, lamenting his friend’s posting in Canada, and warning Brock, “pray do not marry there.” J.A. Vesey, “Colonel J.A. Vesey to Brigadier Brock. Hampton Court Park, April 9, 1811,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>87</sup> Eustace, *Passion is the Gale*, 8.

<sup>88</sup> John Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada, Domestic, Local, and Characteristic: To Which are Added, Practical Details for the Information of Emigrants of Every Class; and some Recollections of the United States of America* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, High-Street, 1821), 265-267.

<sup>89</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 246.

<sup>90</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 246.

of the Atlantic conveys no idea of either high birth or high breeding, nor even of a clean shirt, or a whole coat.”<sup>91</sup>

Despite these negative characterizations, gentlemen-officers such as Le Couteur and Dunlop sought out Upper and Lower Canadian gentlemen and ladies, nonetheless. What they found was a small circle of polite, genteel social elite, consisting primarily of colonial officials, lawyers and judges, and other prominent land-holding citizens, many of whom were retired officers. Le Couteur noted that in Montréal, for example, he was “introduced to the genteel circles: Sir John and Lady Johnson,<sup>92</sup> the Richardsons,<sup>93</sup> Forsythes,<sup>94</sup> Grants,<sup>95</sup> Algies,<sup>96</sup> Caldwells,<sup>97</sup> Judge Ogdens,<sup>98</sup> Judge Foucher,<sup>99</sup> French Roman Catholics, among whom I found all sorts of entertainments, Balls, dinners & Country parties.”<sup>100</sup> Savery Brock, Isaac’s brother, when visiting Montréal in 1817 further noted that “the principal gentlemen of this place” were “so very civil [...] that I am quite overcome with their politeness.”<sup>101</sup> Montreal was, in this

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<sup>91</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 32-35.

<sup>92</sup> Sir John Johnson, Loyalist officer and later head of the British Indian Department, son of Sir William Johnson, and his wife Mary. See Earle Thomas, “Johnson, Sir John,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>93</sup> John Richardson, prominent and wealthy Montreal businessman who would go on to hold political office, and his wife Sarah Ann. See F. Murray Greenwood, “Richardson, John (d. 1831),” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>94</sup> John Forsyth, also a prominent and wealthy Montreal businessman, partnered with Richardson, and his wife Margaret. See Gerald J. J. Tulchinsky, “Forsyth, John,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>95</sup> Charles William Grant, Baron de Longueuil, member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada and prominent member of Lower Canadian society, and his wife Caroline.

<sup>96</sup> Unknown which family he is referring to.

<sup>97</sup> Sir John Caldwell, the Receiver General for Lower Canada, and his wife Jane. See Andrée Héroux, “Caldwell, Sir John,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003).

<sup>98</sup> Isaac Ogden, prominent Loyalist and judge of the Court of King’s Bench in Montreal.

<sup>99</sup> Louis-Charles Foucher, also of the Court of King’s Bench in Montreal. See <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/deputes/foucher-louis-charles-3227/biographie.html>

<sup>100</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 221.

<sup>101</sup> Mr. Savery Brock, “Montreal, October 24., 1817,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

regard, much like Madrid, which, Gavin Daly has shown, Peninsular War officers found to be a city of “‘polite society’, of sight and sensations, of women and balls.”<sup>102</sup>

Officers from Europe, such as Le Couteur, recognized that their European birth, polite manners, and military uniform, “was a sure passport without a further introduction,” into these small colonial social circles.<sup>103</sup> Upon entering, they became members of this (relative) high society themselves, which validated their gentlemanly status – especially the often-precarious gentlemanly status of those officers who were not from the gentry or aristocracy. Howison noted that Europeans were partial to visiting Upper Canada for this very reason, because there they “find themselves of much more importance there than they would be at home; for the circle of society is so limited, and the number of respectable people in the Province so small, that almost every person is able to obtain some notice and attention.”<sup>104</sup> Dunlop espoused a similar view. He boasted that during the war he had become “on the best possible terms with the highest circles” in Upper Canada, which, he pointed out, “exist in all societies, and the smaller the society, the more distinctly is the circle defined.”<sup>105</sup> Although colonial gentlemen were not regarded as the social equals of gentlemen from Britain, in the Canadas they made up “high society” nonetheless, and as such were desirable social companions for established, or aspiring, gentlemen-officers. Dunlop, for example, fondly recalled how “the old gentlemen” of the “then insignificant” village of Cornwall, “when in town came to Our Mess, and when

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<sup>102</sup> Daly, “Liberators and Tourists,” 118.

<sup>103</sup> John Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada, in 1813,” *The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine* (1831:3), 180.

<sup>104</sup> Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada*, 265-267.

<sup>105</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 30-31.

they had imbibed a sufficient quantity of port, they regaled us with toughish yarns of their military doings during the revolutionary war. And when a tea-drinking party called a sufficient number of the aristocracy together, an extemporaneous dance was got up, a muffled drum and fife furnishing the orchestra.”<sup>106</sup>

As revealed by Dunlop’s comments, the consumption of fine wines, such as port, also facilitated public performances of polite gentlemanly masculinity. Only gentlemen and officers were generally able to afford expensive, high-quality wines, which had to be imported from Europe. Port, for example, is a barrel-aged, fortified wine (blended with brandy), historically produced in the Douro Valley of Portugal. Given the high price, the consumption of fine wine, particularly “conspicuous consumption,” denoted that the imbiber was a man of means, and of refined taste.<sup>107</sup> Economist Thorstein Veblen described “conspicuous consumption” as the acquisition and consumption of luxury goods by members of the British “leisure-class” of the eighteenth century in an effort to demonstrate wealth and social superiority.<sup>108</sup> He argues that the so-called “gentleman of leisure,”<sup>109</sup> not only sought to consume “beyond the minimum required for subsistence and physical efficiency,” but that his consumption also underwent “a specialisation as regards the quality of the goods consumed.”<sup>110</sup> The consumption of these luxury goods gave evidence of a gentleman’s wealth, and even became “honorific,” while

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<sup>106</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 30-31.

<sup>107</sup> Julia Roberts has shown that luxurious spending could also establish a man’s gentlemanly identity even if he could not afford it. Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 130-131.

<sup>108</sup> Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (London: Macmillan, 1899, Project Gutenberg eBook #833, 2008).

<sup>109</sup> Which included army officers, as he saw the “profession of arms” as a “leisure-class” occupation (they did not produce anything or directly contribute to the economy).

<sup>110</sup> Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, n.p.

conversely, failure to consume in due quantity or quality became “a mark of inferiority and demerit.”<sup>111</sup> Gentlemen and gentlemen-officers alike were thus expected to be “connoisseur[s] in creditable viands of various degrees of merit, in manly beverages and trinkets, in seemly apparel and architecture, in weapons, games, dances, and the narcotics.”<sup>112</sup> Having a knowledge of fine wines, as well as being able to afford them, conferred a degree of gentlemanly status, well into the nineteenth century.<sup>113</sup>

Conspicuous consumption was particularly effective in the Canadas. Howison remarked that in a society without an aristocracy such as the Canadas, “no man can assume a higher station in society than another, except upon the score of superior intellect or greater wealth; the latter of which is of course rather oftener recognised as a ground of distinction than the former.”<sup>114</sup> When high-birth was lacking, aspiring gentlemen distinguished themselves by displays of superior knowledge, and especially wealth. The contents of the home of William Firth, who served as Attorney General of Upper Canada in 1807, reveal that many gentlemen of the era attempted to do so by living lavishly.<sup>115</sup> The lengthy list of items from his estate included “superb Mahogany Four Post Bedsteads on Castors [...] Prime Goose Feather Beds and Pillows, Best Whitney Blankets [...] Hair Mattresses of very first quality [...] Blue and White English China, complete Set [...] Decanters of best Gloucester shape cut Glasses,” musical instruments, art supplies, a variety of books and atlases, as well as “fine old Port and

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<sup>111</sup> Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, n.p.

<sup>112</sup> Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, n.p.

<sup>113</sup> See Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 130-131.

<sup>114</sup> Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada*, 265-267.

<sup>115</sup> “H 39 House and Contents for Sale. York, York Gazette, August 17, 1811. William Firth, Esqr.” in *The Town of York*, 277-278.

Madeira Wines, old Jamaica Rum, Cogniac Brandy, Geneva, Whiskey, Cyder, Scotch Ale.”<sup>116</sup> Clearly he was a man who sought to possess the best of everything – as did many army officers.<sup>117</sup> A statement of loss by Major James Givins, following the Capture of York, shows that he had £30 worth of “wine and liquors” in the house, which was more than he spent on furniture, groceries, or books, and slightly less than he spent on fine silver and ivory-handled tableware.<sup>118</sup> Major-General Sir Isaac Brock famously maintained an extensive personal cellar (which was auctioned following his death) containing over 600 bottles of wine, in addition to large quantities of wine paraphernalia.<sup>119</sup> These officers’ conspicuous consumption, both in quantity and quality, defined them, in part, as gentlemen.

With regards to quality, true connoisseurs also procured the oldest and rarest vintages of wine in an effort to set themselves apart. Rod Phillips notes that “from about 1780, producers marketed older wines (more than ten years old) as especially suitable for ‘intelligent’ consumers – ‘the older the wine, the more distinguished its drinker.’”<sup>120</sup> The most distinguished drinkers demonstrated their superior knowledge and wealth through their choice in drink. Gentlemen-officers stationed in the Canadas drank brandy, port, claret, punch, and

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<sup>116</sup> “H 39 House and Contents for Sale. York, York Gazette, August 17, 1811. William Firth, Esqr.” in *The Town of York*, 277-278.

<sup>117</sup> Although Dunlop remarked that it was primarily the marines who spent, “in a much more gentlemanly style of profusion than the other,” having their base pay supplemented by prize money won. Dunlop, *Recollections*, 15.

<sup>118</sup> His most expensive claim, at £100, was “the whole of the wearing apparel of Mrs. Givens & 7 children,” and second were the repairs to the house at £50. “[19 Statement of Major Givins’ Losses [P.A.C., War of 1812, Losses Claim No. 234] Statement of the Losses Sustained by Major Givins, from the Enemy, at the Capture of York the 27th. April 1813,” in *The Town of York*, 301.

<sup>119</sup> Gareth Newfield, *Culinary History of Early Niagara* (Niagara National Historic Sites Accelerated Infrastructure Projects, Ontario Service Centre Cornwall: Parks Canada), 40.

<sup>120</sup> Rod Phillips, *Alcohol: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 156.



porter, but the primary choice of Canadian gentlemen in this period, was madeira wine.<sup>121</sup> Madeira is a fortified wine (mixed with brandy), typically produced in the Portuguese Madeira Islands. This was an expensive wine during the early nineteenth century, with a luxury status. Madeira became particularly popular across North America (as did many fortified wines) due to its superior shelf life.<sup>122</sup> A bill from the Managers of the York Assemblies in the early months of 1814 confirms that madeira was popular among gentlemen in Upper Canada during this period.<sup>123</sup> Those in attendance at the assembly were charged for over 6 gallons of Teneriffe (Spanish) wine and madeira consumed, over 25 gallons of London market madeira consumed, and 6 gallons of other unspecified wines consumed, all billed at varying prices. Clearly madeira was popular, and the quality, or *terroir* of the wine served was important to consumers.

With regards to quantity, wine was served liberally at balls, suppers, and dinners in the Canadas. Wine would both accompany the primary meal and be served afterwards, often well into the night. For example, at a celebration of the Queen's birthday in York in 1809,

dancing commenced at ten o'clock, - the Ball Room having been tastefully and elegantly fitted up and decorated for the occasion. - At half past one the Supper Room was thrown open, when the Company, amounting to about a hundred persons, partook of a very sumptuous Banquet, consisting of every delicacy and a variety of the choicest Wines. Dancing was resumed after Supper, and kept up with great spirit, till near eight o'clock in the morning.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> For examples, see Capt. R. Langslow, "Journal, 1817," in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, ed. Janet Carnochan (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, 11. Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Historical Society, 1904), 29; Dunlop, *Recollections*, 30-31, 40; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 109, 111, 134, 153, 177, 192, 244; John Richardson and Alexander Clark Casselman ed., *Richardson's War of 1812* (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1902), 249.

<sup>122</sup> Phillips, *Alcohol*, 156.

<sup>123</sup> "I 43 General Account of Subscription Assemblies 1814 [P.A.P., J.B. Robinson Papers]," in *The Town of York*, 325-326.

<sup>124</sup> "H 32 Queen's Birthday Celebration [York, York Gazette, January 25, 1809]," in *The Town of York*, 273-274.

Merritt similarly recalled several “carousals” in November of 1814 which carried on “till 2 or three o'clock,” or “broke up at 2 in the morning.”<sup>125</sup> Consequently, a large quantity of wine was typically consumed. Actual quantities can be difficult to ascertain, but we do have some evidence from a party held by Peter Russell to celebrate the King’s birthday in 1798. The service included 70 bottles of wine, 3 of brandy, at least 10 bottles of porter, and 7lbs of sugar for “singaree” or sangria.<sup>126</sup> Given the number of meals served, there appears to have been 52 people in attendance, which would indicate that each attendant drank roughly one and a half bottles (or more, given that many attendants were women, who generally did not partake as heavily in social settings). The private group of roughly 31 subscribed assembly-goers at the aforementioned York Assemblies in 1814 drank a similar amount.<sup>127</sup> In the span of three months (Jan-Mar 1814), across five meetings, they were charged for roughly 38 gallons of wine and madeira served. This also equates to roughly one to two bottles consumed per attendant, per meeting. Thus the “three-bottle-man” moniker which was popularized during this period – which denoted a particularly manly tolerance for alcohol – seems to have been relatively accurate.<sup>128</sup> The ability to consume freely in such quantity (while regulating the access of others, such as enlisted soldiers) acted as a clear sign of wealth, privilege, and gentlemanly status. When drinking in such large quantities in public, however, it was imperative that a gentleman not become, or at least not appear to be, drunk.

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<sup>125</sup> Merritt, “Misc Doc. A – Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 647-648.

<sup>126</sup> “H 8 Expenses of Celebration of King’s Birthday [T.P.L., Peter Russell Papers],” in *The Town of York*, 225.

<sup>127</sup> 31 full subscriptions were paid, an unknown number were broken, 6 additional were due, and it seems that some officers may have also subscribed. It is unknown how many attended each meeting. “143 General Account of Subscription Assemblies 1814 [P.A.P., J.B. Robinson Papers],” in *The Town of York*, 325-326.

<sup>128</sup> For a discussion of drinking habits and this moniker, see Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 202-203.

The public consumption of fine wine could establish a man's gentlemanly identity, but public drunkenness had the opposite effect. As Dr. Johnson explained, "drinking may be practised with great prudence; a man who exposes himself when he is intoxicated, has not the art of getting drunk."<sup>129</sup> For eighteenth and early nineteenth century gentlemen, the "art of getting drunk" included either an ability to hold your liquor, or good enough sense to know when to go home. Eli Playter, Upper Canadian tavern-keeper turned militia officer, recognized the importance of doing so at a private dinner for five Gentlemen and three guests (including himself), which he attended on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March in 1802. He noted that:

we spent the evening very pleasant with Song's & Toasts till the wine began to operate [...] we ware all in fact quite intoxicated. Mr. Heward being more able to bear Liquor, was capable to see Mr. Boyd Home. The wine taking its usual affect on me I turned very Sick & staggered off to Bed with Mr. Wards assistance, he desired me to go into the Parlour and take a cup of Tea. I knew enough Drunk as I was not to expose myself– and tumbled into bed whare I lay and slep'd round till morning.<sup>130</sup>

Playter's drunkenness was acceptable in this context, so long as he did not go into public, or let the behaviour become habitual.<sup>131</sup> Gentlemen constructed themselves, in relation to their

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<sup>129</sup> Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *Life of [Samuel] Johnson* (New York: Oxford University Press, [1791] 2008), 1022.

<sup>130</sup> "H 23 Extracts from Ely Playter's Diary [P.A.P., Ely Playter Diary]," in *The Town of York*, 244.

<sup>131</sup> In this period medical authorities were beginning to condemn habitual drunkenness, but occasional drunkenness under certain circumstances, and for certain members of society, was generally regarded as unproblematic. For a discussion, see Paul E. Kopperman, "'The Cheapest Pay': Alcohol Abuse in the Eighteenth-Century British Army," *Journal of Military History* 60, no. 3 (July 1996), 452-53, 464; Martin R. Howard, "Red Jackets and Red Noses: Alcohol and the British Napoleonic Soldier," *Journal of The Royal Society of Medicine* 93, no. 1 (January 2000), 39-40; Renée Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate': Drink and Soldiering on Niagara's Wartime Frontier (1812-14)," *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013), 25-27; Heron, *Booze*, 9-10; Johnathan Reinartz and Rebecca Wynter, "The Spirit of Medicine: The Use of Alcohol in Nineteenth-Century Medical Practice," in *Drink in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, eds. Susanne Schmid and Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp (New York: Routledge, [2014] 2016), 131-133.

perceived social inferiors, as uniquely able to exercise restraint and maintain control. Any public loss of control threatened to undermine that construction.

A gentleman who behaved like a beast – at least in public – was no gentleman at all. In the words of Colonel Stephen Jarvis, he was “a lost man.”<sup>132</sup> His public drunkenness rendered him as little different from the perceived “brutish Swine” of the “lower orders” of society and enlisted ranks.<sup>133</sup> As the nineteenth-century naval physician Thomas Trotter explained, “man, the lord of creation, when by excess and debauch he has lost the faculty of reason, is not only levelled with the brutes, but seems to lose the respect of inferior animals.”<sup>134</sup> Dr. Johnson agreed, but noted that a “strong inducement to this excess,” was that “*he who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man.*”<sup>135</sup> Existing scholarship has demonstrated that in a variety of cultures and settings, men imbibed to the point of drunkenness as a means of escaping the pressure to conform to masculine expectations.<sup>136</sup> In this sense, drunkenness may have offered some gentlemen a moment of reprieve from the dictates of politeness. It was essential, however, in order to maintain existing class, gender, and racial hierarchies, that the heaviest drinking be kept private, behind closed doors.

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<sup>132</sup> Stephen Jarvis, “The Narrative of Colonel Stephen Jarvis,” in *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada*, ed. James J. Talman (Publications of the Champlain Society, 27. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1946), 236-237.

<sup>133</sup> Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 40.

<sup>134</sup> Thomas Trotter, *An Essay, Medical, Philosophical, and Chemical, on Drunkenness: And Its Effects on the Human Body* (Boston: Published by Bradford & Read; and A. Finley, Philadelphia, 1813), 147.

<sup>135</sup> “Anecdotes of the Revd. Percival Stockdale,” in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, Vol. 2. ed. George Birkbeck Hill. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 333.

<sup>136</sup> For example, see Henk Driessen, “Drinking on Masculinity: Alcohol and Gender in Andalusia,” in *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, ed. Dimitra Gefou-Madianou (New York: Routledge, 1992); 71-79; see also Hinote and Webber, “Drinking Toward Manhood.”

## Private Performances

During the War of 1812, gentlemen-officers stationed in the Canadas engaged in more private performances of gentlemanly masculinity in the officers' mess. Like the ballroom or dining room, the mess was a heavily classed, gendered, and racialized space. It was maintained by officers of a particular regiment and reserved for member-officers only (as well as their families). Guests were permitted, under certain conditions, but it was expected that they too were proper gentlemen or ladies.<sup>137</sup> Members of the 41<sup>st</sup> mess strictly regulated access to "strangers," and any man who inappropriately invited an outsider to dine would be fined two bottles of wine.<sup>138</sup> Food and wine served in the officers' mess was paid for by a communal fund, contributed to by each member. The quality of food and drink served, and the company in attendance, directly reflected upon the officers of the mess. As such, the price of membership could be quite high, depending on the quality of provisions provided, and the difficulty in procuring them. Membership costs in the 41<sup>st</sup> officers' mess differed by rank, from 8 guineas for a subaltern, to 11 for a Lieutenant-Colonel.<sup>139</sup> James recommended that mess subscriptions should not exceed "seven days subsistence monthly," but that he had to recommend this likely meant that many subscriptions cost more.<sup>140</sup> In fact, McCormack and Bruce both note that many officers lived beyond their means and even took out loans in order to fulfil the demands

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<sup>137</sup> On occasion, the mess would host large gatherings open to the public. For example, see Janet Carnochan, *History of Niagara* (Belleville: Mika Publishing, 1973), 142; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 78; Dunlop, *Recollections*, 30-31.

<sup>138</sup> "Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment," Rule the 9<sup>th</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>139</sup> "Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment," Rule the 1<sup>st</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>140</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 337.

of military sociability.<sup>141</sup> Whether or not officers could afford their dues, however, and despite their varied backgrounds, they were expected to take part. Historian Edward Spiers argues that mess social life forced officers to conform to the gentlemanly ideal.<sup>142</sup> Those who refused to join, or were frequently absent, were viewed with suspicion and often pressured to conform or leave the regiment. Officers' habitual socializing in the mess was meant to foster group cohesion, regimental identity, and *esprit du corps*.<sup>143</sup> As such, the officers' mess was a critical site of masculine identity construction.

Enlisted men were not permitted in the officers' mess at any time, unless acting on behalf of or as a servant to an officer.<sup>144</sup> They messed separately, reinforcing existing class hierarchies. Restricting access to the officers' mess asserted the right of gentlemen-officers to drink, and even to drink to excess, as their potential drunkenness was concealed from their perceived social inferiors. Transgressing this class boundary carried significant consequences. For example, in the case of Ensign John Mackensie of the Royal West India Rangers, who was charged in 1807 for "being drunk, on duty," for "conduct highly unbecoming the character of an Officer and a Gentleman [...] in going into the Canteen in a state of intoxication, sitting down there, and drinking grog, publicly, in the open day," and for "going very drunk in the open day to the Soldiers' Barrack-room, there sitting in the most familiar manner with a Serjeant of the York Light Infantry Volunteers, and in that situation, before all the private men

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<sup>141</sup> McCormack, "Dance and Drill," 323; Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 69-72.

<sup>142</sup> Spiers, *The Army and Society*, 29.

<sup>143</sup> Lafferty, "The Vice of a Cold Climate," 12-14, 18-19.

<sup>144</sup> For example, in the Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment, Rule the 13<sup>th</sup> stipulated that at least three servants were to attend each meeting of that mess, along with waiters, and that members or outside gentleman were permitted to bring their own servant. "Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment," Rule the 13<sup>th</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

in the Barracks, endeavouring to procure grog to drink with him.”<sup>145</sup> McKensie had not only transgressed space, he had also transgressed taste. He was caught drinking grog, the drink of sailors, which carried distinct “lower-class” connotations. As noted, In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, what a person drank was an indicator of gender, class, or racial status. Rum, gin, and whiskey – which were cheap, mass-produced, and often of low quality – were seen as unrefined or brutish choices.<sup>146</sup> In the Mackensie case, the Court recommended clemency, in view of the man’s excellent service record, however, His Majesty personally intervened and decreed that,

any officer who could be guilty of drinking to intoxication in the Canteen, in open day, in presence of the soldiers of the regiment, and exposing himself in that situation to the observation of the men in the Barrack-rooms, affording thereby so scandalous an example to those under his command, [is] an improper person to bear His Majesty’s commission.<sup>147</sup>

Mackensie’s actions threatened to undermine a carefully constructed social and gendered hierarchy within the army which was built upon the idea that officers were better able to control their own drinking than enlisted men.

At times, the mess was also a heavily gendered, homosocial space. Scholarship has argued that it is in homosocial encounters that men primarily constructed their masculine identity, defined in relation to, and in the eyes of, other men (specifically their peers).<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> “Ensign John Mackensie, 1807,” in *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority*, ed. Charles James (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820), 249-250.

<sup>146</sup> Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 179-180.

<sup>147</sup> “Ensign John Mackensie, 1807,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 249-250.

<sup>148</sup> John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family, and Empire* (London: Routledge, 2016), 5; Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 56; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 5-6; Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. (New York: Free Press, 1996), 7.

Harvey, in particular, notes that “some advocates of politeness argued it was best shaped without female involvement,” particularly towards the end of the eighteenth century as the hegemony of politeness was in decline, threatened by men spending too much time with women.<sup>149</sup> Although women were not completely barred from access to the mess, they were not permitted to remain after hours, which is when the heaviest, and manliest, drinking took place. As Charles Ludington explains, “nothing could be more explicit about the manly nature of drinking than the fact that when it was time to imbibe heavily, women were not welcome.”<sup>150</sup> Of course, given the dictates of feminine politeness, these ladies likely would not have wished to join, instead regarding such behaviour as boorish and particularly unladylike.<sup>151</sup> But scholarship has shown that men in a variety of cultures and situations purposely excluded women from rituals of homosocial drinking in order to enforce gender hierarchies and assert gendered male power.<sup>152</sup> In the setting of the officers’ mess, this was the case. Among gentlemanly peers and removed from the eyes of the outside world, officers expressed their gentlemanly masculinity and asserted their gender and class power, without fear of drawing

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<sup>149</sup> Harvey, “The History of Masculinity,” 302-304; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 66-67.

<sup>150</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 215.

<sup>151</sup> Dr. Johnson’s biographer, James Boswell, recalled comments from a Mrs. Williams which speak to this. She was complaining to Johnson that when she had been at dinner the night before, there were several gentlemen who had been doing “a good deal of hard drinking,” and remarked to Johnson, “I wonder what pleasure men can take in making beasts of themselves.” “Anecdotes of the Revd. Percival Stockdale,” in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, Vol. 2. ed. George Birkbeck Hill. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 333.

<sup>152</sup> Hinote and Webber, “Drinking Toward Manhood,” 294, 298-299, 301; Dimitra Gefou-Madianou, “Introduction: Alcohol Commensality, Identity Transformations and Transcendence,” in *Alcohol, Gender and Culture*, eds. Dimitra Gefou-Madianou (New York: Routledge, 1992), 11; Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 203, 215; Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 87-88.



accusations of effeminacy or having their drunkenness (which was associated with male weakness and a failure of gentility) revealed to their perceived social and gendered inferiors.<sup>153</sup>

Drinking and socializing in the officers' mess was governed by a complex and strictly enforced set of rules, meant to enforce conformity with the gentlemanly ideal. Ludington has shown that manly drinking among civilian gentlemen in private parties was also done according to strict rules.<sup>154</sup> It was incumbent on conspicuously consuming gentlemen, and gentlemen-officers, to master these rituals of consumption. As with most things in the military, these rules were codified, and men were penalized for their infractions – in this case, generally paid in bottles of the “Best Wine.”<sup>155</sup> When dining in the 41<sup>st</sup> mess, for example, gentlemen were not permitted to “read Books, Letters, etc. without leave of the President. A bottle of Wine to be paid for every [infraction].”<sup>156</sup> This encouraged polite conversation and social engagement with the group. The rules of the unnamed Light Dragoon Regiment similarly dictated that “no regimental business is to be discussed at the mess, under the penalty of three bottles of wine for each separate offence.”<sup>157</sup> Every officer in the Regiment was also “to appear clean at the mess, or be fined a bottle of wine,” and in the Highlander Regiment, “all neglects in dress, or the most correct behaviour,” were to be punished by a fine of a bottle of wine “or more.”<sup>158</sup> As noted, gentlemen were defined in part by the way they presented themselves

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<sup>153</sup> Peter Clark has shown that this was the case in civilian society; that the desire to evade accusations of effeminacy led to a rise in all-male gatherings at private social clubs, societies, and dinner groups in England throughout the eighteenth century. Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 88.

<sup>154</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 209.

<sup>155</sup> “Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment,” Addendum, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>156</sup> “Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment,” Rule the 14<sup>th</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>157</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 350.

<sup>158</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 348, 345.

physically. Furthermore, all “blasphemous, nasty and obscene conversation, also swearing” was prohibited, “under the penalty of a bottle of wine for each offence.”<sup>159</sup> Any rowdy conduct was similarly penalized in the 41<sup>st</sup> mess, as “any Officer, or his Servant who shall break or disfigure any part of the Mess Utensils, shall pay double the Value to the Mess fund. If intentionally, to pay six times the value.”<sup>160</sup> These rules were meant to achieve a particular genteel aesthetic and facilitate polite social interaction, constructing the men in attendance as refined, privileged gentlemen.

The quality of mess which member-officers kept, as with the quality of wine they served and consumed, directly reflected upon their character as gentlemen. Certain messes, such as the officers’ mess at the army depot on the Isle of Wight – where officers were stationed prior to shipping out to the colonies – developed a particularly poor reputation. Both Dunlop and Le Couteur provided scathing commentary on the type of “gentlemen-”officers who congregated at the Garrison mess at the depot, which they visited in 1812 and 1813, respectively, prior to shipping out. Le Couteur noted that the mess featured “some of the worst looking scamps I had ever seen wearing the King's Uniform [...] It was a Society so vulgar, so drunken, so vicious and so disorderly that, on meeting [it], One absolutely dreaded who to sit by or who to converse with.”<sup>161</sup> During Dunlop’s first and only visit to the garrison mess, he recalled seeing:

among other novelties of a mess table, one officer shy a leg of mutton at another's head, from one end of the table to the other. This we took as notice to quit; so we made our retreat in good order, and never again returned, or associated with a set

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<sup>159</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 349.

<sup>160</sup> “Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment,” Rule the 8<sup>th</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>161</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 54-55.

of gentlemen who had such a vivacious mode of expressing a difference of opinion.<sup>162</sup>

These were not the sort of gentlemen with whom one would engage in polite conversation, or take a drink.

There were also officers' messes which developed particularly good reputations.<sup>163</sup> After experiencing the "vile mixture [of officers] the Depot Mess was composed of," Le Couteur, for example, set out to raise "the character of the 104th Mess as a model of good breeding."<sup>164</sup> He succeeded, and in December of 1813 boasted that "*our mess was the mess of the day* – conducted on guest days like the table of a Nobleman – every thing of the best – no noise among waiters or officers, all aiding one another to do honor to the Guests [...] it was a happy mess of brotherhood that jolly, gentlemanlike 104<sup>th</sup>."<sup>165</sup> On October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1814, that assertion was put to the test. Le Couteur reported that "Sir James Kempt & staff, Lt. Gore and Capt. Dumaresq, a relative who bears a high reputation for gallantry and ability, dined with our Mess."<sup>166</sup> Fortunately for Le Couteur and his fellow officers, "Sir James was pleased to say the He had never seen a mess so like the establishment of a private family of distinction."<sup>167</sup> While this comment may have been a bit of sarcastic snobbery on James' part, rather than a true assessment, Le Couteur and his messmates clearly strove to present themselves as gentlemen of distinction.

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<sup>162</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 3-4.

<sup>163</sup> Such as the mess of the 70<sup>th</sup> Regiment, who were stationed in the Canadas from 1813 to 1827, as noted by Capt. R. Langslow, "Journal, 1817," in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, 29.

<sup>164</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 59-60.

<sup>165</sup> He goes on to note, however, that four years later, two "Villains disturbed its harmony." Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 154.

<sup>166</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 210.

<sup>167</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 210.

Fine wines, typically fortified wines, were a staple in any officers' mess of distinction. In the mess of the prestigious Light Dragoon's, for example, "port wine and sherry [wine]," were the only wines permitted to be served in the mess.<sup>168</sup> These wines, including the colonial civilian favourite, madeira, featured prominently in the officers' mess for the same reason as at more public civilian events. They had superior shelf-life, positive national connotations, and because the consumption of wine, particularly expensive fine wine, denoted wealth, and genteel status. In the army, officers were certainly the only ones who could afford to procure and drink wine with any regularity – or who were even permitted to do so. By procuring and consuming the highest quality wines, they could conspicuously demonstrate their superior gentlemanly style. Le Couteur, for example, proudly noted that his prized officers' mess of the 104<sup>th</sup> featured "wines [as] old as in a private Cellar."<sup>169</sup> Dunlop similarly lauded praise on one unnamed regiment of artillery, and another of "sharp-shooters" – both "formed of the gentlemen of Montreal" – for their conspicuous consumption in their officers' mess:

I think these were in a perfect state of drill, and in their handsome new uniforms had a most imposing appearance. But if their discipline was commendable, their commissariat<sup>170</sup> was beyond all praise. Long lines of carts were to be seen bearing in casks and hampers of the choicest wines, to say nothing of the venison, turkeys, hams, and all other esculents necessary to recruit their strength under the fatigues of war [...] There can be little doubt that a gourmand would greatly prefer the comfort of dining with a mess of privates of these distinguished corps to the honour and glory of being half starved (of which he ran no small risk) at the table of the Governor General himself.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 349.

<sup>169</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 82.

<sup>170</sup> The department which organized food distribution in the military.

<sup>171</sup> Dunlop is juxtaposing here the lowliest of mess (although privates did not technically have a mess in the same way that officers did) with what was supposed to be (but evidently wasn't) plentiful and refined fare at the table of the Governor General. Dunlop, *Recollections*, 15-16.

The officers of this regiment had firmly established their gentlemanly identity in the eyes of their peers through their conspicuous consumption.

The most popular wine among officers in this period – and among gentlemen in Britain – was port wine.<sup>172</sup> At the time of his death in 1812, Major-General Sir Isaac Brock owned approximately 566 individual bottles of port, which accounted for the vast majority of his personal wine collection.<sup>173</sup> The expense of port largely limited its consumption to the officer class. For example, those bottles owned by Sir Isaac Brock cost approximately four shillings per bottle, which represented nearly a week's wage for an enlisted soldier.<sup>174</sup> But port wine, as with other fortified wines such as madeira and sherry, were also popular among officers for another reason; their strength. According to Dr. Johnson, port was the strongest and manliest of the wines:

Johnson harangued upon the qualities of different liquors; and spoke with great contempt of claret, as so weak, that 'a man would be drowned by it before it made him drunk.' He was persuaded to drink one glass of it, that he might judge, not from recollection, which might be dim, but from immediate sensation. He shook his head, and said, 'Poor stuff! No, Sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port, for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling,) must drink brandy [...] There are, indeed, few who are able to drink brandy.'<sup>175</sup>

This largely spoke to the relative strength of each beverage (not just alcohol percentage and strong effect but also full body, flavour and producing a burning sensation when consumed),

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<sup>172</sup> Ludington notes that port wine became the most popular wine among all wine drinking classes in Britain by the end of the eighteenth century, and continued to be into the nineteenth. For further discussion, see Charles Ludington, "'Claret is the Liquor for Boys; Port for Men': How Port Became the 'Englishman's Wine,' 1750s to 1800," *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 2 (April 2009), 364-390.

<sup>173</sup> Newfield, *Culinary History of Early Niagara*, 42

<sup>174</sup> Newfield, *Culinary History of Early Niagara*, 43.

<sup>175</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 1016.

but Johnson's comments highlight the importance of different national associations as well. As mentioned, any association with France in this period could be construed as effeminate, which was equated with manly weakness. Consuming "weak" claret (~14% abv), in this context, would threaten to make the imbiber similarly weak. Drinking stronger, fortified port wine on the other hand (~20% abv), which was produced by Britain's imperial ally, Portugal, demonstrated manly strength.<sup>176</sup> Consuming the fortifying agent itself, brandy (~40% abv), was manlier still. Thus, being able to consume large amounts of port or brandy demonstrated not only refinement and privilege, but also manly strength.

When gentlemen-officers drank port and brandy with their peers in the mess, quantity of consumption was also important, for two reasons. First, the ability to consume in large quantities further denoted wealth and status, particularly in periods of wartime scarcity. Charles James, noted that the Horse Guards, the most prestigious and aristocratic unit in the army, drank "Madeira, Port and Claret, *without limitation*."<sup>177</sup> In the 41<sup>st</sup> mess, officers were entitled to a two-pint (of wine) allowance before even being charged for further service.<sup>178</sup> The drinking of "bumper toasts" (Figure 3), in which full glasses were consumed by all in unison, was common.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> For further discussion, see Ludington, "Claret is the Liquor for Boys," 368.

<sup>177</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, 360.

<sup>178</sup> "Mess Rules of the 41st Regiment," Rule the 16<sup>th</sup>, *Forty-First Blog*.

<sup>179</sup> For more on toasting rituals, see Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 15-17, 21-32, 27-29, 78, 187, 209, 214, 235.



Figure 3: A satirical look at officers of the Guards drinking bumper toasts “to the King” in the officers’ mess at St. James’s Palace

As one contemporary civilian put it, “there was a good deal of drinking among the officers.”<sup>180</sup> Certainly a good deal more than among the enlisted men. Second, the ability to consume large quantities of wine, particularly strong wine such as port, further demonstrated masculine strength, in both civilian and martial settings. The strongest or manliest of the group was he who could drink the most, without becoming overly intoxicated.<sup>181</sup> Dr. Johnson, for example, boasted of being a “three-bottle-man;” that he could drink “three bottles of port without being

<sup>180</sup> “An Eye Witness’s Story,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 426.

<sup>181</sup> Kopperman, “The Cheapest Pay,” 460; Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 6-7.

the worse for it.”<sup>182</sup> Dr. John Campbell, a frequent attendee at Johnson’s literary club, bragged that he once drank “thirteen bottles of port at a sitting.”<sup>183</sup> These men wore their ability to consume heavily and bear the intoxicating effects as a badge of masculine honour. Weaker men were marked by their calls for water, by leaving to bed early, by vomiting and having to be collected from the floor (such as poor Johnny Newcome, seen below), or worse yet, by abstaining from drink altogether.<sup>184</sup>



Figure 4: Five officers, at least two of senior rank, are gathered around a table in the officers’ mess smoking cigars, taking snuff, and drinking (wine and tea). Johnny Newcome stands with his back to the table, violently ill.

<sup>182</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 911.

<sup>183</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 910.

<sup>184</sup> As Lafferty notes, military men who abstained from liquor were considered by their peers to be weak or effeminate. Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 16.



Such men were effectively emasculated, and often ostracized from the group. Following the scene depicted here (Figure 4) in David Roberts' satirical poem *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome*, the protagonist, Newcome, never recovers, and is sent home in shame.<sup>185</sup> In this way, quantity of consumption within the homosocial space of the mess, as in private parties in the civilian sphere, established a hierarchy of manliness among gentlemen-officers.

This chapter has shown that officers who served in the Canadas during the War of 1812 held a dual-identity as both gentlemen and officers. The masculine code of politeness, which had governed gentlemanly social behaviour in Britain in the previous era, remained influential in governing the behaviour of those gentlemen-officers prior to, during, and immediately following the war. Officers expressed their polite, gentlemanly identity through public socialization with colonial gentlemen and ladies, and in private socialization with other gentlemen-officers. Alcohol consumption was a staple at both events and played a significant role in constructing – or invalidating – an officers' masculine identity as a gentleman. As the next chapter will demonstrate, however, an officer was also expected to conform to his identity as a soldier, or warrior. In times of war, this latter half of his dual identity arguably took precedence. To falter as a gentleman in times of war, by, for example making concessions in polite socialization or failing to keep up in conspicuous consumption, was much more permissible than to falter as a martial commander. An incapable gentleman embarrassed himself, or at worst his regiment; an incapable officer got men killed and threatened the honour

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<sup>185</sup> David Roberts, *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome: With an Account of his Campaign on the Peninsula and in Pall Mall* (London: Methuen and Co., [1816] 1904. Project Gutenberg eBook #44201, 2013).

of his nation. Consequently, we see that the most heroic martial masculine figures of the era, such as Brock or Wellington, received considerably more praise for their martial prowess, than their (albeit excellent) skills in polite socialization.

## Chapter 3 - Warriors

Militia District Orders from Army headquarters at Fort George, dated November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1812, reported that,

Major-General Sheaffe has witnessed with the highest satisfaction the manly and cheerful spirit with which the militia on this frontier have borne the privations which peculiar circumstances have imposed on them [...] It has furnished the best characteristics of the soldier, manly constancy under fatigue, and determined bravery when opposed to the enemy – by a perseverance in the exercise of those noble qualities they may be assured of accomplishing the glorious task in which they are engaged.<sup>1</sup>

As these orders highlight, military authorities in Upper Canada promoted bravery, fortitude, constancy, and the ability or willingness to endure hardship as the manliest and best characteristics of an enlisted soldier at war (whether militia or regular force). The prescription for officers was similar. Contemporary military author, Charles James, advised that,

When a gentleman first embraces the military profession—and none but gentlemen born and bred, or rendered so by education and good habits, ought to be admitted into a society, which of all others, is governed by the nicest principles of honour—he is too apt to conceive, that its character is confined to the external trappings of appearance, to a mere knowledge of parade duties, or to the various evolutions of the field; *forgetting* that the essential qualities of a good Officer are only to be found in the resources of the mind, and the exercise of them in the manly devotion of a robust constitution.<sup>2</sup>

James' comments emphasize that during wartime, specifically during the War of 1812 and the larger Napoleonic Wars, gentlemen-officers needed to be much more than just polite

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<sup>1</sup> "Militia District Orders. Headquarters, Fort George, 1st November, 1812," in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1812... Part II (1812)*, ed. E. A. Cruikshank (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1902), 174.

<sup>2</sup> Charles James, ed., *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820), xiv.

gentlemen of good standing, they also needed to be physically strong, capable military commanders. In order to field an effective fighting force, their masculine identity as a gentleman – or husband and father – was necessarily subordinated by their identity as a “warrior.” As such, common soldiers’ and officers’ manhood was primarily defined by martial qualities such as fortitude, bravery, and a strong constitution; qualities which were practically useful in waging war.

Historians of the British army have widely recognized that attributes such as physical strength, martial skill, courage, bravery, fortitude, honour, duty, heroism, and aggression were quintessential martial masculine traits in this period.<sup>3</sup> Catriona Kennedy argues that “physical courage, martial skill and honour [...] were central to constructions of martial masculinity.”<sup>4</sup> Fewer historians, however, have considered the role which alcohol consumption played in the construction and maintenance of wartime martial masculine identities, even though, as Renée Lafferty has shown, soldiers, officers and military authorities regarded liquor as both “the

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<sup>3</sup> Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 11; Julia Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife: Writing the History of the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 97, no. 3 (Sept. 2016), 335-337; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 303; Stefan Dudink and Karen Hagemann, “Masculinity in Politics and War in the Age of Democratic Revolutions, 1750-1850,” In *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink and Karen Hagemann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 14; Catriona Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle: Military Masculinity and the British Army Officer during the Napoleonic Wars,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 135; Kathleen Wilson, “Empire of Virtue: The Imperial Project and Hanoverian Culture,” in *An Imperial State at War, Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. by Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1994), 150; See also Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service, Manhood in the King’s: Reaching Adulthood in the Eighteenth-Century British Army,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2015), 166; Cecilia Morgan, “Remembering 1812 in the 1840s: John Richardson and the Writing of the War,” *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 29 (Autumn 2014): 39-69.

<sup>4</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 135.

cause of poor discipline, ill health, cowardliness and disreputable behaviour” and “a source of inspiration, of good health, bravery, and manly strength.”<sup>5</sup> In this way, the consumption of alcohol both facilitated, and in certain contexts, compromised, expressions of martial manhood.

The role which alcohol consumption played in the construction and negotiation of wartime martial masculinities is revealed in soldiers’ and officers’ expressions of and praise for certain desired “warrior-like” qualities, as well as condemnations of particularly “unsoldierly” or “unofficerlike” behaviour. The former appears most commonly in wartime accounts from officers, such as Lieutenant John Le Couteur and William “Tiger” Dunlop, who boasted about their own manly feats of physical strength and fortitude as much as they admired the bravery of other men.<sup>6</sup> They reveal the ways alcohol helped them to physically endure the hardships and privations of war, and service in the Canadas, and inspired courage in the men under their command when facing the enemy. Condemnations, on the other hand, appear most frequently in the proceedings of General Courts-Martial and in General Orders read before the troops. Such formal statements broadcast military authorities’ expectations by censuring and punishing desertion, poor discipline, cowardice, and drunkenness on duty. These condemnations of unwanted behaviour communicated to the army just as effectively as praise

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<sup>5</sup> Renée Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate:’ Drink and Soldiering on Niagara’s Wartime Frontier (1812-14),” *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013), 6; Hurl-Eamon does note that soldiers in this period proved their maleness by drinking and womanizing, but she focuses on the latter. Hurl-Eamon, “Youth in the Devil’s Service,” 166.

<sup>6</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1905); John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993).

(if not more so) what qualities made a man an ideal soldier, officer, and warrior in the British army of the period.

Taken together, these sources reveal that alcohol consumption played a significant role in the construction and maintenance of martial masculinities. A warrior's manliness was measured by his adherence to duty, his willingness to sacrifice for the nation, and by the strength of his constitution, both physical and mental. He proved himself through displays of courage and gallantry in battle, and, in the Canadas, by unique feats of strength and endurance off-the-battlefield. The rough terrain and cold winter weather of the Upper Province tested the mettle of even the hardest soldiers stationed in the Canadas and required as much (or more) courage to face than the enemy. The consumption of alcohol helped warriors to muster courage, revive physical strength, and fortify their constitution against the hardships of war and cold winter weather of the Canadian theatre – in essence facilitating their martial and imperial conquests. Drunkenness, however, particularly habitual drunkenness, or drunkenness on duty, is revealed to have had the opposite effect. Soldiers and officers alike associated drunkenness on duty, or in the presence of the enemy, with cowardice, poor discipline, and neglect of duty, which were particularly undesired traits in a warrior. Habitual drunkenness also damaged the body, leading to poor health, and signalling a weak constitution which had lost its battle to strong drink. Thus, while the consumption of alcohol could facilitate expressions of warrior masculinity, drunkenness undermined them.

### **Warrior Masculinity and Military Service**

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century saw the rise of “warrior” masculinity in British civilian society as well as in the military. Charles Ludington, Philip Carter, and Michèle Cohen argue that as the hegemony of politeness continued to decline, it was gradually refashioned to re-incorporate more traditional chivalric, warrior-like elements of British elite masculinity which had governed the feudal societies of Britain’s past.<sup>7</sup> Martial qualities such as physical strength, hardiness, aggression, and courage were emphasized as particularly manly – qualities which historian Graham Dawson notes, “have repeatedly been defined as natural and inherent qualities of manhood,” in Western culture since the Ancient Greeks.<sup>8</sup> Heroic warriors from British history and Western mythology were cast as the epitome of manliness, which, Ludington argues, led to renewed emphasis on elite men bearing arms and armour, engaging in rough sport, fighting, hunting, gambling, and, of course, “drinking heavily with other men,” qualities which were traditionally associated with these heroes of lore.<sup>9</sup> By this new code of masculine behaviour, the ideal gentlemen – and gentlemen-officer – was physically strong, with a stout constitution (as knights who bore heavy armour traditionally

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<sup>7</sup> Cohen, however, argues that the “association of chivalry and war was underplayed” for fear of evoking the barbarism of ancient times, and that consequently, the ideal masculine models raised by contemporaries were not military men, but rather were civilian figures such as “Mr. Knightley” from Jane Austen’s *Emma* (1816). Michèle Cohen, “Manners’ Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750–1830,” *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (April 2005), 313-315, 324-329; Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 191; Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005), 304; Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001), 11, 213.

<sup>8</sup> Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes; British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Ludington argues that heavy drinking was a “core activity” of the new warrior masculinity. Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 184-186, 191, 204-205.

were), and well-versed in the military arts, in addition to being skilled in dancing, socializing, and courting ladies (as members of courtly society).

Warrior masculinity was also on the rise in this period as a consequence of war. Since the Seven Years War (1756-1763), Britain had been embroiled in a nearly ceaseless string of global conflicts, lasting until the end of the War of 1812 and Napoleonic Wars, in November 1815. The result, as argued by Linda Colley, was that British national identity took on an increasingly martial character.<sup>10</sup> Prominent military figures such as General James Wolfe, Lord Admiral Nelson, and Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, who embodied desired martial characteristics of duty, honour, and sacrifice, were elevated in this period as national heroes. Martial qualities regarded as essential to winning armed conflicts and forwarding the aims of the state were emphasized in constructions of both civilian and martial masculinity.<sup>11</sup> As Leo Braudy argues, war yields “what could be called a centripetal masculinity, focusing consciousness on a narrowly limited number of traits.”<sup>12</sup> While there was theoretically more room for multiple masculinities and various modes of expression to co-mingle (and compete) in times of peace, wartime masculinity, Braudy argues, needed to be streamlined and focused, just like the weapons and actions of war.<sup>13</sup> This was the case in both the British army and civilian society during the War of 1812 and the larger Napoleonic Wars. A brand of warrior

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<sup>10</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 9; Kennedy agrees that British national masculinity was shaped by war, but disagrees “that the national character was understood as martial or militaristic,” pointing instead to the figure of John Bull as representative of national ideals of masculinity. Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 128.

<sup>11</sup> Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 330-350; Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, 1-2; See also Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 202.

<sup>12</sup> Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 330.

<sup>13</sup> Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 350.



martial masculinity emerged – largely out of practical necessity – which focused on physical strength, bravery, fortitude, and sacrifice for the nation, above all else.

Consequently, despite negative public perceptions of enlisted soldiers, military service in this period became strongly associated with manliness.<sup>14</sup> Comments from Dr. Johnson highlight this veneration: “Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea,” Johnson proclaimed, “were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, ‘Follow me, and hear a lecture on philosophy;’ and Charles, laying his hand on his sword to say, ‘Follow me, and dethrone the Czar;’ a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates.”<sup>15</sup> Although most Britons of the period preferred naval service, Johnson’s biographer and close friend James Boswell noted that Johnson instead “always exalted the profession of a soldier,” which he felt had “the dignity of danger.”<sup>16</sup> Johnson argued that “the character of a soldier is high,” for “they who stand forth the foremost in danger, for the community, have the respect of mankind.”<sup>17</sup> Men such as these, who were willing to do their wartime duty by joining the service and sacrificing for the nation, were elevated as particularly manly figures in the eyes of gentlemen such as Johnson.

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<sup>14</sup> Numerous historians have argued this, including Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate,’” 13-14; Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, xvi, 229, 246; Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, “Introduction: New Histories of Soldiering,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 11; and Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760–1900: Bodies, Emotion, and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 101.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *Life of [Samuel] Johnson* (New York: Oxford University Press, [1791] 2008), 267.

<sup>16</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 267.

<sup>17</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 200.

Once in the army, men would have found that there was an even higher value placed on adherence to duty and willingness to sacrifice. A soldier's duty was to protect the nation and defeat the enemy, to fight, kill, and possibly die for the cause. An officer's duty was to lead his men in that effort, to inspire confidence, direct their actions, and to also give his life if necessary.<sup>18</sup> Men who did so were revered by their martial comrades. Men such as General Isaac Brock, whose final push up Queenston Heights in October of 1812 would set the stage for significant wartime and post-war mythologizing about his courage, martial skill, and (possible) last words, highlighting Brock's steadfast leadership and dedication to duty until the very end.<sup>19</sup> But Brock was not the only officer to be valorized for his courageous sacrifice during the war. Private Shadrach Byfield of the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot (whose motto was 'Gwell Augau Neu Chwilydd,' or 'death rather than dishonour') similarly praised the bold actions of his Sergeant-Major, Keynes, who led twelve men in a valiant attempt to re-take a captured British artillery battery during the Siege of Fort Meigs, and fought on despite receiving several wounds.<sup>20</sup> Byfield notes that "the Sergeant-Major was soon wounded in one of his arms, and lost several of his men, but that did not stop them, they were bold and

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<sup>18</sup> Le Couteur reflects upon the importance of an officers' duty to give proper commands during an engagement at the top of *Le Couteur, Merry Hearts*, 177.

<sup>19</sup> For a biography of Brock, see Wesley B. Turner, *The Astonishing General: The Life and Legacy of Sir Isaac Brock* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2011); For post-war mythologizing, see Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: the Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 37-38; George Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 21, 78-79; For a discussion of his last words, see Guy St-Denis, "A Final Utterance: The Last Words of Sir Isaac Brock," *Ontario History* 110, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 1-8.

<sup>20</sup> Shadrach Byfield, *A Narrative of a Light Company Soldier's Service in the Forty-First Regiment of Foot, 1807-1814*, (Bradford: John Bubb, 1840; Reprinted by William Abbatt, 1910), 70.

courageous.”<sup>21</sup> Dunlop spoke in similarly glowing fashion about the much-liked Lieutenant Colonel Drummond, who was killed leading the assault on the northeast bastion of Fort Erie during the siege in August of 1814. Dunlop praised Drummond as embodying “everything that could be required in a soldier,” for “a brave man and a soldier would wish to fall, a death far less to be pitied than envied.”<sup>22</sup> These men were remembered as heroes for their bravery and sacrifice in the execution of their wartime duty.

Such grandiose sentiments about duty, heroism, and sacrifice, were, of course, heavily romanticized. As Catriona Kennedy argues, the theatre of war (specifically the Peninsular theatre of the Napoleonic Wars) was not always the site in which manhood found its fullest expression – particularly for subaltern officers.<sup>23</sup> Kennedy notes that the “fantasies of masculine adventure and heroism” which fired men with martial ardour simply did not match up with the realities of daily life in the army at war.”<sup>24</sup> Subalterns, NCOs, and enlisted men more often wound up dead or disfigured, and largely forgotten, rather than praised as national heroes. They found that their acts of bravery, while essential to winning the war, gained them very little in the way of personal advancement. Comments from Johnny Newcome, the protagonist of Colonel Roberts’ satirical poem, *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome*, support this:

‘I think,’ says John, ‘Campaigning is no joke  
‘With us poor Subs, it only ends in smoke:  
[...]

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<sup>21</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 70.

<sup>22</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 62-63.

<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 128; see also Neil Ramsey, “‘A Real English Soldier’: Suffering, Manliness and Class in the Mid-Nineteenth Century Soldiers’ Tale,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland*, 136-155.

<sup>24</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 128.

‘I know a man of whom ’tis truly said  
‘He bravely twice a Storming party led;  
‘And Volunteer’d both times—now here’s the rub,  
‘The gallant fellow still remains a Sub.’”<sup>25</sup>

Although there were significant differences between soldiers’ experiences in the Peninsular War and the War of 1812, Le Couteur similarly confessed in a letter home, dated July, 19<sup>th</sup>, 1815, that after only a short time in the service, “I am heartily tired of a Subaltern’s life.”<sup>26</sup> Evidently, many young men like Le Couteur were snared by the lure of “manly soldiering,” only to find their dream of achieving that vaunted martial masculine status of national hero to be quite illusory.

Regardless, sacrifice, and adherence to duty were heavily promoted as part of the wartime martial masculine ideal. This is not only revealed in praise of fallen heroes, but also in condemnations of soldiers and officers who shirked their duties. As Kennedy notes, such men were “dismissed as effeminate, lured by the glamour and spectacle of the military but unwilling to endure its hardships.”<sup>27</sup> Sources reveal that many such officers congregated at the army depôt on the Isle of Wight, where they avoided deployment to the Canadas:

All the worse characters in the army were congregated at the Isle of Wight; men who were afraid to join their regiments [...] These stuck to the depôt, and the arrival of a fleet of transports at Spithead or the Mother-bank, was a signal for a general sickness among these worthies.<sup>28</sup> And this was peculiarly the case with those who were bound for Canada, for they knew full well if they could shirk past the month of August, there was no chance of a call on their services until the month

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<sup>25</sup> Roberts even reveals the man’s name, with whom he served with in the Peninsular War, Lieutenant Dyas, of 51st Light Regiment. Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, 93-101.

<sup>26</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 231.

<sup>27</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 134.

<sup>28</sup> A person of notable importance. Here used tongue-in-cheek regarding these men’s own estimation of themselves.

of April following. And many scamps took advantage of this. I know one fellow who managed to avoid joining his regiment abroad for no less than three years.<sup>29</sup>

Clearly there were men who had been drawn into the army by the “dignity of danger,” as Johnson notes, and the masculine affirmation which military service seemingly offered, but yet were unwilling to do their duty, to face combat and the hardships of service, as they had agreed to. These officers’ refusal to deploy marked them as lesser men in the eyes of their peers; as men consumed with their own importance rather than driven by a sense of duty.

Once deployed, officers who were unwilling to lead the charge in combat and sacrifice themselves as Brock, Keynes, and Drummond had done (or soldiers who were unwilling to follow), were similarly viewed as poor warriors in the eyes of their martial peers. They could also face harsh repercussions for their refusal to do their duty. For example, Byfield relates that when a fellow enlisted man in his regiment turned to run during the Battle of Fort Stephenson, another soldier in the unit threatened that “if he did not face fire he would run his bayonet through him.”<sup>30</sup> In the case of officers, on the other hand, they faced their comrades in General Courts-Martial. Major Robert William Ottley, for example, of the 85<sup>th</sup> Regiment serving in Holland, was brought up on charges by a fellow officer for “Disobedience of Orders, and unsoldierlike conduct,” in refusing to disembark and lead his three companies of men into action.<sup>31</sup> The court chastised him for “shamefully abandoning” his junior lieutenant and “retreating into the rear” while ordering other companies to advance “and attack a very superior

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<sup>29</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 3-4.

<sup>30</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 77.

<sup>31</sup> “Major Robert Wm. Ottley – 1800,” in *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority*, ed. Charles James (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820), 62-65.

force;” for disobeying an order to “lead [his men] into action,” while keeping them “concealed under shelter of a sand bank;” and for “shamefully quitting part of the 85th regiment that same day, on receiving only a trifling wound,” before immediately reembarking a vessel to return to England.<sup>32</sup> Although Ottley was ultimately found “not guilty,” the language used in the charges (which was repeated in General Orders, read before the men), emphasized the value placed upon adherence to duty, and a willingness to endure and sacrifice, if necessary.<sup>33</sup>

Desertion represented the clearest abandonment of an enlisted man’s soldierly duty, and was strongly associated with cowardice or weakness (and often drunkenness), which were particularly undesired traits in a warrior.<sup>34</sup> For example, following a minor skirmish with American forces on July 18<sup>th</sup> 1813, Le Couteur remarked that a man in his regiment, “Serjeant Chase” had deserted, “from cowardice I suspect, He did not like fire.”<sup>35</sup> The Canadas featured some of the highest rates of desertion of any posting in the Empire, and military authorities’ efforts to combat this problem were largely ineffective during the war.<sup>36</sup> Brock blamed the “lures to desertion continually thrown out by the Americans [...] who have an interest in debauching the soldier from his duty.”<sup>37</sup> The proximity of a large, white, English-speaking populace just across the border would indeed have made desertion more enticing for soldiers

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<sup>32</sup> “Major Robert Wm. Ottley – 1800,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 63.

<sup>33</sup> No reason was given for the acquittal.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of desertion in the Canadas during the War of 1812 see, Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles*.

<sup>35</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 131.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Burroughs, “Crime and Punishment in the British Army, 1815-1870,” *English Historical Review* 100 (1985), 553; Carol M. Whitfield, *Tommy Atkins: The British Soldier in Canada, 1759-1870* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, 1981), 59-60.

<sup>37</sup> Isaac Brock, “Isaac Brock to His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, 1806,” in *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock*, ed. Ferdinand Brock Tupper (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845; Project Gutenberg eBook #14428, 2004), n.p.

stationed in the Canadas as compared to other colonial postings. Deserters who were apprehended, however, faced severe physical punishment and harsh public reprimand, which broadcast their dishonour to the rest of the army. During the War of 1812, deserters received sentences ranging from hundreds of lashes, to being made “to serve as Soldiers for Life” (typically in a different regiment), being transported as a felon to the penal colony of New South Wales for seven years, for life, or even “to be shot to death.”<sup>38</sup>

In many cases in the Canadas, however, we find that these harsh sentences were remitted, and offenders given a second chance at life (though they carried the permanent stigma of shame in the eyes of their peers).<sup>39</sup> This was not reflective of a tolerant stance towards desertion or their rejection of martial masculine ideals, but rather a pragmatic response to a shortage of regular troops available for service in the Canadas, given that the bulk of the British forces were engaged with the armies of Napoleon in Europe.<sup>40</sup> Not all military authorities agreed with this practice, however, as evidenced by the trial of a number of deserters from the Regiment De Watteville, who were stationed in the Canadas, in 1813. In a General Order dated September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1813, His Excellency the Commander of the Forces conveyed his “marked

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<sup>38</sup> “General Orders. Montreal. 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1812; 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1812,” “General Orders. Montreal. 27<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1812; 29<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1812,” “General Orders. Quebec. 24<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1812; 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1813,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. I, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society, 13; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920), 327-329, 338-339, 341-342; “General Order. Kingston, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 476-477; “General Order. Kingston. 21<sup>st</sup> Jun. 1813,” “General Order. Montreal. 8<sup>th</sup> Jun. 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 676-678, 696-701.

<sup>39</sup> As evidenced by the number of cases which featured repeat offenders. For example, in “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 166 (1814-1815) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 145.

<sup>40</sup> Wald notes that in India too, many intemperance related infractions were dealt with informally due to a shortage of manpower. Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012), 854-855.

disapprobation” with this issuance of what he viewed as an overly lenient sentence (to serve as soldiers for life), noting that the “critical exigency of the times” demanded a greater adherence to duty on the part of officers, who “by awarding a Sentence so very inadequate to the enormity of the offence, are not only Guilty of a gross neglect of duty, but thereby exposes to hazard, the Honor, Discipline and very Existence of His Majesty's Service, which they are bound to maintain.”<sup>41</sup> In order to emphasize the shame associated with desertion, His Excellency directed that the prisoners instead be “drummed through the Cantonments of Kingston with every mark of disgrace and infamy.”<sup>42</sup> This was apparently common practice, as Le Couteur relates that a deserter from the 104<sup>th</sup> was similarly made to give an “appropriate speech on the heinousness of desertion,” as he was marched slowly through the ranks of his peers, “in his filthy overdress, which was put over his clean underclothes for the occasion [...] every part of his poor Body, had been preyed upon by myriads of Insects small and large [...] His face was a mass of inflamed sores, no eyes distinguishable – it made one Sick and weep to see Him.”<sup>43</sup> This public shaming promoted an adherence to duty as particularly honourable and “soldierlike,” by broadcasting the dishonour associated with desertion without compromising the strength of the army.

Repeat offenders, however, particularly those who took up arms with the enemy, were dealt with severely. General Orders dated October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1813 broadcast that “traitors” who took up “their paricidal [sic] Arms against that Country which gave them birth,” were considered to

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<sup>41</sup> “General Order. Kingston, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 476-477.

<sup>42</sup> “General Order. Kingston, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 476-477.

<sup>43</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 81.



be “guilty of the basest and most unnatural Crime that can disgrace human Nature.”<sup>44</sup> This was the case with Private John Farley of the 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment, who deserted from the siege lines surrounding Fort Erie on August 11<sup>th</sup> a few days prior to the assault on Snake Hill.<sup>45</sup> Farley joined the American forces inside the Fort, and was sent back out to attack the British siege lines during the September 17<sup>th</sup> sortie, where he was promptly captured by his former regiment. At his trial later that year, the Court found him guilty of desertion and sentenced him to be “shot to Death.”<sup>46</sup> They recommended a reduction of the sentence, but in this case the Crown deemed that any possibility of clemency had been forfeited “by the repetition of the heinous crime of which he had been convicted,” showing that repeat offenders, particularly those who joined with the enemy, would not be spared.<sup>47</sup> Those soldiers who apprehended such men, on the other hand, were praised for their actions. In a final note on the case, His Excellency expressed his “great satisfaction in noticing the soldierlike conduct of Privates John Lynch and John Conran of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment [...] in the execution of their Duty, as advanced sentries, and who have with Serjeant Gaving of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, evinced by their vigilance and integrity, an honourable sense of their duty as British Soldiers.”<sup>48</sup> These men were elevated by military authorities as model soldiers, with their sense of duty offered as clear proof of their martial masculine honour.

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<sup>44</sup> “General Order. Head Quarters, Montreal. 27<sup>th</sup> October 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 819-820.

<sup>45</sup> “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 166 (1814-1815) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 145.

<sup>46</sup> “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records*, 145.

<sup>47</sup> “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records*, 145.

<sup>48</sup> “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records*, 145.

While a private's abandonment of duty was most readily associated with the crime of desertion, an officer's was more often marked by drunkenness on duty, which Le Couteur noted, was a "most heinous offence."<sup>49</sup> Drunkenness on duty (in public) signalled a loss of self-control, and was considered under military law to be "conduct unbecoming a gentleman and an officer," as was frequently cited in Courts-Martial cases.<sup>50</sup> In the eyes of military authorities, drunkenness, rather than excusing or "palliating" a soldier or officers' "non-performance" of duty, was seen as aggravating this offense, for example, in the cases of Ensign John Stevenson and Ensign Daniel Dupré of the Canadian Regiment of Fencible Infantry.<sup>51</sup> Stevenson was charged in 1811 with "being drunk, on duty [...] when Subaltern of the Cape Diamond piquet, and for the regimental duty of the day," and Dupré in 1813 with "being so drunk [...] as to be incapable of doing his duty."<sup>52</sup> Stevenson's conduct in particular was characterized by the court as "disgraceful, and unbecoming the character of an Officer."<sup>53</sup> The conduct of Lieutenant Peters, also of the Canadian Fencibles, who was charged in 1810, "for being drunk, on piquet," as well as "for great insubordination," in afterwards insulting and

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<sup>49</sup> As noted by Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 79; Retired Major Charles James' 1820 *Collection* features over sixty cases of officers charged for being drunk on duty, as well as nearly a hundred others in which officers were reprimanded for "neglect of duty," for not "evin[cing] a proper sense of duty due to the service," or for engaging in actions which otherwise impeded their ability to do their duty. Charles James, ed. *A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820).

<sup>50</sup> For example, see James, *A Collection of Charges*, 151, 153, 161-162, 191, 227-228, 245, 254-255, 260, 276-277, 281, 287, 290, etc; See also Alexander Tytler, *An Essay on Military Law, and the Practice of Courts Martial*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1806), 109-110.

<sup>51</sup> "Ensign John Stevenson – 1811," "Ensign Daniel Dupré – 1813," "Lieutenant Joseph Peters – 1810," in *A Collection of the Charges*, 374-375, 489, 351; See William Hough and George Long, *Practice of Courts Martial, Also the Legal Exposition and Military Explanation of the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War*, Second Edition (London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1825), 293-295.

<sup>52</sup> "Ensign John Stevenson – 1811," "Ensign Daniel Dupré – 1813," in *A Collection of the Charges*, 374, 489.

<sup>53</sup> "Ensign John Stevenson – 1811," in *A Collection of the Charges*, 374.

challenging his commanding officer Captain M'Queen to a fight, was characterized similarly.<sup>54</sup>

The Court condemned Peters' actions, but also reprimanded M'Queen, whom, they argued:

Did not exert his authority, to prevent the improper use of liquor in the guard-room, and after finding the effect it had produced on Lieutenant Peters, he did not evince a proper sense of duty due to the service; but, on the contrary, entered into altercations, and suffered him to remain, while in a state of intoxication, in the command of the piquet.<sup>55</sup>

M'Queen, in this case, escaped formal punishment, but Peters, as well as the other two ensigns from the regiment, were sentenced to be “cashiered.”

“Cashiering” was the official punishment for officers found to be drunk on duty, or under arms.<sup>56</sup> It was the primary means of public reprimand for officers, and a thoroughly emasculating punishment.<sup>57</sup> Cashiered officers had their commission revoked, and were prohibited from “selling-out,” or receiving any financial compensation for their (often-purchased) rank. They were also physically stripped of all denotations of rank from their uniform such as epaulets, insignia, sashes, and even swords, in full view of their regiment, and the charges and sentence of the Court were “read at the head of every regiment, and entered in the regimental orderly books,” to convey the officer’s shame to the entire army.<sup>58</sup> This

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<sup>54</sup> “Lieutenant Joseph Peters – 1810,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 351.

<sup>55</sup> “Lieutenant Joseph Peters – 1810,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 351.

<sup>56</sup> See William Hough and George Long, *Practice of Courts Martial, Also the Legal Exposition and Military Explanation of the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War*, 2nd Edition (London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1825), 293-295.

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of cashiering, see John Grodzinski, “‘Bloody Provost’: Discipline During the War of 1812,” *Canadian Military History* 16, no. 4 (October 2007): 27; Alan James Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-63* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1985), 103.

<sup>58</sup> For example, see James, *A Collection of the Charges*, 131, 134-135, 138-139, 141, 143, 146-148, 151-153, 155, 157, 159-160, 164, 167, etc; Erica Wald notes that “legal observers believed that the public shame which accompanied a court martial was much more effective in disciplining men of officer rank.” Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012): 851.

punishment was not simply reserved for subaltern officers, such as Lieutenant Peters, either. In 1808, Colonel Sir Charles Hotham, Bart.,<sup>59</sup> was charged for being drunk on duty, found guilty, and sentenced to be cashiered. His Majesty ordered that Hotham's crime be "publicly communicated to the army, in order that officers, and soldiers of all descriptions, may be made sensible that no consideration of rank or station in life, or even of past services, will induce His Majesty to pardon an offence of this nature, so injurious to the discipline of the army."<sup>60</sup> As Captain William Hough and George Long, Esq., noted in their treatise on *The Practice of Courts-Martial*, this was the intent of punishment, "to secure the due performance of duty; and in a manner that shall not be derogatory to the respectability of the mil. character."<sup>61</sup> Cashiering very publicly communicated to the entire army that drunkenness on duty, or any neglect of duty, was particularly unsoldierlike, and unofficerlike behaviour.

### **Bravery, Gallantry, and Cowardice**

The consumption of alcohol also played a role in facilitating – and when consumed in excess, compromising – expressions of martial masculine bravery and courage. Bravery, in this context, being a character trait denoting a strength or willingness to face danger, and courage the act of overcoming fear in combat. These qualities set warriors apart from other men. As noted by Dr. Johnson, "mankind reverence those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness."<sup>62</sup> Weakness or cowardice was something which no man wanted to be

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<sup>59</sup> Abbreviation for Baronet, a hereditary title.

<sup>60</sup> "Sir Charles Hotham, Bart. – 1808," in *A Collection of the Charges*, 257.

<sup>61</sup> Hough and Long, *Practice of Courts Martial*, 295.

<sup>62</sup> Johnson and Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 267.

associated with, and which no warrior could not afford to show. As Joanne Begiato argues, those who failed to conform to this masculine ideal of bravery were deemed cowards, weak, or effeminate.<sup>63</sup> But most, if not all men experienced fear in combat. Byfield admitted as much after becoming separated following his unit's devastating defeat and retreat after the Battle of the Thames in 1813.<sup>64</sup> He was taken in by a group of Indigenous warriors,<sup>65</sup> and at one point mistakenly thought himself sold for a pair of moccasins. When an interpreter saw the fear on his face and asked him "You are afraid," Byfield rebuffed the notion, but confessed in his journal that "I really was afraid, but did not want him to know it."<sup>66</sup> The measure of a soldier, of a warrior, was how he overcame fear, particularly in combat. Acts of courage gained him the respect of his martial comrades, and, if Dr. Johnson is to be believed, all of mankind.

Bravery and courage were essential to the performance of a soldiers' duty and to the functioning of the army as a whole because of the weapons and linear tactics of the era.<sup>67</sup> Flint-lock muskets, the most common firearm employed by European armies, were highly inaccurate and unreliable, and consequently most effective when fired in volleys, *en masse*. As a result, soldiers were typically organized in long lines facing the enemy, packed shoulder-to-shoulder. They would load and fire as a group, step-by-step, according to the orders of their commanding officer. This exposed position, and the relatively slow reload-time of the muzzle-loading

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<sup>63</sup> Begiato, *Manliness in Britain*, 7-8.

<sup>64</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 80-83.

<sup>65</sup> Byfield only refers to them as "Indians," however, it is likely that they were of the Shawnee, or at least the Western Confederacy, given that Byfield mentions "their prophet was killed" during the battle.

<sup>66</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 82.

<sup>67</sup> For a discussion of the weapons and tactics employed by the British army during the War of 1812 see, Donald E. Graves, *And All Their Glory Past: Fort Erie, Plattsburgh, and the Final Battles in the North, 1814* (Montreal, Québec: Robin Brass Studio, 2013), 355-359; J. Mackay Hitsman and Donald E. Graves, ed. *The Incredible War of 1812: A Military History* (Toronto, Robin Brass Studio, 1999), 283-296.

muskets presented soldiers as an easy target for the enemy. Byfield's description of the Battle of Fort Stephenson highlights this reality: "We were exposed to the enemy's fire. My front-rank man, the sergeant on my right, Major Short and Lieutenant Gordon, were killed. My left-hand man received six balls."<sup>68</sup> Standing upright, continuing to load, hold, and fire in repetition – and inevitably leading or receiving a bayonet charge – required courage and discipline. Dunlop (who was a surgeon, not a front-line officer), spoke to this, noting that "a man must possess more courage than I can pretend to, who can stand perfectly cool, while, having nothing to do, he is shot at like a target."<sup>69</sup> However, this was what was required of soldiers – of masculine bodies – in order to win battles. A General Order read to the troops at Chippewa in December of 1813, just before the raid on Black Rock and Buffalo, reminded the men of this; that they must "depend wholly not only for their success, but even for their safety, on their bravery and discipline, a relaxation in the latter may be as fatal as even a deficiency in the former quality."<sup>70</sup> The army needed brave, disciplined soldiers if they hoped to achieve victory. Consequently, "warrior" masculinity was defined by martial qualities such as bravery and courage.

As often as soldiers and officers were praised by military authorities for their "bravery" and "courage," however, we see them even more often praised for "gallantry." Gallantry, in this context, denoted heroically courageous conduct in battle (but, in another context, could also refer to polite or courtly attention given to women). This choice of "gallantry" over

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<sup>68</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 77.

<sup>69</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 83-84.

<sup>70</sup> "General Order. Head Quarters, Chippewa, 28th December 1813," in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 507-509.

“courage” or “bravery” reflects the re-incorporation of notions of chivalry into the refashioned, now warrior-like, code of politeness. To be cited for gallantry was, in this period, perhaps the highest praise which could be lauded upon a gentleman-officer. Le Couteur, for example, praised the “bold” and “gallant” actions of Captain Glew of the 41<sup>st</sup>, who led his unit of Light Infantry under heavy fire to retake a key artillery position during the bloody Battle of Lundy’s Lane in July of 1814. Le Couteur noted that Glew “ought to have been made a [Medieval] Knight Banneret<sup>71</sup> or a Major on the spot.”<sup>72</sup> Le Couteur heaped similar praise on his own commanding officer at that action, noting that “while we were under this fire, Lieutenant-Colonel William Drummond was seated on his war horse like a knightly man of valour as He was exposed to a ragged fire from hundreds of brave Yankees.”<sup>73</sup> Both men were portrayed as heroic knights of lore, fighting to save their kingdom. They had, by their gallant actions, proven themselves exemplars or martial manliness, worthy of emulation (in the eyes of at least one young subaltern).

Enlisted rank-and-file also received praise for their gallantry. Byfield recalled that after they had taken Fort Detroit in August of 1812, “our general, who was about to leave us, assembled the troops and thanked them for their gallantry, saying it would be a feather in our caps as long as we lived.”<sup>74</sup> But individual soldiers were rarely, if ever, constructed as heroic or knightly figures, nor did they receive individual accolades.<sup>75</sup> As Braudy notes, gentlemen

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<sup>71</sup> A medieval knight who led men at arms under his own banner, ranking higher than other knights. Also, a title conferred for valiant deeds done in the king’s presence on the field of battle.

<sup>72</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 175.

<sup>73</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 175.

<sup>74</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 65.

<sup>75</sup> The Victoria Cross would not be awarded until 1856.

and officers felt that men of lower social standing had no individual honour worth mentioning.<sup>76</sup> Instead, the regiment as a whole would be granted a “battle honour” for meritorious conduct; the name of the battle won would be emblazoned on their regimental flag or “colours” for all time. For example, Byfield’s regiment, the 41<sup>st</sup>, were granted the battle honour “Niagara,” along with a host of other regiments, “as a testimony of their good conduct” in capturing Fort Niagara, and at the Battle of Lundy’s Lane (on the Niagara Peninsula). Specifically cited was their “unshaken firmness, and well-disciplined gallantry [...] fully meriting every honorable mark of distinction and of approbation, which can be conferred upon them.”<sup>77</sup> This was the highest honour which any enlisted soldier could hope to receive. Of course, also noted in the testimony were “those Officers, who led their brave men on those occasions, [no] less deserving of His Majesty's Gracious Approbation.”<sup>78</sup>

The place of bravery, courage, and gallantry as core martial masculine values is further emphasized by military authorities’ frequent condemnations of cowardice. Cowardice was not only costly in battle and injurious to military discipline, it signalled weakness – that a man had succumbed to fear. Accordingly, acts of cowardice in battle were condemned in General Orders and punished by General Courts-Martial. For example, in the case of Lieutenant Michael O’Flanagan of the King’s 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, who was charged with “laying himself on the Ground in the rear of the division to which he was attached, while the Regiment was actually

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<sup>76</sup> Brady, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 297.

<sup>77</sup> “From Drummond at Kingston to Prevost at –. Kingston. November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1814,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. III, pt. II, 772.

<sup>78</sup> “From Drummond at Kingston to Prevost at –. Kingston. November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1814,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 772.



engaged with the Enemy,” at the Battle of Chippawa, and for later “quitting his Division without leave, whilst the Regiment was actually engaged with the Enemy [...] and withdrawing himself towards Fort George.”<sup>79</sup> O’Flanagan was found guilty, sentenced to be cashiered, and the sentence carried out. This strict and very public reprimand, which was entered into the order books and read before the troops, reinforced that there was no place for cowards in the army.

Even to accuse another officer of being a coward was a serious attack on his character – whether or not the accusation had merit. For example, Captain Cortlandt Skinner Meredith of the 85<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot was brought before General Courts-Martial in November of 1812, for “disgracefully slandering and traducing the character” of a fellow officer by asserting that his superior, Colonel Cuyler, was a “coward, and drunk on duty,” and that if Colonel Cuyler “attempted to annoy him” or bring him up on Court-Martial, that he would “smash him.”<sup>80</sup> The severity of this particular instance was amplified because it happened publicly, in front of the men under Colonel Cuyler’s command. The Court recognized that “such assertions and reports [were] injurious to Colonel Cuyler’s character as an Officer and a Gentleman,” and accordingly discharged Meredith from His Majesty’s service, without pay.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> “General Order. Horse Guards. 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1815,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 167, (1815) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 477.

<sup>80</sup> “Lieutenant Colonel Eneas McIntosh, Captain John Hylton, Lieutenant Edward Powell, Lieutenant James Cameron, Capt. Cortlandt Skinner Meredith, and Lieutenant and Adjutant John Connor – 1813,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 471-472.

<sup>81</sup> “Lieutenant Colonel Eneas McIntosh, Captain John Hylton, Lieutenant Edward Powell, Lieutenant James Cameron, Capt. Cortlandt Skinner Meredith, and Lieutenant and Adjutant John Connor – 1813,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 472.

The significance of the damage done to an officers' character from accusations of cowardice (or drunkenness on duty) is further highlighted by fervent attempts by officers found "not guilty," to rehabilitate their character in the public eye following their acquittals.<sup>82</sup> Many men published full accounts of their trials and wrote letters or "memorials" in their own defence.<sup>83</sup> For example, in the case of Lieutenant Benoit Bender of the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot, who submitted a full accounting of his trial – held at Québec in July, 1815 – to the public, "for the purpose of removing the unfounded imputations" to which his character had "been so long exposed."<sup>84</sup> Bender had been charged with "concealing himself while the detachments of His Majesty's Troops with which he was serving, was engaged with the enemy," at the Battle of the River Raisin in January of 1813, and again in August near Fort Sandusky.<sup>85</sup> One officer asserted that Bender "*hid behind a dead horse.*"<sup>86</sup> He was found not guilty, and honourably acquitted – as was the case with most officers – but his character was irreparably damaged nonetheless. Bender had lived and served with his fellow officers, and accusers, for roughly two years before he got his day in court, all-the-while condemned as a coward. He had been expelled from the Regimental Mess, ostracized by his peers, and "attacked," as he put it, "in

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<sup>82</sup> For example, in the 1814 case of Lieutenant Robert Jones of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ceylon Regiment, who was charged with "falsely asserting in the presence and in the hearing of the soldiers of the water gate guard, commanded by Ensign Robert Layton [...] that he, the said Ensign Layton was drunk, or in liquor, or using words to that effect, thereby attempting to prejudice and degrade the character of that Officer." "Lieutenant Robert Jones – 1814," in *A Collection of the Charges*, 630.

<sup>83</sup> See also the case of Lieutenant Colonel Murray of the 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment. *Proceedings of a Court Martial, [Holden] at Montreal, in March, 1809*. CIHM/ICMH microfiche series; no. 92392. ([Montréal?: s.n., 1809?]), preface.

<sup>84</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial, Holden at Quebec, for the Trial of Lieutenant Benoit Bender, of the 41st Regiment of Foot, in July, 1815*. CIHM/ICMH microfiche series; no. 10896 (Montreal: Printed by J. Lane ..., 1817), preface.

<sup>85</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial*, 17.

<sup>86</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial*, 10.

that which is most dear to a soldier, his honour.”<sup>87</sup> Bender related that “he has now lived in disgrace (if to live in disgrace can be called existence) ever since the month of May last, the period at which he was shut out from the fellowship of his brother officers.”<sup>88</sup> Clearly even unsubstantiated accusations of cowardice did significant damage to an officers’ masculine honour and martial identity as a warrior, particularly in the eyes of his immediate peers.

For those military men who did have difficulty mustering the requisite courage to face the enemy (and even those who didn’t), liquor provided a potential solution. In the War of 1812, the British army regularly gave extra rations of rum or whiskey to enlisted soldiers before battle in order to bolster their courage.<sup>89</sup> Byfield and the men of the 41<sup>st</sup>, for example, were each given “a noggin of rum” (roughly one quarter pint), before the battle of Lundy’s Lane in July of 1814, and the men of the Newfoundland Regiment each received a “half a pint of whiskey,” in March of 1813, as they prepared to defend the shore from an American attack.<sup>90</sup> One Private from the latter Regiment recalled that after imbibing, they “were fully determined to dispute every inch of ground at the point of the bayonet. I am certain that every man of us would have fallen before we had given up to the enemy.”<sup>91</sup> In this case, the spirits appear to have had the desired effect; the men were willing to bravely fight on, and to the bitter end if

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<sup>87</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial*, 11.

<sup>88</sup> *Proceedings of a Court Martial*, 12.

<sup>89</sup> Elizabeth Purdy notes that this practice of imbibing before battle was commonly referred to as “Dutch courage,” an ethnic slur which came to refer to the drinking of alcohol prior to taking on any unpleasant task or duty, which spurs the imbiber into action. Elizabeth R. Purdy, “Dutch Courage,” In *The Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol: Social, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*, Vol. I, ed. Scott C. Martin (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2015), 823-827.

<sup>90</sup> Byfield, *A Narrative*, 90; “Fort Erie, 20th March, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 124.

<sup>91</sup> “Fort Erie, 20th March, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign... Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 124.

necessary. In this way, the consumption of alcohol facilitated martial masculine performances of bravery, courage, and gallantry.

The practice of providing men with alcohol before battle was not simply a means of placating supposed alcoholics, however, or incentivizing them to fight.<sup>92</sup> Rather, it had a basis in popular culture and medical science of the period. Dr. Johnson, for example, noted that “in the bottle, discontent seeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and bashfulness for confidence.”<sup>93</sup> His comments reveal the popular perception that drinking could literally inspire a man to action. And, although not a medical doctor, Johnson’s comments influenced the work of actual physicians. For example, Dr. Thomas Trotter, who argued in his seminal work, *On Drunkenness*, that “invigorated with wine, the infirm man becomes strong, and the timid courageous.”<sup>94</sup> As medical authorities such as Trotter recognized the beneficial effects which liquor (initially) had upon the body, military authorities unsurprisingly found a practical application for this knowledge.

This practice of imbibing liquor before battle walked a fine line, however. It closely resembled dram-drinking,<sup>95</sup> which civil and medical authorities considered to be a major cause of problematic, lower-class drunkenness throughout the eighteenth century, particularly during the “Gin Craze” in London. Officers also feared that providing soldiers with too much alcohol

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<sup>92</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 6, 23.

<sup>93</sup> From *Life of Addison*, quoted in Thomas Trotter, *An Essay, Medical, Philosophical, and Chemical, on Drunkenness: And Its Effects on the Human Body* (Boston: Published by Bradford & Read; and A. Finley, Philadelphia, 1813), 26.

<sup>94</sup> Trotter frequently offered quotes from Johnson as evidence to support his claims. Trotter, *An Essay*, 25-26.

<sup>95</sup> A dram was simply a small drink of cheap whiskey or spirits, typically procured at an unlicensed seller. Dram-drinking typically referred to the repetitive consumption of drams in relatively quick succession.

might lead them to lose their (already perceived as tenuous) control over baser impulses.

Consequently, medical authorities such as Trotter strongly criticized the practice:

It is well known that the modern armies of France are much addicted to drinking spirits; and many of their greatest victories are said to have been obtained under the fury inspired by dram-drinking [...] This is a species of prowess which our tars call Dutch courage; and which, I hope, will never be resorted to by Britons in the present contest with France.<sup>96</sup>

Trotter comments reveal that fighting while intoxicated was, paradoxically, seen as dishonourable. He argued that heavy drinking had, in this instance, taken the French soldiers past the point of courage on the battlefield, for they no longer feared anything, to the point of furious, uncontrolled rage. As Nicole Eustace argues, the terms “rage” and “fury,” in this period, signalled a capitulation to anger and baser violent instincts, and were generally associated with animals or nature.<sup>97</sup> To describe a soldier in a drunken state of fury was to describe a man who had, as noted in the previous chapter, made a “beast of himself.”<sup>98</sup> Beasts were not brave, they had no honour, and no man could win glory in securing victory by such means. As described by Trotter, courage inspired by drink was a “false courage,” indeed.<sup>99</sup>

This alcohol-inspired courage paradox highlights a major issue with alcohol consumption in the construction of martial masculine identities. Although imbibing large amounts of spirituous liquors was constructed as having the potential to imbue men with

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<sup>96</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 141.

<sup>97</sup> Nicole Eustace has argued that “the words chosen to describe people’s anger carried important information about their purported capacity for making reasoned moral judgements and hence about their social status.” Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 157.

<sup>98</sup> “Anecdotes of the Revd. Percival Stockdale,” in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, Vol. 2. ed. George Birkbeck Hill. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 333.

<sup>99</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 200.

courage and prove themselves brave, effectively facilitating the performance of their martial masculine identity as a warrior, drunkenness, especially in the presence of the enemy, was regarded as particularly unbecoming a soldier or officer. The aforementioned General Order read to the troops at Chippewa in 1813 prior to the raid on Black Rock and Buffalo, reminded the men of this; that “intoxication in the presence of an Enemy, let it be remembered, is not only the most disgraceful, but the most dangerous crime which a soldier can commit – the man who wilfully disqualifies himself from meeting his Enemy, by whatever means, cannot be considered as a brave man.”<sup>100</sup> Drunkenness not only compromised a man’s ability to fight, it signalled that alcohol had overcome his willpower and constitution, proving him weak, and susceptible to cowardice. If he was so easily overcome by strong drink, so too might he be by fear, or by the enemy. Thus, alcohol was seen as having the potential to sap a man’s courage, as well as bolster it.

### **Warrior Masculinity and Soldiering in the Canadas**

One thing that was particularly unique about service in the Canadas, is that there were fewer opportunities for men to prove their bravery and win martial glory *on the battlefield*, as compared to the European and Iberian theatres of the Napoleonic Wars. The small navy and largely untrained army of the upstart American republic was not held in the same esteem as the battle-hardened armies of Napoleon’s grand French Empire, and the sheer size (and frequency) of engagements in North America never compared to those in Europe or on the

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<sup>100</sup> “General Order. Head Quarters, Chippewa, 28th December 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 508-509.

Peninsula. Canada's favourite hero, General Isaac Brock, frequently complained about being "buried in this inactive, remote corner, without the least mention being made of me."<sup>101</sup> One of Brock's friends, Colonel J. A. Vesey, even wrote to him from England in May of 1811 to express his sympathy for Brock's situation:

I quite feel for you, my good friend, when I think of the stupid and uninteresting time you must have passed in Upper Canada—with your ardour for professional employment in the field, it must have been very painful. I did not think Sir James (Craig) would have detained you so long against your will. Had you returned to Europe, there is little doubt but that you would immediately have been employed in Portugal, and, as that service has turned out so very creditable, I regret very much that you had not deserted from Canada.<sup>102</sup>

While the outbreak of war would provide Brock and other officers stationed in the Canadas with significantly more opportunity to earn glory and honour in battle than in peacetime, this theatre of war remained secondary in the British military mindset.

The rugged Canadian landscape and cold winter weather, on the other hand – the impersonable adversary of Mother Nature – proved to be a more formidable opponent. Indeed, John Douglas, Assistant Surgeon to the King's 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, argued that the "physical obstructions" surmounted by his regiment when in the Canadas, "were more difficult to be overcome than those opposed to them by the designs of the enemy. The centre of a wide forest was sometimes the theatre, where bravery was to be shown, or victory to be won."<sup>103</sup> Douglas described overcoming wet and windy spring weather, and being plagued by mosquitos;

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<sup>101</sup> Isaac Brock, "Brigadier Brock to his Brothers. QUEBEC, November 19, 1808," in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>102</sup> J. A. Vesey, "Colonel Vesey to Brigadier Brock. HAMPTON COURT PARK, May 9, 1811," in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

<sup>103</sup> John Douglas, *Medical Topography of Upper Canada* (London: Burgess and Hill, 1819), 39.

“oppressive” summer heat which “superadded to the fatigues of long and forced marches;” deluges of rain which frequented the fall months; and “cold and piercing” winter winds, with “severe frost.”<sup>104</sup> Through these conditions, regiments such as his traveled vast distances from the Atlantic Provinces and Lower Canada to reach the front lines in the Upper Province. Douglas notes that when a Regiment arrived at Québec, it would immediately be ordered to march overland to the Upper Province, “a distance of nearly 550 miles.”<sup>105</sup> In the summer, soldiers marched on foot, and in winter, on heavy wooden snowshoes,<sup>106</sup> hauling provisions on sleighs or toboggans like “dray-horses.”<sup>107</sup> Douglas noted that on one such extended march, “the faces of the men were often frost-bitten,” sometimes so badly that “the tear was no sooner secreted from the eye, than it congealed into an icicle upon the eyelashes.”<sup>108</sup> At night, he described their accommodations as “wretched;” they slept “cold and comfortless in the barns and out-houses of the settlers,” or simply in the woods, on the ground surrounding a meagre fire.<sup>109</sup> Many men reported being completely unable to sleep, “prevented by a certain degree of cold, and a deficiency of covering,” in addition to “the howlings of savage wolves, that

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<sup>104</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 25-31.

<sup>105</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 35.

<sup>106</sup> Le Couteur notes that they “weighed one pound and a half when dry; they were full half a pound heavier if wet, when the strain caused by lifting them to those who are unaccustomed to snow-shoes, causes an intolerable pain in the tendon Achilles.” John Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada, in 1813,” *The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine* (1831:3), 178.

<sup>107</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 36-37; Dunlop and his road-cutting party did so also. Dunlop, *Recollections*, 91-95; as did Le Couteur and the 104<sup>th</sup>, wearing snowshoes and dragging toboggans laden with provisions, supplies, and ammunition, including a disassembled three-pounder cannon “on a kind of sledge” like “dray-horses.” Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 179.

<sup>108</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 37.

<sup>109</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 36.



prowled around the cottages.”<sup>110</sup> “The services of the army in Upper Canada,” Douglas concluded, “were arduous and severe.”<sup>111</sup>

The physical challenges presented by these conditions were compounded by the poor state of Canadian roadways. Douglas noted that “miry state of the roads presented many obstructions” for soldiers on the march.<sup>112</sup> He was not the first visiting European officer to complain about the poor quality of Upper Canadian roadways, nor the last. Dunlop described his own “most wretched” journey to join his Regiment at Fort Wellington near Prescott in November of 1813 in which “rain and sleet poured down in torrents,” leaving the roads “at no season good, were now barely fordable.”<sup>113</sup> Major-General Francis De Rottenburg, who took command of the Crown forces in Upper Canada in the summer of 1813, similarly noted that the roadways were “the worst I ever saw any where.”<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, Douglas noted that the destruction of key bridges, “burnt down by the enemy,” further hampered their marching.<sup>115</sup> As a result, the army transported troops in batteaux whenever possible. However, as Douglas notes, these men also suffered, as “the hauling and poleing [sic] of these vessels against the stream, was attended with much labour,” which left the men “constantly wet.”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 38.

<sup>111</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 34.

<sup>112</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 35-36.

<sup>113</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 20-21.

<sup>114</sup> “Major-General DeRottenburg to Sir George Prevost. 12 Mile Creek. 7th July, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 199-200.

<sup>115</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 37.

<sup>116</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 36.

But “more dejecting than all,” Douglas wrote, was that “such obstructions as these were sometimes accompanied with privation.”<sup>117</sup> During the War of 1812, lodgings, supplies, and provisions provided to the troops were often inadequate.<sup>118</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Charles de Salaberry remarked in 1812 that:

Last year's clothing was composed of Materials so inferior to those furnished to the line and that the duty has been so hard upon the men, in the woods and swamps, together with long and harassing Marching in the worst of Weather, that the men have been put to a vast expence [sic] in order to keep themselves complete in clothing [...] The Quantity of Shoes worn out exceeds all belief and the same inconvenience exists in respect to the Pantaloons [...] The shoes received last year were very bad and not at all of the sort furnished to the troops.<sup>119</sup>

This problem with supply only worsened as the war wore on, and sometimes no new uniforms were sent at all. This included an inadequate supply of cold weather clothing, which compounded the lack of adequate winter quarters available to house the men. Most military barracks and garrisons in the Canadas, particularly in the Upper Province, were in state of neglect, or simply not large enough to house such a large garrison. Le Couteur noted that at times they had “no bedding,” and “not a thing to eat.”<sup>120</sup> This was largely the result of over-extended supplies lines stretching back to Britain. As Dunlop bluntly explained, “troops acting on the Niagara frontier, 1,000 miles from the ocean, were fed with flour the produce of England, and pork and beef from Cork.”<sup>121</sup> Army tents, which were manufactured in Britain,

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<sup>117</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 37.

<sup>118</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 23; See also Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles*, 109.

<sup>119</sup> “From de Salaberry at St. Phillip to the Military Secretary. St. Phillip. Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1812,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. III, pt. II (Publications of the Champlain Society, 17; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1928), 751.

<sup>120</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 206.

<sup>121</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 35-36.

were also evidently in short supply. When Dunlop arrived at the siege camp outside Fort Erie in 1814, he assumed that “like other camps, it would have been provided with tents,” but found that “in this I was mistaken.”<sup>122</sup> After being nearly drowned one night when his makeshift hut collapsed under heavy rain, he concluded that “the line might nearly as well have slept in the open air.”<sup>123</sup>

Overcoming these physical challenges became a veritable test of manhood for soldiers stationed in the Canadas; a test which, Ludington argues, had heightened symbolic importance in this colonial setting, as British colonizers attempted to “assert, maintain, or restore physical control” over the area.<sup>124</sup> Military men – true warriors – argued that enduring and overcoming the challenges presented by the Canadian climate and terrain (and, in general, army life on campaign) made men of boys, and rooted out the weak. For example, Andrew Kemp, whose father was employed by the army Engineer Department during the war, recalled that “the Colonel of Royal Scots, in order to make his men hardy, used to make them do sentry-go<sup>125</sup> in the depth of the winter of 1814-1815 without their great coats.”<sup>126</sup> He added that “they had come to Canada from the West Indies,” which certainly would have been a shock to the system.<sup>127</sup> Cruelty aside (which was sometimes the point) the Colonel was, in this instance, not only inculcating desired martial masculine values in his own men, he was simultaneously

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<sup>122</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 58.

<sup>123</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 61.

<sup>124</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 211.

<sup>125</sup> Sentry duty.

<sup>126</sup> D. K. Goodfellow, “Andrew Kemp. Recollections of a Boy of 1812,” in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, ed. Janet Carnochan (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, no. 11), n.p.

<sup>127</sup> Goodfellow, “Andrew Kemp,” in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, n.p.

broadcasting to every other Regiment that his troops were the manlier; that they did not *need* coats.

Military men revered those who bore physical suffering well. One such manly feat left a lasting impression on a young Le Couteur. He remarked that he once saw a grenadier “receive nine hundred and some lashes, put on his shirt, shake himself like a Hero and walk away apparently unconcerned.”<sup>128</sup> In another instance, John Richardson similarly described a young man (his younger brother) who had had his leg shattered by a cannonball, as suffering “intensely, but with manly and enduring courage.”<sup>129</sup> He added that “although afflicted with a wound which eventually cost him his life, the noble ardour developed at so early a stage of his existence, was not without its reward, in the approval of men whose high military rank and character invested their individual regard with ten-fold value.”<sup>130</sup> Le Couteur, Richardson, and Dunlop accordingly highlighted their own manly feats of strength and endurance in their writings about the war. In chronicling the difficulties they faced and overcame in these instances, these men framed their suffering as a masculine badge of honour, as giving proof of their own physical strength, fortitude, and prowess as warriors. There were numerous instances, from Dunlop joining a road-cutting party “at mid-winter, in one of the northernmost points of Canada,” to Le Couteur and his regiment of “Light Bobs” challenging a group of grenadiers to a rowing match – but two in particular stand out.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 81.

<sup>129</sup> Major (John) Richardson, *War of 1812. First Series. Containing a Full and Detailed Narrative of the Operations of the Right Division, of the Canadian Army* (Brockville: n.p., 1842), 78.

<sup>130</sup> Richardson, *War of 1812*, 78-79.

<sup>131</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 90-91; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 140.

Dunlop framed his tending to wounded soldiers following the Battle of Queenston Heights as a particularly momentous task, which only he possessed the requisite strength of constitution to accomplish. He noted that the Surgeon in charge had left for Scotland in poor health, and that the senior assistant “naturally of a delicate constitution” had “the last of his strength exhausted” from disease and battle.<sup>132</sup> Thus, as Dunlop tells it, it fell to him, the lone Assistant Surgeon, to tend to “two hundred and twenty wounded, including my own Regiment, prisoners and militia, with no one to assist me but my hospital serjeant.”<sup>133</sup> He described the scene as such:

I never underwent such fatigue as I did for the first week at Butler's Barracks. The weather was intensely hot, the flies were in myriads, and lighting on the wounds, deposited their eggs, so that maggots were bred in a few hours, producing dreadful irritation, so that long before I could go round dressing the patients, it was necessary to begin again; and as I had no assistant but my serjeant, our toil was incessant. For two days and two nights, I never sat down [...] on the morning of the third day [...] I fell asleep on my feet.<sup>134</sup>

Dunlop offered this feat of endurance, in the due performance of his duty, as proof of his own martial manhood. Unlike his comrades-turned-patients, he was unable to prove himself in battle. Instead, he portrayed his actions in tending to the wounded following battle as equally meritorious, and heroic even. Dunlop declared that “there is hardly on the face of the earth a less enviable situation than that of an Army Surgeon after a battle—worn out and fatigued in body and mind, surrounded by suffering, pain and misery, much of which he knows it is not in his power to heal or even to assuage.”<sup>135</sup> By emphasizing his physical strength, fortitude, and

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<sup>132</sup> Dunlop was an Assistant Surgeon, the equivalent of a subaltern officer. Dunlop, *Recollections*, 52-53.

<sup>133</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 53.

<sup>134</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 55.

<sup>135</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 53-54.

suffering in the line of duty, Dunlop effectively constructed himself as the martial hero of his own narrative.

Le Couteur framed himself and his comrades in the 104<sup>th</sup> similarly, in recounting their journey from Fredericton to Kingston in February and March of 1813. According to Le Couteur, the regiment marched “between 800 and 1000 miles in six weeks, with only ten days’ halt, during which time we had never lost sight of a forest.”<sup>136</sup> The trip was actually closer to 700 miles, significantly less than Le Couteur’s estimate, but impressive nonetheless.<sup>137</sup> As with Douglas’ unit, the men of 104<sup>th</sup> traveled on snowshoes, hauling provisions by hand. Le Couteur described the winter of 1813 as an exceptionally cold one, with “a temperature varying from 18° to 27° below zero,” and “a greater quantity of snow than had been known during the nine preceding years.”<sup>138</sup> These conditions, he argued, were “not a little trying to the best constitution,” but Le Couteur characterized the soldiers of his regiment, a mixed unit of French-Canadians, New Brunswickers, and other loyalist descendants, as “thoroughly fitted to endure cold and hardships.”<sup>139</sup> He emphasized “the *morale* of the corps,” which he felt “was not at all inferior to its *physique*.”<sup>140</sup> Le Couteur bragged that despite the “considerable privations and hardships” they underwent, the Regiment “had not lost a single man during the march.”<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, “not one single robbery was committed by the men, nor was there a

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<sup>136</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 186.

<sup>137</sup> The official Government of Canada plaque cites 700 miles; Hitsman cites roughly 710 miles, Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, 121; numerous other sources cite 1100 kilometers (683.5 miles).

<sup>138</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 181, 180.

<sup>139</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 186, 178.

<sup>140</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 178.

<sup>141</sup> Although, he later notes, “many were ill, and a few died [afterwards] from the effects of it.” Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 187.

single report made against them by the inhabitants to the commanding officer.”<sup>142</sup> In other words, they had not resorted to plundering the locals to survive. In their battle against Mother Nature, they had fought honourably, and won.

Le Couteur documented the march day-by-day in his private journal, and published an account in the 1831 issue of *The United Service Journal (USJ)*, a popular military periodical.<sup>143</sup> He felt that “as our regiment was the first British corps that ever performed such a march during the height of a northern winter, a great part of it upon snow-shoes, it may, perhaps, be deemed not unworthy of insertion in this truly national Journal.”<sup>144</sup> Other Regiments had made the march previously – especially the final leg from Québec to Kingston – but, as Le Couteur boasted, none had done so on snowshoes, and none “in so short a space of time.”<sup>145</sup> While the men of the 104<sup>th</sup> had not won a great victory on the battlefield in this instance (indeed this was only the journey to reach the battlefield) Le Couteur presented this feat of physical strength and endurance as “an effort yet unknown in British warfare, and, therefore, well worthy of British soldiers to accomplish.”<sup>146</sup>

The emphasis placed on fortitude and physical strength in wartime martial masculinity identities in the Canadas is further emphasized by condemnations of soldiers who were unable, or, worse yet, unwilling, to endure these difficult conditions. Comments from officers reveal that such men were looked down upon by their peers, dubbed “feather-bed soldiers,” a

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<sup>142</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 187.

<sup>143</sup> Le Couteur’s biographer, Donald Graves, provides an 1831 copy from *The Albion* newspaper, in *Merry Hearts Make Light Days*, in lieu of Le Couteur’s original draft.

<sup>144</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 177.

<sup>145</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 186.

<sup>146</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 177.

particularly emasculating title which suggested weakness or a need for comfort. Army officer-turned-author Major Charles James, in his *Regimental Companion*, spoke out strongly against the use of the term, or any such “silly notion, that one body of armed men - considered within its own circle – can be inferior to another.”<sup>147</sup> He declared that:

the term feather-bed soldiers, (so unjustly applied to the life guards and the militia), and other degrading epithets, may suit the drunken lips of a crimp,<sup>148</sup> or recruiting serjeant, or the flippant tongue of an unfledged automaton of the line, but they never can be pronounced by a real officer.<sup>149</sup>

Clearly this was an insult which struck home with most officers, and likely on a personal level in this instance. Major James never saw active military service abroad; he never left the comfort of his own feather-bed.<sup>150</sup> Real officers of the line who had served in the Canadas, however, such as Le Couteur and Dunlop, had no qualms about using such language. Le Couteur, in explaining the frigid sleeping conditions<sup>151</sup> which the men of the 104<sup>th</sup> had endured on their icy trek from Fredericton to Kingston, boasted that “here were no feather-bed soldiers.”<sup>152</sup> Speaking of his meagre accommodations at York in late 1814 (post-burning), Dunlop similarly

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<sup>147</sup> Charles James, *The Regimental Companion: Containing the Pay, Allowances and Relative Duties of Every Officer in the British Service*. 3 vols. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: C. Roworth, 1811), ix-x.

<sup>148</sup> Someone who entraps or swindles men into military service.

<sup>149</sup> James, *The Regimental Companion*, ix-x.

<sup>150</sup> Even his position as Major of Royal Artillery Drivers was granted by appointment, and swiftly revoked when his patron fell out of power. Prior to that he was on half-pay as a lieutenant in the 62<sup>nd</sup>, and prior to that served in the militia in England. For a biography, see Jacqueline Reiter, “The name’s James, Charles James: A Napoleonic Enigma,” *The Late Lord* online, Posted 18/06/2019, <https://thelatelord.com/2019/06/18/the-names-james-charles-james-a-napoleonic-enigma-part-1/>

<sup>151</sup> The men slept in huts dug out of the snow, with pine boughs as a makeshift roof, and a small fire in the centre. Their beds were composed of pine branches laid on the ground, which Le Couteur blissfully described as a “delicious and fragrant bed.” Each man took his turn blocking the cold winds coming in the entrance with their sleeping bodies. As a result, Le Couteur noted that “while our feet were burning, which was sometimes literally the case whilst asleep, our heads were in a freezing temperature, as water immediately froze if placed near the inner circumference of the hut.” Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 181.

<sup>152</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 181.



expressed that “we had a tight roof over our heads, a clean floor under our feet, and the means of fire enough to keep us warm; and a soldier who is not content with this, on a campaign, deserves to want.”<sup>153</sup> “Real men,” true “warriors” in the Canadas posited their own suffering as evidence of manly strength and fortitude.

Just as in combat, the consumption of alcohol played a significant role in facilitating soldiers’ expressions of martial masculinity off the battlefield as well. Military medical authorities widely held that alcohol had the ability to revive spirits, recruit physical strength, and fortify a man’s constitution – applications which were particularly useful when soldiering in the Canadas.<sup>154</sup> Dr. Trotter, for example, explained that upon imbibing a sufficient quantity of wine or liquor:

An agreeable heat is diffused over the whole body; muscular strength is recruited [...] a sparkling of the eyes may be observed [...] the whole appearance of the countenance is brightened into a smile [...] calling forth vigor of body and mind [...] The system has been enough excited to bring forth pleasurable sensation, to subdue pain [...] the soldier no longer complains of the hardship of a campaign, or the mariner of the dangers of the storm.<sup>155</sup>

Trotter concluded that certain alcoholic beverages, if consumed in moderation, could have beneficial effects on men’s – specifically soldiers’ – bodies.<sup>156</sup> Military authorities, unsurprisingly, saw practical applications for this knowledge. Dunlop, for example, spent

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<sup>153</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 89-90.

<sup>154</sup> For further discussion, see Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 23-28. She notes that medical opinions were not unanimous.

<sup>155</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 23-26, 39.

<sup>156</sup> Erica Charters argues that “with the expansion of Britain’s colonial holdings in the eighteenth century, the health of soldiers and sailors in foreign climates became a focus for British medicine.” Erica Charters, “Making Bodies Modern: Race, Medicine and the Colonial Soldier in the mid-Eighteenth Century,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 46, no. 3/4 (July 2012), 215.

much of his time during the night assault on Fort Erie in August of 1814 carrying wounded soldiers out of the line of fire, refreshing them with canteens filled with wine.<sup>157</sup>

Most importantly for soldiers stationed in the Canadas, however, physicians such as Trotter theorized that the consumption of alcohol could provide them with protection against the cold.<sup>158</sup> This he deduced from the observation that “the drunkard is found, in the first stage of the paroxysm, to resist the operation of cold.”<sup>159</sup> Trotter cited numerous examples of various “inebriates” resisting cold weather; sailors and civilians who had spent a night, intoxicated, sleeping outside on the ground in winter months without covering.<sup>160</sup> Ever a naval man, he of course bragged that “nothing but that hardiness of constitution peculiar to the British seamen, which braves every danger, could survive such extremes of cold.”<sup>161</sup> But, in explaining the “science,” behind these feats of endurance, Trotter argued that it was alcohol which had literally warmed these men’s blood sufficiently to keep them alive. He explained that,

Wine, and all fermented liquors, by quickening the circulation of the blood, generate heat [...] heat stimulates the withered limb to motion, softens the rigid fibre, and opens the dry skin by augmenting the perspirable fluid. Thus aged people feel additional comfort in warm seasons and climates; and generally die in some of the winter months. For these reasons, wine has been aptly called the ‘milk of old age.’<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> As noted in Gary Draper and Roger Hall, “Dunlop, William, Tiger Dunlop,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003); Shadrach Byfield was similarly given mulled wine before the amputation of his limb. Byfield, *A Narrative*, 91-92.

<sup>158</sup> As also noted by Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 22.

<sup>159</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 54.

<sup>160</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 54-57.

<sup>161</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 54.

<sup>162</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 153-154.

Trotter worked backwards from an observable reaction to explain how alcohol affected the body internally. And again, officers such as Dunlop (who was familiar with military medicine as an Assistant Surgeon) applied this knowledge in the field.

In one particular instance, Dunlop boasted about how alcohol helped him to survive “out in a Canadian winter night, without fire or covering of any kind.”<sup>163</sup> He proudly claimed in his *Recollections* that he was the only “white man” known to have done so, “at the time and since,” framing his accomplishment as proof of his own manly fortitude.<sup>164</sup> Dunlop had gotten lost while hunting partridge, and failed to make it back to camp before sunset. To survive, he notes that “I took off my snow shoes, and poured a quantity of rum into my moccasins; I buttoned my jacket, secured my fur cap about my ears, drew on my fur gloves, and calling a little dog I had with me, and laying my hands over my face, I made him lie on the top of all.”<sup>165</sup> In Dunlop’s mind, alcohol, which warmed the body internally when consumed, would have the same effect externally as well. Unsurprisingly, however, by morning his feet were “frozen,” and his hands so numb that he could not fasten his snow shoes.<sup>166</sup> When Dunlop finally limped back to camp, he was treated by “some old French Canadians” for severe frostbite, noting that “of all the tortures this world can devise, the resuscitation was the worst I ever experienced.”<sup>167</sup> He periodically lost consciousness from the pain, but this “unpleasant symptom they combated

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<sup>163</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 98-99.

<sup>164</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 98-99; Dunlop wrote his *Recollections* sometime between 1825-1848, and had them published sometime after 1838.

<sup>165</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 97.

<sup>166</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 98.

<sup>167</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 98-99.

by pouring down my throat a tin cup full of rum.”<sup>168</sup> Le Couteur’s Regiment similarly gave hot brandy to a lieutenant who had fallen through the ice.<sup>169</sup> In both cases, the treatment “worked.” After several weeks Dunlop – and his rum-soaked frost-bitten feet – had recovered.<sup>170</sup> He internalized, and broadcast, the whole experience as a particularly impressive feat of endurance; a manly accomplishment to be revered, rather than simply a near-death blunder in the woods.

Dunlop was far from the only officer to use alcohol in this way. Le Couteur, for example, claimed that “port wine alone restored the tone of my stomach after the attacks of dysentery and subsequent boils,” which he developed from camping in the “Black swamp” somewhere in the Niagara region (an illness which he claimed, at the time, to have avoided “by temperance and early habits”).<sup>171</sup> John Richardson, following the British defeat at the Battle of Fort Stephenson in August of 1813, described his relief in discovering “a few bottles of port wine,” in his provision basket, “which had arrived that very morning from Amherstburg,” noting that “this was indeed a luxury that I would not at the moment have exchanged for a throne; and so thoroughly exhausted was I with hunger, thirst and fatigue, that placing a bottle to my parched lips, I did not abandon it until the whole of its contents had been emptied at a draught. The effect was instantaneous, and I lay in the bottom of the boat all night enjoying the most delicious moments of repose I recollect ever having experienced.”<sup>172</sup> These

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<sup>168</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 98-99.

<sup>169</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 83.

<sup>170</sup> Unfortunately, his canine companion, Moses, was not so lucky, and died shortly after returning to camp.

<sup>171</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 153.

<sup>172</sup> (John) Richardson and Alexander Clark Casselman, *Richardson’s War of 1812; with Notes and a Life of the Author* (Toronto: Historical Pub. Co., 1902), 246.

men regarded (high quality, and especially fortified) wine, as Dunlop did, as an “esculent necessary to recruit their strength under the fatigues of war.”<sup>173</sup>

A popular soldiers’ song from the period, “How Stands the Glass Around,” or “Why Soldiers Why?” reveals that enlisted men also shared this same perception of alcohol (although they were less concerned about choice or quality of drink):

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| How stands the glass around?         | What? sighing? Fye!                       |
| For shame you take no care, my boys, | Drink on, drown fear, be jolly boys;      |
| How stands the glass around?         | 'Tis he, you or I, wet, hot, cold or dry; |
| Let wine and mirth abound;           | We're always bound to follow boys,        |
| The trumpet sound,                   | And scorn to fly.                         |
| The colors they do fly my boys;      | 'Tis but vain;                            |
| To fight, kill or wound;             | I mean not to upbraid you boys,           |
| As you would be found,               | 'Tis but vain;                            |
| Contented with hard fare, my boys    | For a soldier to complain;                |
| On the cold ground                   | Should next campaign,                     |
| O why, soldiers why?                 | Send us to him that made us boys;         |
| O why should we be melancholy boys,  | We're free from pain,                     |
| O why soldiers why?                  | But should we remain,                     |
| Whose bus'ness is to die;            | A bottle and kind landlady                |
|                                      | Cures all again. <sup>174</sup>           |

These manly warriors described in the song were content with hard fare and the cold ground so long as wine and mirth abound. They drank to drown fear, to be jolly, and to cure what ailed them, for it was vain to complain. By singing this song, soldiers invoked their own manly ability to endure, and willingness to suffer and sacrifice for the cause.

Drunkenness, on the other hand, especially habitual drunkenness, was widely regarded by military and medical authorities as having the opposite effect on a soldiers’ body – again

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<sup>173</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 16.

<sup>174</sup> Commonly known as “General Wolfe’s Song,” it was popular throughout the eighteenth-, and into the nineteenth-century, particularly in the Canadian colonies. J. H. L., “157. A Soldier’s Song. ‘Why? Soldiers, Why,’” *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 6, no. 26 (1927): 249.

highlighting the paradox of alcohol consumption and martial masculine identity construction. Excessive consumption, they thought, could weaken a man's constitution, degrade his health, and sap his physical strength. Stronger men with stronger constitutions were seen as better able to tolerate and enjoy the benefits of drink – it reinforced and revived their strength – while weaker (or older) men were at greater risk of being overcome. As Trotter explained, “difference of age, and varieties of temperament and constitution, influence the accession and progress of wavering intellect during intoxication.”<sup>175</sup> By this reasoning, those with weak constitutions became even more susceptible to disease and cold when consuming large quantities of alcohol, rather than being protected from them.<sup>176</sup> Douglas, for example, observed several instances of soldiers who, he claimed, had died from exposure to the cold due to intoxication.<sup>177</sup> Le Couteur similarly observed that the few men who died following the march of the 104<sup>th</sup>, “were all the hardest drinkers.”<sup>178</sup> He went on to note that “there is no doubt whatever that dram-drinking is highly injurious in a very cold country, as the heat that is momentarily conveyed to the body is followed by a re-action, which the cold turns quickly into a numbness, and retarded circulation.”<sup>179</sup> However, as noted by Lafferty, in Le Couteur's case this was somewhat disingenuous, given the number of times he referred to the use of brandy as a warming

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<sup>175</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 17.

<sup>176</sup> As Lafferty notes, inebriates were thought to be more susceptible to disease. Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 23.

<sup>177</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 81-82.

<sup>178</sup> Contradicting his claim that they didn't lose a man. Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 187.

<sup>179</sup> Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada,” 187.

stimulant.<sup>180</sup> Clearly there were conflicting perceptions regarding the effect which alcohol consumption had upon the body.

All agreed, however, that habitual drunkenness was particularly unbecoming an officer, enlisted soldier, or any “warrior,” as it not only conveyed weakness, but rendered him physically unable to do his duty. Drunkenness, Trotter explains, led to

Loss of voluntary motion, and delirium [...] a state of indirect debility, or exhausted excitability, from inordinate action of the different functions [...] stupor supervenes, [...] the head nods, the walk is tottering, vox faucibus haesit.<sup>181</sup> The countenance looks swoln and inflamed, the eyes start and glare, vision is doubles; or, is rendered obscure, from mists or meteors, flying, as it were, in the atmosphere.<sup>182</sup>

In a drunken stupor, a man’s ability of movement, speech and vision all became impaired; he was left debilitated and weak, and unable to command. Such was the case with Lieutenant-Colonel Sutherland of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, who was brought before General Courts-Martial in 1808 for being “in a state of absolute and continual drunkenness and behaving himself publicly in a most shameful and disgraceful manner [...] having on the said line of trench been so bereft of the powers of his mind by the effect of Liquor, that he was totally unable to command the said Detachment,” and for “being continually drunk for several successive days on his arrival at Annapolis, and unable to give the necessary Orders.”<sup>183</sup> The proceedings of his General Courts-Martial broadcast to the army that drunkenness which compromised an officers’ ability to do his duty was “shameful,” and “disgraceful,” and would

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<sup>180</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 27.

<sup>181</sup> Voice stuck in throat.

<sup>182</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 39, 33.

<sup>183</sup> “General Order. Horse Guards. 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1809,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 164, (1790-1810) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikn record: 105012, Microform: c-2773), 792-802.

not be tolerated under any circumstances. As the Prince Regent so aptly concluded in the 1815 trial of Captain Edward Brian Balguy of the York Chasseurs, “notwithstanding the merit and bravery which may have marked Captain Balguy’s former conduct,” habitual drunkenness was a “disgraceful habit, which equally unfits him for the service, as in society.”<sup>184</sup>

This chapter has shown that during the War of 1812, British martial masculinity emphasized warrior-like qualities which were useful in waging war. Its core values were duty, discipline, and a willingness to sacrifice for the nation; bravery, courage, and gallantry in combat; and strength, fortitude, and the ability to overcome physical hardships outside of combat. Officers who were stationed in the Canadas constructed themselves as embodying this martial masculine “warrior” ideal by highlighting their feats of physical strength and courage in their published accounts of the war. Conversely, proceedings of General Courts-Martial and General Orders read before the men censured qualities and behaviours which conflicted with this ideal. Men who successfully demonstrated desired characteristics were praised as particularly manly, while those who shirked their duty, ran from combat, or lacked the requisite strength to endure were shamed as lesser men. The consumption of alcohol played a significant role in facilitating soldiers’ performances of martial masculinity in this regard, helping to muster courage and fortify their constitution. Excessive consumption leading to drunkenness, however, also potentially compromised their health, and their ability to perform their duty. Habitual drunkenness rendered a man completely unfit for service in the eyes of military

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<sup>184</sup> “Captain Edward Brian Balguy – 1815,” in *A Collection of the Charges*, 671-673, 673.



authorities, and was broadcast as behaviour particularly unbecoming an officer, as well as a gentleman. Drunkenness denoted, among other things, that a gentlemen-officer did not have the requisite power of will to control his baser impulses, especially the impulse to drink to excess – a deficiency which officers frequently ascribed to those whom they constructed as their social, and racial inferiors, as demonstrated in Chapter One of this dissertation. The next chapter will again examine this process of “othering,” but with regards to the Indigenous allies and American enemies of the British army in the War of 1812 specifically. It will show that British officers’ perceptions of self were heavily influenced by their interactions with, and perceptions of racialized “others.”

## Chapter 4 - Allies and Enemies

Previous chapters have shown that British officers serving in the Canadas during the War of 1812 constructed their classed and gendered identities in relation to their fellow gentlemen-officers, and to the enlisted men under their command. Furthermore, that in the latter case, they characterized their perceived social inferiors as prone to drunkenness – a construction which reinforced existing class hierarchies and validated officers’ own paternal masculine identity. This chapter argues that British officers in the Canadas also defined themselves against their American enemies, and, even more so, their Indigenous allies. By deploying racist tropes of “Indian” “savagery” and “drunkenness” in their wartime writings, British officers established what historian Emma LaRocque has called a “civ/sav” dichotomy.<sup>1</sup> They ascribed to themselves positive masculine traits, while racializing and denigrating Indigenous warriors as “other” – as somehow less “civilized,” and less manly, than their British (and even American) counterparts. In the British mindset, only White Christians were “civilized” and manly enough to exercise proper control over their actions – to avoid lapses into “drunkenness” and “savagery” – a construction which validated their imagined colonial racial hierarchies and justified colonial rule. These constructions are not only racist and highly hypocritical, but also patently false, and can be proven as such using the writings of these very officers.

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<sup>1</sup> She provides this as a “framework for interpreting White and Native encounters.” Emma LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me: Native Resistance Discourse, 1850-1990* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010), 38.

Numerous historians of the British army in the Napoleonic period have demonstrated that “othering” played a prominent role in gendered and racialized identity construction.<sup>2</sup> Most scholarship has focused on British officers’ othering of their long-time French rivals, their Iberian allies, or their colonial subjects in India. Catriona Kennedy, for example, building upon Linda Colley’s seminal work, argues that contact and comparison with national “others” such as the French or Portuguese helped to alleviate tensions between often-competing or even conflicting martial masculinities within the army, and bolster officers’ own sense of masculine superiority.<sup>3</sup> Historians of gender and empire, such as Kathleen Wilson and Catherine Hall,

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<sup>2</sup> Including Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760-1900: Bodies, Emotion and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020); Catriona Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle: Military Masculinity and the British Army Officer during the Napoleonic Wars,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hageman, Gisela Mettele and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 127-146; Gavin Daly, “‘Barbarity More Suited to Savages’: British Soldiers’ Views of Spanish and Portuguese Violence During the Peninsular War, 1808-1814,” *War and Society* 35, No. 4 (October, 2016): 242-258; Gavin Daly, “Liberators and Tourists: British Soldiers in Madrid during the Peninsular War,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 117-135; Julia Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife: Writing the History of the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 97, no. 3 (Sept. 2016): 315-345; Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The “Manly Englishman” and the “Effeminate” Bengali in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Philippa Levine, ed., *Gender and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Erica Charters, “Making Bodies Modern: Race, Medicine and the Colonial Soldier in the Mid-Eighteenth Century,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 46, No. 3-4 (2012): 214-231; Kathleen Wilson, “Empire, Gender, and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 14-45; Catherine Hall, “Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century,” in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 46-76; Gregory T. Knouff, “Masculinity, Race and Citizenship: Soldiers’ Memories of the American Revolution,” in *Gender, War and Politics*, 325-342; Harald Fischer-Tiné, “‘The Drinking Habits of our Countrymen’: European Alcohol Consumption and Colonial Power in British India,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 3 (September 2012): 383-408; See also Douglas M. Peers, “Privates off Parade: Regimenting Sexuality in the Nineteenth-Century Indian Empire,” *The International History Review* 20, No. 4 (Dec., 1998): 791-1072; Erica Wald, “Governing the Bottle: Alcohol, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century India,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 46, no. 3 (2018): 397-417; Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012): 815-56.

<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 141.

have further shown that in colonial settings such as British India, racialized and gendered distinctions drawn between colonizer and colonized were mobilized to establish racial hierarchies and justify colonial rule.<sup>4</sup> In these unequal power dynamics, the colonizer held the power of identity formation and definition. Fewer historians, however, have examined how this process played out in the Canadas during the War of 1812.<sup>5</sup> As a result, British gentlemen-officers' prejudices, preconceptions, and racist assumptions about their Indigenous allies in North America have gone largely unchallenged. Meanwhile, their writings continue to inform histories of the war and perpetuate harmful stereotypes about Indigenous peoples.<sup>6</sup>

British officers knew full well that they were in an alliance with a vast network of different Indigenous nations, primarily those which made up the Western Confederacy and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy. British allies included the Potawatomi, Ojibwa, Shawnee, Odawa, Kickapoo, Dakota, Algonquin, Wendat, Abenaki, Sioux, Menominee, Winnebago, and members of the divided Six Nations, with the Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Mohawk joining the British, the Tuscarora attempting to remain neutral, and the Seneca siding

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<sup>4</sup> Wilson, "Empire, Gender, and Modernity," in *Gender and Empire*; Hall, "Of Gender and Empire" in *Gender and Empire*; Knauf, "Masculinity, Race and Citizenship"; See also Fischer-Tiné, "'The Drinking Habits of our Countrymen'"; Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*.

<sup>5</sup> Cecilia Morgan does touch upon this in a post-war context. Cecilia Morgan, "Gender, Loyalty and Virtue in a Colonial Context: The War of 1812 and Its Aftermath in Upper Canada," in *Gender, War and Politics*, 307-324; see also, Roberts, "John Galt and the Subaltern's Wife."

<sup>6</sup> This will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, but for examples see E. A. Cruikshank, *The Employment of the Indians in the War of 1812*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 322, 326, 335; George F. G. Stanley, "The Indians in the War of 1812," *The Canadian Historical Review* 31, no. 2 (June 1950), 153, 162; Reginald Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York: Knopf, 1969), 136; Pierre Berton, *The Invasion of Canada and Flames Across the Border* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980, 1981), 25; Jon Latimer, *1812: War With America* (London: Belknap Press, 2007), 119; Donald Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 86; Jason Ridler, "Battle of Frenchtown," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada (Published online October 23, 2011, last edited March 4, 2015). <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/battle-of-frenchtown>.

with the Americans. These groups participated in the war as allies, not subjects, of Great Britain, and their contributions to the war effort were invaluable.<sup>7</sup> In some instances, officers differentiated between groups in their writings – even ascribing positive masculine characteristics to certain tribes, while denigrating others.<sup>8</sup> For the most part, however, British officers in the Canadas grouped these various nations (and individuals) under one imagined label, “Indian,” which reveals that constructions of race were deliberate, rather than simple misunderstandings or the product of European ignorance.

The early nineteenth century thus represents a particularly interesting period to study concepts of “race” in the British army. Historians generally argue that later in the century, racial othering became more reified, codified, and grounded in pseudoscientific observation of classifiable differences.<sup>9</sup> Mixed comments from officers such as Le Couteur, however, reveal that in the early nineteenth century, conceptions of race were still quite fluid; even though, as Erica Charters argues, the “seeds of later racial thought” were already being sown in the writings of British military physicians from this period, whose profession “provided a fertile testing ground and context for emerging notions of fixed and racialized bodies.”<sup>10</sup> The observations of army officer-surgeons who served in the War of 1812, such as Assistant

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<sup>7</sup> As argued by Carl Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, [1999] 2004), 4-6; The contributions made by Indigenous warriors have not been widely recognized by Canadian historians, or by the general public. An exhibit and accompanying publication by the Woodland Cultural Centre in the Fall of 2012 attempted to address this deficit. See, *War Clubs & Wampum Belts: Hodinöhsö:ni Experiences of the War of 1812*. Brantford, Ont: Woodland Cultural Centre, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 147.

<sup>9</sup> Charters, “Making Bodies Modern,” 230; Simon Harrison, *Dark Trophies: Hunting and the Enemy Body in Modern War* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 42; See also, Streets, *Martial Races*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> Charters, “Making Bodies Modern,” 215, 230.

Surgeon John Douglas of the King's 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, reveal this trend towards racial homogenization. For example, Douglas wrote, in his *Medical Topography of Upper Canada*, that,

the Indians of Upper Canada bear a striking resemblance to those who inhabit the other parts of North America, nay even to those who are scattered over the great southern division of the new continent [...] The individuals of each nation vary but little in stature and the symmetry of their bodies [...] so great is the similitude that exists amongst the numerous tribes, that, though differing remarkably from each other in language, we are induced to conclude, that they are all sprung from the same common stock.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, while constructions of “race” remained somewhat fluid in this period, racialized characterizations and observations about individual Indigenous bodies came to be representative, in the minds of British physicians and officers alike, of all “Indians.” British officers who had newly arrived in the Canadas such as Le Couteur, whose perceptions of Indigenous warriors were informed as much by the writings of their peers and predecessors than first-hand experience (if not more), made similar assumptions about an inherent “Indian” propensity for alcohol, “drunkenness,” and “savagery.”<sup>12</sup> In this view there were no individual warriors or men (save perhaps Tecumseh, as will be discussed), simply “types” of “Indians.”

The two most prominent racist tropes found in military source material from the period are indeed the “savage Indian,” and the “drunken Indian.”<sup>13</sup> It is important to critique these

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<sup>11</sup> John Douglas, *Medical Topography of Upper Canada* (London: Burgess and Hill, 1819), 107-108.

<sup>12</sup> Officers frequently read the published dispatches and accounts of other officers in newspapers and military periodicals (and, possibly emigrant guides and travel narratives), gossiped and traded stories in the mess, and, in Le Couteur's case in particular, conversed with family members serving abroad. Many men would have arrived in the Canadas with deeply ingrained beliefs about the colony and its inhabitants.

<sup>13</sup> These are not the only two representations found, but they are certainly the most common.

racist characterizations, as numerous Indigenous authors and historians have argued.<sup>14</sup> Olive Dickason was one of the first historians to challenge “the myth of the savage,” as she called it.<sup>15</sup> She argued that European colonizers (specifically the French) mischaracterized Indigenous peoples as “savages” in order to justify colonization and assimilation on a massive scale. Furthermore, Dickason explained that as a social construction, this image of the “Indian” did not (and does not) reflect any historical reality about Indigenous peoples. Scholarship has since come to convincingly show that the imagined “Indian”— whether characterized as “savage,” “drunken,” or otherwise – was (and is) a social and cultural construction, a White invention, malleable to the needs of White Europeans.<sup>16</sup> Unlike with the “myth of the savage,” however, fewer historians have challenged what anthropologist Joy Leland coined as the “firewater myth,” or the idea that Indigenous peoples were and are “more constitutionally prone to develop an inordinate craving for liquor and to lose control over their behaviour when they

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<sup>14</sup> Including LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*; Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*, (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2012); Vine Deloria jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: an Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, [1969] 1988); Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Olive Patricia Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage: And the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1984); See also Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Including Robert Berkhofer Jr., *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian From Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978); Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992); John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Elizabeth Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*; King, *The Inconvenient Indian*; Deloria jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins*; Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*; Travis Hay and Teri Redsky Fiddler, *Inventing the Thrifty Gene: the Science of Settler Colonialism* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2021); See also Julia Roberts, “‘A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’: Race and Tavern Space in Upper Canada,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 102, s.2 (July 2021): 427-450.

drink.”<sup>17</sup> Historian Peter Mancall has directly challenged the myth on a biological level, arguing that “no genetic trait leads Aboriginal peoples to drink excessively, and they metabolize alcohol at the same rate as non-Natives,” and historian Julia Roberts has demonstrated that in post-War of 1812 Upper Canada, most Indigenous tavern-goers drank moderately, at levels on par with the rest of the adult male population.<sup>18</sup> But few have addressed the colonial origins and aims of the “firewater myth,” as Dickason has done with the “myth of the savage.” This chapter reveals how both racist tropes were constructed and deployed by British officers during the War of 1812, often in tandem, both to elevate themselves as “civilized,” and to justify colonial rule.

Examining how British officers portrayed racialized “others” in these colonial sources can reveal much about how they viewed themselves. As LaRocque argues, “the face of the colonizer is made visible through what Edward Said in *Orientalism* calls the ‘Western techniques of representation,’ in this case, the textual records colonizers have left and continue to perpetuate in the Canadian academy.”<sup>19</sup> In their attempts to define the “Indian” “other” in their writings, British colonizers also defined their own masculine and racialized identity.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Joy Leland, *Firewater Myths: North American Indian Drinking and Alcohol Addiction* (New Brunswick: Publications Division, Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies, 1976), xi; Peter Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); See also; Harold Johnson, *Firewater: How Alcohol Is Killing My People (and Yours)*, (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2016); See Roberts, “‘A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’”; Robert A. Campbell, “Making Sober Citizens: The Legacy of Indigenous Alcohol Regulation in Canada, 1777-1985,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 105-126.

<sup>18</sup> Mancall, *Deadly Medicine*, 106. See also: Peter C. Mancall, “‘I Was Addicted to Drinking Rum:’ Four Centuries of Alcohol Consumption in Indian Country,” in *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States 1800–2000*, ed. Sarah W. Tracy and Caroline Jean Acker (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 98-100; Roberts, “‘A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’”; 427-450.

<sup>19</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Hall, “Of Gender and Empire” in *Gender and Empire* 50.



Rather than elucidating what qualities made a British officer “manly,” or “civilized,” they focused on what made the Indigenous “other” “unmanly” or “uncivilized.” As LaRocque explains, they supported their “eminent merits by constructing ‘evidence’ of Natives’ demerits.”<sup>21</sup> Consequently, this chapter deals directly with racist tropes and characterizations of Indigenous people found in the writings of British officers. Working with such bigoted source material, however, presents unique challenges.

Scholars from a variety of disciplines have argued that the repetition of racist colonial language or images, even in an effort to criticize them, runs the risk of repeating the racist colonial gesture of appropriation, distortion, and exploitation; of perpetuating what LaRocque has called “textual dehumanization.”<sup>22</sup> Cultural theorist Mieke Bal points out that no matter the intention of the scholar, the insidious effect of the language comes through the writing.<sup>23</sup> Bal argues against ignoring or censoring these images altogether, however, because they offer a significant avenue for ideological analysis, and “if we refuse to touch this tricky stuff” false representations remain dominant and under-analyzed.<sup>24</sup> Bal and LaRocque thus acknowledge that quoting harmful colonial language is sometimes necessary, but emphasize that historians have an ethical responsibility to challenge such racist material, rather than simply contextualize it.<sup>25</sup> It is not enough to simply explain *why* European colonizers thought and wrote this way,

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<sup>21</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Mieke Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” *Diacritics* 21, no. 1 (Spring, 1991): 24-45; Emma LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me: Native Resistance Discourse, 1850-1990* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010); See also, Amy Louise Wood, ““Somebody do Something!”: Lynching Photographs, Historical Memory, and the Possibility of Sympathetic Spectatorship,” *European Journal of American Studies* 14, no. 4 (2019): 1-25.

<sup>23</sup> Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 27.

<sup>24</sup> Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 27.

<sup>25</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 38, 61; Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 31, 38, 41.

we must challenge the truthfulness of such statements, frame them as racist, and expose the hypocrisy behind them. We must also make an effort, Bal argues, to “return the gaze.”<sup>26</sup> In this case, to allow the colonized to gaze upon the colonizer. Given the predominance of British sources, this is not an easy task. As historian Carl Benn notes, there were relatively few written records left by Indigenous writers, and even “the voices of oral tradition are comparatively quiet for 1812.”<sup>27</sup> But we do have a handful of Indigenous voices on the topic of drink. To that end, this chapter includes both Indigenous and White voices within the British military who challenged the racist assumptions of other “Whites,” showing that the tropes deployed in their writings were indeed deliberate acts of racism, with specific imperial and colonial aims.

Constructions of “Whiteness” must then also be critiqued and challenged. We must deconstruct Whiteness to expose how it was constructed against racialized “others.” Indianness or “Indianness” was not homogeneous or universal, nor was Whiteness. Both were socially constructed and thoroughly malleable concepts in this period. As Catherine Hall argues, “Whiteness,” “posed as a non-racial category, yet was produced ‘from the cauldron of racial thinking,’ its normative presence marked by its differentiated others. The characteristics of whiteness were rarely explicitly delineated. They provided the absent presence; the norm against which the inadequacies of other races were defined.”<sup>28</sup> As such, Whiteness took on different meanings in different parts of the British Empire, and granted a profound degree of power to those who defined and accessed it. Noel Ignatiev, for example, has demonstrated that

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<sup>26</sup> Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 39-40.

<sup>27</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 6-7.

<sup>28</sup> Hall, “Of Gender and Empire” in *Gender and Empire* 49.

the Irish were treated as a “non-White” colonized race in Britain, but came to be considered “White” in America, in comparison to racialized and classed “Black” and “Indian” others.<sup>29</sup> As Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern note, “White” groups which were subordinate domestically in the British Empire but yet engaged in imperial conquests abroad as colonizers, such as the Irish (who comprised a large portion of the British army), were able to define themselves, in colonial settings, in relation to the colonized “other,” and reap the benefits of their White skin.<sup>30</sup> Whiteness, therefore, also had internal hierarchies, many of them tied to gender and class.<sup>31</sup> British gentlemen-officers, for example, often ascribed “non-White” characteristics to poor “Whites,” or other “Whites” who did not conform to their gendered and classed expectations.<sup>32</sup> The language of the period still used terms such as “Christian,” “civilized,” or “European,” in place of “White” at times, but the latter was rapidly becoming more commonplace, and these terms increasingly carried racialized connotations.

In the Canadas during the War of 1812, British gentlemen-officers constructed their own masculine identity as “civilized” and “honourable” warriors in direct relation to the racialized “drunken,” “savage” “Indian.” British (and American) officers characterized

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<sup>29</sup> Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern, “Introduction: British Identities, Indigenous Peoples and the Empire,” in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850*, ed. Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 5; See also Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, 1-3.

<sup>31</sup> Hall, “Of Gender and Empire” in *Gender and Empire* 49.

<sup>32</sup> Kennedy has shown that British officers in the Peninsular War, for example, characterized their Iberian allies as “uneducated,” “uncivilized,” and “barbaric,” for failing to provide adequate gentlemanly accommodations, among other factors. Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 140-141; As Daly notes, British officers also focused on Iberian modes of warfare. See Daly, “Barbarity More Suited to Savages,” 252, 258.

Indigenous modes of warfare as “savage” and “cowardly,” and White or Christian modes of warfare, by comparison, as “civilized,” “honourable,” and manly, despite ample evidence to the contrary. They further constructed an “Indian” propensity for “savagery” and “drunkenness” as racially inherent and inevitable (again, despite evidence to the contrary), while characterizing instances of British (or American) “drunkenness” and “savagery” as little more than an unfortunate lapse in discipline, and not representative of all White or Christian soldiers. A comparative analysis of British officers’ characterizations of their American enemies further reveals British hypocrisy in asserting this racialized double-standard. Ultimately, British officers deployed these racialized tropes in order to elevate themselves (and their American “brother” officers) as tolerant drinkers, manly warriors, and “civilized” gentlemen who were fit to rule, with the racialized and infantilized “Indian” constructed as in need of his paternal guidance. These officers’ own drinking habits hardly left them in a position to judge others, but, nonetheless, judge they did.

### **“Civilized” vs. “Savage”**

The construction of the “drunken Indian” was built upon and inexorably tied to the longstanding European characterization of Indigenous peoples in North America as “savage,” and thus the latter must be explored first. Historians such as Dickason have shown that this characterization was based on early European observations of and misunderstandings about Indigenous societies, cultures, and bodies.<sup>33</sup> Within the military in the early nineteenth century,

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<sup>33</sup> See Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage*.

however, we see that British officers in the Canadas focused primarily on mobilizing differences between European and Indigenous modes of warfare to define “civilized” peoples from “savages,” and manly warriors from the un-manly “other.” British officers constructed themselves, and their static-line, open-field methods of waging war, as particularly “civilized,” honourable, and manly, in direct comparison to “guerrilla”<sup>34</sup> tactics of their Indigenous allies.<sup>35</sup>

As explained in the previous chapter, the flint-lock smooth-bore<sup>36</sup> weapons of the era required infantry to stand tightly together in long static lines and “volley” fire collectively at relatively close range to the enemy in order to achieve maximum effectiveness. Thus, European armies often faced each other in open fields, with minimal cover. Cavalry and light infantry would generally harass the flanks of enemy lines and give pursuit when they broke formation. Artillery provided support from the rear, firing heavy iron projectiles into the massed ranks of men. Engagements often ended with one side fixing bayonets to the end of their muskets and leading a charge across open ground against the enemy, engaging them in hand-to-hand combat. This mode of warfare necessitated rigid discipline and group cohesion, and units generally suffered heavy losses. But, as historian Carl Benn notes, “this was possible in societies with a large pool of labour from which soldiers could be drawn and separated almost entirely from the broader requirements of civilian society.”<sup>37</sup> In other words, European armies

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<sup>34</sup> Taken from the Spanish word for war, “guerra,” this term was coined by Wellington’s troops during the Peninsular War to describe Iberian irregular troops, and was soon applied to irregular troops and fighting styles throughout the Empire.

<sup>35</sup> For a discussion of weapons and tactics, see Carl Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, [1999] 2004), 67-85; See also Philip J. Haythornthwaite, *The Armies of Wellington* (London: Arms and Armour, 1994).

<sup>36</sup> Without rifling grooves which spin a projectile to increase accuracy.

<sup>37</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 81.

could afford to operate in such a fashion because they had relatively deep reserves of rank-and-file manpower to draw upon – reserves which gentlemen-officers felt were largely expendable.

Indigenous methods of warfare generally differed from European methods in this period.<sup>38</sup> Haudenosaunee warriors, for example, were much more conservative with their tactics, operated independently, and favoured constant movement on the battlefield.<sup>39</sup> As Benn explains, the Haudenosaunee had much smaller population numbers to draw upon, and most adult males were only part-time warriors, carrying other important responsibilities in their society as well.<sup>40</sup> Military training was a lifelong activity, with martial skills honed during years of hunting and warfare, rather than taught institutionally in a short period of time. Haudenosaunee warriors did use smooth-bore muskets – in addition to more traditional weapons such as bows, tomahawks and war clubs – but they tended to form much looser lines of fire and operate from cover whenever possible to reduce casualties. The line would frequently retreat, reform and redeploy as needed, seeking to harass, confuse, and terrify the enemy, rather than meet in formation on open ground. British officers such as Isaac Brock and Le Couteur characterized this fighting style as “cowardly,” in an effort to distinguish the “unmanly” Indigenous warrior from the “brave” British soldier.<sup>41</sup> But Haudenosaunee warriors

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<sup>38</sup> There was of course no single Indigenous way of war, nor European, but general comparisons between European and Indigenous tactics can be drawn with regards to factors such as population size. For a discussion and comparison, see Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 67-85.

<sup>39</sup> For a detailed discussion, see Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 67-80.

<sup>40</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 80.

<sup>41</sup> Isaac Brock, “Brock to Prévost. Fort George, 7 September 1812,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations: A Collection of Documents on the Indian Lands of the Grand River*, ed. Charles M. Johnston (Publications of the Champlain Society, Ontario Series: 7. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1964), 197; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 147.

proved themselves brave and heroic through individuals acts of initiative on the battlefield, rather than by adhering to European-style discipline.<sup>42</sup> These tactics proved extremely effective in a number of key engagements during the war, and were far from “cowardly.”<sup>43</sup>

The fact that the British army of the era *also* employed non-linear, skirmishing-style tactics, further reveals this imagined division to be little more than a British construction.<sup>44</sup> The British army had experimented with this “extraordinary and peculiar mode of warfare,” as Lieutenant-Colonel John Tucker called it, since the early campaigns in North America in the eighteenth century.<sup>45</sup> By the War of 1812, Light Infantry units were a staple force in the British army (and indeed most European armies of the era). Light infantry units formed in longer, looser lines than their regular counterparts, and operated more independently, similar to Indigenous warriors. They too used smooth-bore muskets, but relied less on volley firing. Light infantry were primarily deployed to harass enemy lines, protect allied flanks, and cover retreats. As such, they took significantly fewer casualties than their regular counterparts. Several light infantry companies and regiments, most notably the Glengarry Light Infantry, played an active role in the War of 1812.<sup>46</sup> Le Couteur was even a light infantryman, which further highlights his hypocrisy in denigrating Indigenous modes of warfare as “cowardly” or

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<sup>42</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 80-81.

<sup>43</sup> Including at Michilimackinac, Detroit, Queenston Heights, Stoney Creek, Beaver Dams, Chippawa, and a number of other engagements.

<sup>44</sup> See Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 68-69.

<sup>45</sup> John Tucker, “Lieut.-Colonel Tucker to Major-General Riall. Mississauga Fort, 15th July ½ past 10 p.m.,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1814, Part I and II*, ed. E. A. Cruikshank (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1908), 66-67; For a discussion, see Peter E. Russell, “Redcoats in the Wilderness: British Officers and Irregular Warfare in Europe and America, 1740 to 1760,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (October 1978), 629-652.

<sup>46</sup> Some Infantry regiments, such as the 104<sup>th</sup>, fielded one or two Light infantry companies. Other regiments, such as the Glengarrys and the Canadian Voltigeurs, were comprised entirely of Light infantry.

“savage,” when they were, in reality, so similar to those which he himself practiced. Clearly, constructions of race were the true dividing line between these two groups. Indigenous warfare was only critiqued and “othered,” because it was non-European; an artificial division meant to elevate European warfare and the men who practiced it, by comparison, as “civilized,” honourable, and manly.<sup>47</sup>

For British officers, the greatest dividing line between “civilized” and “savage,” however, was how an army or people treated prisoners, civilians, and other non-combatants – whether or not they lost control when facing the enemy. They argued that European or Christian warfare was governed by a masculine code of honour, which stipulated that no harm should come to these groups, or to private property.<sup>48</sup> Their martial masculinity was, in this sense, complemented by a vision of domestic femininity which placed women at home with the children and requiring protection.<sup>49</sup> Enlisted men who failed in this duty to protect by engaging in plunder faced severe punishment under the Articles of War, effectively broadcasting and reinforcing this desired martial masculine ideal.<sup>50</sup> General Orders dated August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1813, reminded the rank-and-file that “any man found plundering is liable to be

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<sup>47</sup> For a discussion of this process of “military orientalism” and “Eastern” armies, see, Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War through Western Eyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

<sup>48</sup> Indigenous warfare was, of course, also governed by different codes of conduct and masculine honour, but few officers (save perhaps John Norton and some members of the Indian Department) made any attempt to understand or appreciate these codes. Instead, they racialized and exaggerated Indigenous wartime actions for effect, casting them as the foil to British soldiers and codes of warfare.

<sup>49</sup> See Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes; British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994), 2.

<sup>50</sup> For a treatise on military law from the period, see William Hough and George Long, ed., *Practice of Courts Martial, Also the Legal Exposition and Military Explanation of the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War, Together with the Crimes and Sentences of Numerous Courts-Martial, and the Remarks Thereupon by His Majesty, and the Several Commanders In-Chief in the East-Indies, and on Foreign Stations, &c* (Second Edition. London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1825).



hanged, and that without being brought to court martial.”<sup>51</sup> Commissioned and non-commissioned officers who failed to prevent their men from engaging in plunder were also reprimanded, albeit less severely.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, excessive alcohol consumption was frequently linked to these lapses in discipline.<sup>53</sup> Finally, with regards to enemy combatants, captured soldiers were to be taken prisoner and given quarter until exchanged, released, or paroled.<sup>54</sup> Any man killed in the line of duty was to be left un mutilated, and receive a proper burial.

British officers argued that “Indians” did not follow these rules of warfare, and thus were “savages.” Wartime accounts from British officers (and enlisted soldiers) are rife with descriptions of Indigenous warriors “murdering” or “massacring” prisoners or civilians, plundering and scalping them, burning captives alive, and even eating their flesh.<sup>55</sup> Le Couteur

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<sup>51</sup> See “Left Division Orders. Kingston. 6<sup>th</sup> August, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 319.

<sup>52</sup> For example, see the case of Sergeant William Patterson of the Grenadier Company of the 100th Regiment, tried at Kingston in August of 1813, “Left Division Orders. Kingston. 6<sup>th</sup> August, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 319.

<sup>53</sup> In the aforementioned case, the Brigadier-General commanding noted that at the time many of the men in the unit were “in a state of intoxication and fighting with one another,” and accordingly laid blame on the commissioned officers present, for allowing “more liquor to be brought than the regulated quantity (which is very ample).” Otherwise, the Brig.-General concluded, “this would not have happened.” See also, John Norton, *The Journal of Major John Norton, 1816*, Publications of the Champlain Society: 72 (Toronto: Champlain Society, 2013), 339; James Sloan, “Recollections of the Attack on Black Rock, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 229.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of the parole system, see George C. Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

<sup>55</sup> For example, see Shadrach Byfield, *A Narrative of a Light Company Soldier's Service in the 41st Regiment of Foot, During the Late American War: Together with Some Adventures Amongst the Indian Tribes from 1812 to 1814* (New York: Reprinted by William Abbatt, [1840] 1910), 76, 90; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 128, 131, 147; 174; William Hamilton Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal, 1812-1815, Journal of Events Principally on the Detroit and Niagara Frontiers,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. III, Part II, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society, 17; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1928), 567; Peter Latouche Chambers, “Enclosure. From Chambers to Procter. Detroit 24<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 498-499;

wrote about this in graphic detail in his journal and in letters home to his family, asserting that “this is a fact. Let the Ladies pass their comments, and rejoice that they are blessed in a country where such deeds were never heard of.”<sup>56</sup> But these wartime descriptions were far from “fact.” These were racialized constructions meant to scandalize, and create a foil for White British officers in order to maintain the division between “civilized” and “savage.”<sup>57</sup> British officers constructed their own treatment of prisoners, by comparison, as particularly honourable, and evidence of their “civility.” Le Couteur, for example, related that during the attack on Sacket’s Harbour on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1813,

As we charged, a fine young American Soldier fell and was caught by our light bobs,<sup>58</sup> two or three bayonets were flourishing over his handsome imploring face, with hands uplifted. ‘For Gods sake spare me!’ ‘For shame men, never kill an unarmed man who begs for quarter!’ I struck their bayonets aside, and sent the poor fellow to the rear.<sup>59</sup>

In this way, Le Couteur juxtaposes an image of gallant White British officers such as himself defending their masculine code of honourable warfare, against an image of the “savage Indian” doing the opposite. Neither construction, however, reflected reality.

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Gordon Drummond, “From Drummond at St. David’s to Prévost at --. St. David’s 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 504; Charles Askin, “From a Diary in Handwriting of Charles Askin. Thurs, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812=4*, vol. IX., 28; A. Gray, “From Gray at Cornwall to Baynes at --, Cornwall 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov, 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 673-674.

<sup>56</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 147.

<sup>57</sup> Julia Roberts and Cecilia Morgan argue that this was also the case in post-war fictional literature based on the war. See Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife,” 339; Cecilia Morgan, “Remembering 1812 in the 1840s: John Richardson and the Writing of the War,” *London Journal of Canadian Studies* (Autumn 2014), 53-54.

<sup>58</sup> A slang term for a light infantry soldier.

<sup>59</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 117.

Historian Simon Harrison notes that certain individuals from various Indigenous nations did engage in acts such as scalping at times during the war; but he adds that many other individuals did not, and still others spoke out against those who did.<sup>60</sup> Benn argues that “such behaviour was unusual among native peoples,” and not customary of Haudenosaunee methods of warfare.<sup>61</sup> Scalping, for example, the practice which had garnered the most British attention, had evolved as a result of cross-cultural contact with Europeans, and was heavily promoted by British bounty systems (offering payment for scalps).<sup>62</sup> But British officers ignored evidence which countered their racist characterizations of “Indian savagery” based on scalping and the torture of prisoners – evidence which can be found even in their *own* writings on the war. Prior to the capture of Detroit, in July of 1812, for example, Militia Captain William Hamilton Merritt reported that “a grand council of war was held at Amherstburgh, where their Chiefs [Shawnee and Wyandott] solemnly promised to abolish the shocking practice of scalping, likewise to save all prisoners that should fall into their possession.”<sup>63</sup> Le Couteur related another instance, following the Battle of Beaver Dams in June 1813, in which a captured American prisoner, whom Le Couteur claimed was to be “immolated,” was instead adopted by a Mohawk Chief who had lost his only son in the war.<sup>64</sup> Whether or not Le Couteur knew about this common practice of adoption,<sup>65</sup> he presumed the man’s fate to be torture, and only

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<sup>60</sup> Harrison, *Dark Trophies*, 39-40.

<sup>61</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 82-83.

<sup>62</sup> Harrison, *Dark Trophies*, 40; James Axtell and William C. Sturtevant, “The Unkindest Cut, or Who Invented Scalping,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 3 (July, 1980): 451-472.

<sup>63</sup> Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 549.

<sup>64</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 129-130.

<sup>65</sup> Norton, for example, includes accounts of various tribes adopting prisoners of war, including the Cherokee, Mohawk, Shawnee, Delaware, and the Five Nations, see John Norton, *The Journal of Major John Norton, 1816*, eds. Carl F. Klinck, James J. Talman and Carl Benn. Publications of the Champlain Society, 72. (Toronto:

attributed the Chief's apparent change of heart to his own efforts to save the man – to his “Good humour and presents.”<sup>66</sup> Merritt did so similarly in another account, following a skirmish at Corus's Farm on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1813, in which he recounted trying to save a group of American prisoners from being killed, only to learn that their Indigenous captors simply wanted to “frighten them a good deal to prevent their coming again.”<sup>67</sup> Both accounts reveal that, in reality, Indigenous warriors typically sought to adopt or at worst frighten the captured enemy, rather than kill them (especially in horrific fashion). Merritt relates that, in the end, “all that were taken [at Corus's Farm] were mercifully treated.”<sup>68</sup> So too was the case at Beaver Dams; a General Order released four days after the battle stated that “the Indian Warriors [sic] behaved with great steadiness and courage, and His Excellency has great Satisfaction in learning that they conducted themselves with the greatest humanity and forbearance towards the Prisoners, after the Action.”<sup>69</sup>

Conversely, as numerous historians of the era have pointed out, British and American forces frequently employed violence against civilians (particularly Indigenous civilians) and scalped the dead.<sup>70</sup> They had a long history of doing so. Harrison demonstrates that the English

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Champlain Society, 2011), 40, 147, 169, 173, 175, 204; See also P. Whitney Lackenbauer, John Moses, Scott R. Sheffield, and Maxime Gohier, “Warfare in Pre-Columbian North America,” in *Aboriginal People in the Canadian Military* (Ottawa: Department of National Defense, n.d.), n.p. Harrison, *Dark Trophies*, 39.

<sup>66</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 130.

<sup>67</sup> Merritt, “Merritt's Journal, 1812-1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 589-590.

<sup>68</sup> “Except,” he adds, “Adjutant Eldridge, the officer who forfeited his life by firing at an Indian while a prisoner.” Merritt, “Merritt's Journal, 1812-1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 590.

<sup>69</sup> “General Order. Kingston, 28th June, 1813,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812, Vol. II*, Publications of the Champlain Society: 14, ed. William C. H. Wood (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1923), 167-168.

<sup>70</sup> Colin G. Calloway, *Crown and Calumet: British-Indian Relations, 1783-1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 211; Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 84-85; Wayne E. Lee, “Mind and Matter -- Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A Look at the State of the Field” *Journal of American History* 93, no. 4

had headhunted, scalped, and mutilated bodies of animals, criminals, enemy combatants and non-combatants for hundreds of years, and Jim Walker remarks that torture was still permissible by law in many European countries in this period.<sup>71</sup> During the War of 1812, there are numerous British and American accounts which describe the troops of the enemy taking scalps, perhaps most notably the reputed scalping and mutilation of the body of Shawnee War Chief Tecumseh by American forces at the Battle of the Thames on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1813.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, despite his frequent condemnations of “Indian savagery,” Le Couteur wrote in a letter to his Aunt’s husband, Philip Bouton, dated October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1813, that he endeavoured “to procure [a scalp] as a *relic*.”<sup>73</sup>

British and American troops also frequently plundered White and Indigenous civilians, again breaking the so-called code of “civilized” warfare upon which this imagined civ/sav dichotomy rested. The British army frequently issued warnings to their troops that “plundering is positively forbidden. By His Majesty's regulations and the articles of war, any man found plundering is liable to be hanged, and that without being brought to court martial.”<sup>74</sup> They reminded men before going into battle, for example prior to the raid on Black Rock and Buffalo

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(2007), 1128; See also, John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>71</sup> Harrison, *Dark Trophies*, 44-45; James W. St. G. Walker, “The Indian in Canadian Historical Writing,” *Historical Papers* 6, no. 1 (1971), 34.

<sup>72</sup> Whether or not the body was his has been widely disputed, but souvenirs of human flesh were procured from someone’s corpse. See Harrison, *Dark Trophies*, 44; For Norton’s account, see Norton, *The Journal of Major John Norton*, 331; See also, Guy St-Denis, *Tecumseh’s Bones* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005); For other examples of scalping accounts, see Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal, 1812-1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 550; (John) Richardson and Alexander Clark Casselman, *Richardson’s War of 1812; with Notes and a Life of the Author* (Toronto: Historical Pub. Co., 1902), 31, 212.

<sup>73</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 147.

<sup>74</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 319.

in December 1813, that “any Soldier leaving his ranks for the purpose of plunder, is liable to be shot on the spot.”<sup>75</sup> But that these orders had to be so frequently and sternly issued, is evidence that they were likely not being followed. Indeed, the towns of Lewiston, Black Rock and Buffalo were famously pillaged following this battle, as were the towns of Queenston, Newark and York on the other side of the river.<sup>76</sup> As Cecilia Morgan notes, post-war images “of manly courage exercised in the protection of feminine virtue may have had only a tenuous relationship to the lived experience of many colonists during the war.”<sup>77</sup>

Indigenous warriors recognized British hypocrisy in this regard. Odawa War Chief Jean Baptiste Assiginack (“Blackbird”), speaking on behalf of his uncle Keminichagun or Giiminijjaangan (“The Bastard”), addressed Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs William Claus on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1813:

Brother! At the foot of the rapids last year we fought the Big Knives and we lost some of our people. When we retired the Big Knives got some of our dead. They were not satisfied with having killed them but cut them in small pieces. [...] Brother! Last year at Chicago and St. Josephs the Big Knives destroyed our corn. This was fair, but they did not allow the dead to rest. They dug up their graves and the bones of our ancestors were thrown away and we could never find them to return them to the ground. [...] We thought white people were Christians. They ought to show us a better example. We do not disturb their dead. What I say is known to all the people present. I do not lie. [...] when we take prisoners to treat them kindly.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> “General Order. Head Quarters, Chippewa, 28th December 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 508-509.

<sup>76</sup> For a discussion of who committed the looting following Lewiston, Black Rock and Buffalo, see Carl Benn, ed. *A Mohawk Memoir from the War of 1812: John Norton – Teyoninhokarawen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 221, footnote 78.

<sup>77</sup> Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue,” 308.

<sup>78</sup> “Address from Black Bird, Speaker to the Bastard, an Ottawa Chief, to Mr. Claus, Deputy Superintendent General, 15th July, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 242.

Clearly this artificially constructed “civ/sav” dichotomy operated under a double-standard. Indigenous warriors were cast as “savage” because their engagement in war was framed as “murdering” White Christians, while British troops were constructed as “gallant” and manly for killing the very same enemy.<sup>79</sup> When Whites or Christians killed each other, it was war; when Indigenous warriors killed Whites, it was a “massacre;” when Whites killed Indigenous warriors, it hardly received mention. “Savagery” on the part of Europeans troops was considered a rare exception to the rule (and not at all characteristics of officers), while any “atrocious” committed by even one Indigenous warrior was considered by officers as representative of all “Indians.”<sup>80</sup> From these officers’ perspective, punishment through the courts-martial system could curb Europeans *acting* savagely, but Indigenous “savagery” was inherent, and racially inevitable. As LaRocque argues, “this explains why even when Whites and Indians behaved the same – say, in warfare, religion, or trade – positive values were assigned to Euro-Canadians and negative ones to Natives.”<sup>81</sup> The construction of the “savage Indian” was important to maintain because it elevated British warfare and the soldiers who practiced it as particularly “civilized,” honourable, and manly by comparison.

### **Drunkenness, Savagery, and Civility**

British officers and medical authorities constructed “drunkenness” as characteristic of “savage” “races,” and how one acted while intoxicated as yet another barometer of “civility.”

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<sup>79</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 49; See also Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife,” 339-340.

<sup>80</sup> Walker, “The Indian in Canadian Historical Writing,” 26, 33; LaRocque adds that any Native person modelling civilized behaviour was similarly seen as an exception. LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 49.

<sup>81</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 49.

Both “savagery” and “drunkenness” represented a loss of control, and maintaining control (even when intoxicated) was key to gentlemanly civility. Trotter, for example, argued in his 1804 essay, *on Drunkenness*, that

the cultivated mind is even seen in drunkenness. It commits no outrage, provokes no quarrel, and turns its ear from insult and offence. But the ignorant and illiterate man is to be shunned in proportion to his excess: it is human nature in its vilest garb, and madness in its worst form. [...] Men of uncultivated minds exhibit most signs of outrage and ferocity [when drunk]: and are certainly the most dangerous. Drunkenness has been called a vice of barbarous and uncivilized nations; for savages in the state of intoxication are like so many devils.<sup>82</sup>

British officers constructed themselves, in relation to so-called “savage” members of “barbarous” and “uncivilized” nations, as “civilized,” evidenced by their carefully “cultivated” manner of drinking and self-restraint. British officers asserted that men of “uncultivated” minds and manners, on the other hand, were unable to control their impulse to drink, to drink to excess, and to become “outrageous” and “ferocious” when drunk. This thinking informed perceptions of their Indigenous allies in the Canadas during the War of 1812, whom they already assumed to be “savages.” British officers constructed an “Indian” identity as one with a racialized propensity for drunkenness, that served to differentiate the “civilized” British soldier from the “savage” Indigenous warrior.

The racialized construction of Indigenous warriors as “drunken” thus reinforced that of “savage,” and was, in turn, reinforced by it. British officers assumed that “Indians” drank because they were “savages,” and that they became “savage” when they drank. This construction effectively invalidated the martial manliness of Indigenous warriors, as British

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<sup>82</sup> Thomas Trotter, *An Essay, Medical, Philosophical, and Chemical, on Drunkenness: And Its Effects on the Human Body* (Boston: Published by Bradford & Read; and A. Finley, Philadelphia, [1804] 1813), 31, 57.



codes of honour held that warriors driven by drink, fanaticism, or animal fury were not truly brave.<sup>83</sup> British officers frequently attributed wartime “atrocities” and “massacres” to “Indian” intoxication, and loss of control.<sup>84</sup> For example, following the attack on Lewiston in December of 1813, General Drummond reported to Prévost that “the Indians who advanced with M. General Riall’s force on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> had committed great excesses (in consequence of intoxication) and had burnt the greatest part of the Houses.”<sup>85</sup> Drummond conveniently omits plundering and burning done by British troops, placing blame instead on the Indigenous warriors present in an effort to absolve Riall and his men of any wrongdoing – of violating the code of “civilized” warfare.<sup>86</sup> But other British sources reveal that “several men of the regular troops got drunk also [...] Indians, regulars, militia were plundering everything they could get hold of.”<sup>87</sup> Historian Carl Benn argues, however, that both sides exaggerated this event; that “there were no widespread incidents of assaults or murders of civilians,” and that “much of the looting at Buffalo was the work of American militiamen, and some retreating American troops who stopped long enough to take advantage of the confusion to rob the Senecas at Tonawanda

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<sup>83</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

<sup>84</sup> For example, Charles Askin, “From a Diary in Handwriting of Charles Askin. Thurs, Dec. 16th, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812=4*, vol. IX., 28; Peter Latouche Chambers, “Enclosure. From Chambers to Procter. Detroit 24<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 498-499; Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal, 1812-1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 567.

<sup>85</sup> Gordon Drummond, “From Drummond at St. David’s to Prévost at --. St. David’s 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 504.

<sup>86</sup> For an account which shows British plundering at Lewiston, see Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 150. Benn acknowledges that some warriors took part, but also implicates British and American troops.

<sup>87</sup> Charles Askin, “From a Diary in Handwriting of Charles Askin. Thurs, Dec. 16th, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812=4*, vol. IX., 28.

before continuing their withdrawal from the border region.”<sup>88</sup> We may never know the truth, but we can still learn a lot from these officers’ accounts.

Namely, we see that officers blamed “unruly” “drunken” troops, and “uncontrollable” “drunken” Indigenous warriors for “massacres,” plunder, and the destruction of property in an effort to maintain their own masculine identity as “honourable” Christian warriors.<sup>89</sup> It was an officers’ responsibility to maintain control over the men under his command, and following rumours about the commission of so-called “atrocities,” officers such as Richardson and Merritt vehemently asserted that they had attempted to do so.<sup>90</sup> Constructing “Indians,” as “uncontrollable,” due to a racialized propensity for “savagery” and “drunkenness,” absolved British officers, in their minds, not only of any wrongdoing, but of their own loss of control over the situation (which could potentially undermine their martial masculine identity as “civilized” warriors, and their justification for colonial rule). Hypocritically, officers such as Brock even played upon this construction in an effort to frighten American forces into surrender, most famously at the capture of Fort Detroit in August of 1812.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, 150.

<sup>89</sup> See Lord Bathurst, “Dispatch. August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1812,” quoted in E. A. Cruikshank, “The Employment of Indians in the War of 1812,” (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 333; John Harvey “From Harvey at Chippewa to Riall at --. Head Quarters, Chippewa 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1813,” *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 510; Prévost, “Prévost to Procter. March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1813,” quoted in E. A. Cruikshank, “The Employment of Indians in the War of 1812,” 334; George Prévost, “Sir George Prévost to Major-General Brock. Montreal, July 7, 1812,” in *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock*, ed. Ferdinand Brock Tupper (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845; Project Gutenberg eBook #14428, 2004), n.p.

<sup>90</sup> Charles Askin, “From a Diary in Handwriting of Charles Askin. Thurs, Dec. 16th, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812=4*, vol. IX., 28; Richardson, *Richardson’s War of 1812*, 6-7; Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal, 1812-1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 567.

<sup>91</sup> Brock threatened that once the battle commenced, the Indigenous warriors attached to his force would be beyond his ability to control. For a discussion of the battle, see James H. Marsh, “Capture of Detroit, War of 1812,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada (October 23, 2011).

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/capture-of-detroit-war-of-1812>

As with ideas about the “savagery” of Indigenous warriors, however, the notion that Indigenous peoples were somehow racially predisposed to “drunkenness” was merely a British colonial construction, and does not reflect any historical reality about Indigenous peoples. There is again evidence from even British sources which proves this. There are, for example, numerous accounts of Indigenous warriors acting abstemiously during the war. Indian Department Agent John Askin Jr., reported to Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs William Claus following the capture of Fort Michilimackinac in July of 1812, that “I never saw so determined a Set of people as the Chippawas & Ottawas were. Since the Capitulation they have not drunk a single drop of Liquor, nor even killed a fowl belonging to any person.”<sup>92</sup> Brock similarly noted, in an August 1812 dispatch to Lord Liverpool, that Tecumseh was, “in every respect, abstemious,” and had “likewise prevailed on all his nation and many of other Tribes to follow his example.”<sup>93</sup> His biographer, Ferdinand Brock Tupper, included yet another story in which Shawnee warriors promised “not to taste that pernicious liquor until they had humbled the ‘big knives,’ meaning the Americans.”<sup>94</sup> However, as with accounts which countered British constructions of “Indian savagery,” these accounts of Indigenous sobriety were largely ignored.

There are also accounts which do mention particular Indigenous individuals getting drunk in particular instances, and indeed many men did likely drink, and, on occasion, got

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<sup>92</sup> John Askin jr., “From John Askin, Jr., to Claus. Michilimackinac 18th July 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 436-437.

<sup>93</sup> Isaac Brock, “From Brock to Liverpool. York Upper Canada 29<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 508.

<sup>94</sup> Tupper, ed., *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

drunk.<sup>95</sup> Indian Department Agent and adopted Mohawk War Chief, Major John Norton (Teyoninhokarawen), for example, relates that following the attack on Lewiston in December of 1813, he had found a group of warriors which he was to command “generally in a state of great Inebriety.”<sup>96</sup> However, as historian Peter Mancall reminds us, “from contact until the present day, there has been no single Native American response to liquor.”<sup>97</sup> I would add that neither has there been any singular White, European, or Christian reaction to alcohol. A singular instance of intoxication on the part of *any* individual cannot be taken as representative of the behaviour of an entire “race” of people, and secondary sources have convincingly shown that there is no scientific or medical evidence that Indigenous peoples are genetically or racially predisposed to alcoholism, alcohol abuse, or drunkenness.<sup>98</sup> In the minds of these British observers, however, it often was. As with instances of “savagery,” British officers viewed singular instances of “drunkenness” as characteristic of all peoples they labelled “Indian” because this racist characterization confirmed preconceived notions of how “Indians” behaved, and reinforced the “civ/sav” dichotomy.

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<sup>95</sup> For example, see William Claus, “Claus’ Military Report. December 4, 1813,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations*, 216-218.

<sup>96</sup> Norton, *A Mohawk Memoir*, 220, 238.

<sup>97</sup> Mancall, “I Was Addicted to Drinking Rum,” 93.

<sup>98</sup> For example, see Mancall, *Deadly Medicine*, 6; Campbell, “Making Sober Citizens,” 106; See also, Don Coyhis and William L. White, “Alcohol Problems in Native America: Changing Paradigms and Clinical Practices,” *Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (2002), 159-160; A. D. Fisher, “Alcoholism and Race: The Misapplication of Both Concepts to North American Indians,” *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 24, no. 1 (February 1987): 81-98; Philip A. May, “The Epidemiology of Alcohol Abuse Among American Indians: The Mythical and Real Properties,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 18, no. 2 (1994): 42; J. M. Schaefer, “Firewater Myths Revisited: Review of Findings and Some New Directions,” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Supplement*, No. s9 (1981): 99-117.

Comparative evidence of White or Christian “drunkenness,” on the other hand, was overwhelming. As demonstrated in previous chapters, British officers frequently drank heavily in the officers’ mess, and also on occasion at private dinners or public balls. Trotter went so far as to suggest that all of the inhabitants of Great Britain had “a strong tendency to extend the habit of ebriety,” noting that “there is no business of moment transacted in these islands without a libation to Bacchus. It prevails among the Peers of the realm and down to the parish committee.”<sup>99</sup> But this tendency, and even individual cases of drunkenness, were often ignored – and certainly not taken as representative of all White or Christian gentlemen-officers.<sup>100</sup>

A handful of British sources from the period actually acknowledge this racist double-standard, and actively refute it. Trotter, for example, remarked in his essay, *on Drunkenness*, that:

Christians have little reason to charge the Negro and Indian with the propensity to intoxication while it prevails so much among themselves. I have known a drunken man whip a post till he was tired, which he took for a human being that would not move out of his way. An old gentleman of 80, when in his cups, became so amorous, as to take a lamp-post for a lady, and addressed it with all the language of passion and flattery [...] An officer much accustomed to hard drinking, after getting intoxicated at the mess-table, fell asleep; and awoke suddenly at the end of two hours. He then told one of his brother officers in a peremptory tone of voice, that as it was an affair of honour, now was the best time for settling it; and insisted upon their taking their ground immediately. It was with great difficulty that he could be pacified: and no small remonstrance took place before he was convinced that he had been dreaming.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 142.

<sup>100</sup> For example, see Francis De Rottenburg, “Major-General De Rottenburg to Mr. E. B. Brenton. St. David’s, July 18th, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813)*, 248.

<sup>101</sup> Trotter, *An Essay*, 57-58.

Trotter's work asserted that Christian officers and gentlemen could also be afflicted by this "disease" of "drunkenness" as he saw it.<sup>102</sup> But this "disease theory," which would eventually lead to more modern ideas of alcohol "addiction," was still in its infancy.<sup>103</sup> In his era, Trotter was one of the few White Christian voices advocating against drunkenness and the habitual consumption of spirits.

Conversely, there were a number of contemporary Indigenous voices, including Tecumseh, his brother the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa, and the Seneca prophet Gani'o'dai'io or "Handsome Lake," who strongly condemned what they saw as "the evils of drink," and actively advocated that Indigenous peoples should abstain from liquor.<sup>104</sup> The latter set up an influential ministry in North America in the early 1800s, promoting a brand of Haudenosaunee religion which blended elements of Christian Quaker religion such as abstinence from alcohol, with existing Haudenosaunee traditions.<sup>105</sup> Gani'o'dai'io claimed to have led a dissolute life, a victim of drink, until he had a vision of four beings who revealed to

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<sup>102</sup> He wrote that, "in medical language, I consider drunkenness, strictly speaking, to be a disease." Trotter, *An Essay*, 17.

<sup>103</sup> For a fuller discussion of the disease theory of alcoholism, see Marianna Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-4.

<sup>104</sup> See Benjamin Drake, *Life of Tecumseh, and of His Brother the Prophet; With a Historical Sketch of the Shawanoe Indians* (Cincinnati: E. Morgan & Co., 1841); Thomas J. Lappas, "Tenskwatawa," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol: Social, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Scott C. Martin (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2015): 1260-1261; Victor B. Stolberg, "Handsome Lake," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol: Social, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Scott C. Martin (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2015): 649-650; Handsome Lake, "The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet," ed. Arthur C. Parker, *New York State Museum Education Department Bulletin* 163, no. 530 (November 1912): 5-148.

<sup>105</sup> For a biography, see Lou Williams jr., "Handsome Lake and Kaliwihyo," *Oneida Nation Historic Timeline*. <https://oneida-nsn.gov/our-ways/our-story/historic-timeline/handsome-lake-and-kaliwihyo/>; "Ganioda'yo, Seneca chief," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Last updated, Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022), <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ganiodayo>.

him the will of the Creator.<sup>106</sup> He codified this will, and began spreading his message to the world. The Code of Handsome Lake was comprised of 81 messages – the Gai’wiio – which were to be recited over the course of three days, dealing with everything from familial relations to trade relations, to work and social habits. Both the first and the last, however, deal specifically with alcohol.<sup>107</sup> The first section calls for adherents to “use it nevermore,” and warns that “the Creator made one’ga<sup>108</sup> and gave it to our younger brethren, the white man, as a medicine but they use it for evil for they drink it for other purposes than medicine [...] No, the Creator did not make it for you.”<sup>109</sup> In the final section, Ganio’dai’io reinforces this message by relating a vision of the “punisher” whose “delight is to see people filled with strong drink,” and is strongly associated with evil.<sup>110</sup> His code was widely adopted by Haudenosaunee communities on both sides of the border during the nineteenth century, and the Religion of Handsome Lake continues to be practiced today.<sup>111</sup>

Indigenous voices continued to speak out against the evils of drink and criticize White Christian hypocrisy well after the war. George Frederick Playter, a Methodist minister and author recorded several of these voices in his *History of Methodism in Canada*, written in the 1840s, and published in 1862.<sup>112</sup> For example, he relates one instance in which a Christian

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<sup>106</sup> See above.

<sup>107</sup> Omitting “The Journey Over the Great Sky-Road.” See Handsome Lake, “The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet,” ed. Arthur C. Parker, *New York State Museum Education Department Bulletin* 163, no. 530 (November 1912): 5-148; Also transcribed online at <https://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/iro/parker/index.htm>

<sup>108</sup> Whisky or rum.

<sup>109</sup> Handsome Lake, “The Code of Handsome Lake,” 27.

<sup>110</sup> Handsome Lake, “The Code of Handsome Lake,” 61-62.

<sup>111</sup> See Derek G. Smith, “Handsome Lake Religion,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada (Aug. 09, 2010) [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/handsome-lake-religion](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/handsome-lake-religion)

<sup>112</sup> For example, see George F. Playter, *The History of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto: Anson Green, 1862), 258, 281.

“convert,” “a sprightly youth of 18 years” named Jacob Peter, spoke to a group of assembled “whites” and so-called Christians at a prayer-meeting in the village of Demorestville in 1826:

You white people have the Gospel a great many years. You have the Bible too: suppose you read sometimes—but you very wicked. Suppose some very good people: but great many wicked. You get drunk—you tell lies—you break the Sabbath.’ Then pointing to his brethren, he added, ‘But these Indians, they hear the word only a little while—they can’t read the bible—but they become good right away. They no more get drunk—no more tell lies—they keep the Sabbath day. To us Indians, seems very strange that you have missionary so many years, and you so many rogues yet.’<sup>113</sup>

Playter noted that “the whites” in attendance “little expected so bold a reproof from a youth belonging to a race which is generally despised.”<sup>114</sup> Evidently, British colonial hypocrisy did not end with the war, and although available evidence suggests that an image of the “temperate Indian” could just as easily have been constructed in relation to the “drunken European,” this was rarely the case.

As with constructions of “Indian savagery,” assertions of an Indigenous propensity for drunkenness were important for the British army to maintain because they offered gendered and racial justification for colonial rule. If Indigenous peoples were constructed as “savage,” “drunken,” and “uncivilized,” they were presumably in need of “civilized” European governance and Christian moral teachings. British officers and military physicians considered Indigenous peoples, in this paternalistic dynamic, to be like children, which fed notions that they were unable to control their drinking.<sup>115</sup> As supposed children, Marianna Valverde argues,

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<sup>113</sup> Playter, *The History of Methodism*, 281.

<sup>114</sup> Playter, *The History of Methodism*, 281.

<sup>115</sup> Wilson argues that this White paternalistic mentality was at the core of British colonialism in North America. Wilson, “Empire, Gender, and Modernity,” in *Gender and Empire*, 25.



Indigenous peoples were constructed as unable to exercise their will to regulate their own intake of pleasure, which led them to drink to excess.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the war, army officers and military physicians confirmed and codified these racist assumptions in their writings. Douglas, for example, observed in his *Medical Topography* that “civilization has as yet made little progress amongst the greater number of the [Indigenous] nations. Their intellectual powers may therefore be regarded as in a state of infancy.”<sup>117</sup> British soldiers and officers were, in turn, imbued with what they saw as the necessary manly qualities to successfully conquer, colonize, and rule.

Constructing this binary racial hierarchy and “civ/sav” dichotomy around “drunkenness” presented an unforeseen problem, however, for White British colonizers who liked to drink. Any public display of drunkenness from White gentlemen or officers would undermine constructed notions of British civility and White supremacy. Multiple historians have shown that this was the case in colonial British India.<sup>118</sup> Historian Douglas Peers, for example, has argued that “critical racial hierarchies could only be maintained by doing nothing that would seem to discredit the British (or at least not be caught).”<sup>119</sup> Accordingly, Peers argues, British officers who “set the public facing standards of white civility” in India received severe punishments for instances of public drunkenness.<sup>120</sup> Their private drunkenness among

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<sup>116</sup> Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, 162-163.

<sup>117</sup> Douglas, *Medical Topography*, 112.

<sup>118</sup> Including, Douglas M. Peers, “Discipline and Publish: Military Law, Punishments, and the Negotiation of Order and Honour in the Company Era” (Unpublished Manuscript, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020), n.p.; Fischer-Tiné, “The Drinking Habits of our Countrymen, 398; Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour,” 815-816, 850-851.

<sup>119</sup> Peers, “Discipline and Publish,” n.p.

<sup>120</sup> Peers, “Discipline and Publish,” n.p.

gentlemanly peers was not considered a problem, but public drunkenness signaled a failure of self-restraint – that key factor which had been mobilized to distinguish gentlemen-officers from their perceived social and racial inferiors.

Officers in the Canadas faced similarly harsh punishments for public instances of drunkenness.<sup>121</sup> For example, in the case of Lieutenant Colonel Sutherland of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, who was cashiered in September of 1808 “for repeatedly appearing on the morning Parades of the Regiment in a most shameful and disgraceful state of Intoxication,” among other charges.<sup>122</sup> Or Ensign William Baxter of the 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment, who was cashiered for “for highly disgraceful and unofficerlike Conduct in appearing in a state of Intoxication in the presence of the Men of the Main Guard at Montreal on the Night of the 14<sup>th</sup> of October [...] when in charge of the said Main Guard.”<sup>123</sup> There are numerous other examples, and all were cashiered, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, was a particularly emasculating and public punishment, and, aside from death, the most severe which an officer could receive.<sup>124</sup> Such punishments reflect a concerted effort to maintain imagined

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<sup>121</sup> For example, see Major-General DeRottenburg, “Major-General DeRottenburg to Mr. E. B. Brenton. St. Davids, July 18th, 1813,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 248.

<sup>122</sup> “General Order. Horse Guards. 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1809,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 164, (1790-1810) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikn record: 105012, Microform: c-2773), 792-802.

<sup>123</sup> “General Order. Horse Guards. 4<sup>th</sup> February 1817,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 168, (1816-1818) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikn record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 664-667.

<sup>124</sup> Including, but not limited to: “General Order. Horse Guards. 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1809,” “General Order. Horse Guards. 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1810,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 164, (1790-1810) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikn record: 105012, Microform: c-2773), 792-802, 872-875; “General Order. Horse Guards. 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1812,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 164a, (1811-1814), 1029-1035; “General Order. Horse Guards. 4<sup>th</sup> February 1817,” “General Orders. Horse Guards. 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1817,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 168, (1816-1818), 664-667, 782-785; “Lieutenant Joseph Peters – 1810,” “Ensign John Stevenson – 1811,” “Lieutenant William Sheehan – 1812,” “Ensign Daniel Dupré – 1813,” “Lieutenant Anthony Keogh – 1813,” “Lieutenant James O’Flanagan – 1815,” in

racial, class, and masculine hierarchies which underpinned colonial rule; to maintain the notion that “temperate,” “civilized” White British gentlemen-officers were fit to rule over the “drunken,” “savage,” non-White “Indian” other, in the face of all evidence to the contrary.

### American “(Br)others”

Further evidence that the labels of “savage” and “drunken” were merely British constructions, malleable to the needs of British officers, is that they readily applied these same labels in different settings to differentiate themselves against a host of national<sup>125</sup> “others,” including other White Christians. Within Britain, for example, the English had traditionally constructed their masculine identities in relation to the “barbaric” Scots or “drunken” Irish.<sup>126</sup> In Europe, the British nation defined itself against the “effeminate” French, the “cruel” Spanish, and the “barbaric” Portuguese. In doing so, British officers again focused on supposedly differing modes of warfare and treatment of prisoners or civilians as evidence of “savagery,” and offered “savagery” or lack of “civility” as evidence of a propensity for drunkenness.<sup>127</sup>

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*A Collection of the Charges, Opinions, and Sentences of General Courts Martial, As Published by Authority*, ed. Charles James (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1820), 351, 374-375, 443, 489, 555-556, 651-652.

<sup>125</sup> Referring to a combination of racial, linguistic, religious, and cultural differences. As Wilson argues, national difference was “perhaps the most important category of difference of the period [...] a way of imagining community that tied people together less by physical characteristics (although these were significant) than by customs, descent, and ‘blood’.” Wilson, “Empire, Gender, and Modernity,” in *Gender and Empire*, 15-16.

<sup>126</sup> For example, see Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 24.

<sup>127</sup> See Daly, “Barbarity More Suited to Savages,” 249, 243; Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 140-141; For a primary source example, see Trotter, *An Essay*, 141.

In the War of 1812, British officers labelled the White American army as “savage,” “drunken,” “cowardly,” and in breach of the unspoken rules of honourable warfare between “civilized” Christian nations.<sup>128</sup> As LaRocque argues, however, “when Whites displayed ‘negative’ traits, they could become ‘wicked’ or ‘ruffian,’ but such name-calling never implied that they were outside the civilized fold [...] his savagery is more situational than fundamental.”<sup>129</sup> For example, in the minds of British officers, even the frontier militiamen from Ohio and Kentucky, who operated in similar fashion to Indigenous warriors and British Light Infantry forces, wore distinctly non-military dress, and accordingly developed a particular reputation among the British army for “savagery,” were not as “savage” as the non-White “Indian.” Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Evans, in a report from October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1812, referred to the “troops from Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee,” as only “half-savage.”<sup>130</sup> In his letter to Bouton, Le Couteur similarly wrote that “the Americans on the Ohio and Kentucky lands, are nearly Indians, they use the Scalping knife and Tomahawk, and are merely a civilized Savage.”<sup>131</sup> To Le Couteur’s mind, these men had transgressed racial boundaries to a degree, and become “Savages” of a sort (at least compared to British officers), yet paradoxically he still regarded them as “civilized.”<sup>132</sup> Those who found themselves among the “civilized fold” in colonial North America benefitted from this position of power and White privilege; they

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<sup>128</sup> For example, see Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 643; “Address to the York Militia,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 27; Norton, *The Journal of Major John Norton*, 304; Trotter, *An Essay*, 160.

<sup>129</sup> LaRocque, *When the Other Is Me*, 49.

<sup>130</sup> Thomas Evans, “From Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Evans (“Acting Brigade-Major to the Forces”). Government House, Fort George, Oct. 15, 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 619-620.

<sup>131</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 147.

<sup>132</sup> “Civilized,” in this context, potentially referring to social and technical modernity, rather than ethos or manners – but this is unclear.

were always constructed as racially superior to Indigenous warriors, regardless of their behaviour.

On the other side of this racist double-standard, we see that while British officers ascribed certain Indigenous individuals or groups positive masculine or “civilized” traits at times, recognizing their martial value as warriors, they nonetheless continued to regard them members of a “savage” “race.”<sup>133</sup> John Richardson’s praise of the actions of the Shawnee Chief Tecumseh following the Battle of the Miami during the Siege of Fort Meigs offers a prime example:

Forty of these unhappy men had already fallen beneath the steel of the infuriated party, when Tecumseh, apprized of what was doing, rode up at full speed, and raising his tomahawk, threatened to destroy the first man who resisted his injunction to desist [...] the threats and tone of the exasperated chieftain produced an instantaneous effect, and they retired at once [...] Never did Tecumseh shine more truly himself than on this occasion; and nought of the savage could be distinguished save the color and the garb. Ever merciful and magnanimous as he was ardent and courageous, the voice of the supplicant seldom reached him in vain; and although war was his idol, the element in which he lived, his heart was formed to glow with all the nobler and more generous impulses of the warrior [...] In any other country, and governing any other men, Tecumseh would have been a hero; at the head of this uncivilized and untractable people he was a savage; but a savage such as civilization herself might not blush to acknowledge for her child.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Merritt, “Merritt’s Journal,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 553; Isaac Brock, “From Brock to Liverpool. York Upper Canada 19<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 508; “General Order, Head Quarters, Detroit, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1812, in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 463-465; Henry Procter, “From Procter at Sandwich to Sheaffe at Fort George, Sandwich, Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 7; “Address from the House of Assembly to His Honor the President,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 98-99; “To Lieutenant-General Sir George Prevost, Bart., Commander of the Forces, &c., &c., &c.,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 99-101; “Proclamation,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812*, 135-137.

<sup>134</sup> Richardson, *Richardson’s War of 1812*, 153-154; Isaac Brock offered similar praise, see Isaac Brock, “From Brock to Liverpool. York Upper Canada 29<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 508.

For Richardson, Tecumseh's "savagery" was racially inherent; he could not be "civilized," even though he obeyed and enforced White Christian rules of warfare, treated prisoners with magnanimity, and proved himself courageous in battle (and, not to mention, was reputedly abstemious).

But notions of "savagery" were not only influenced by racialized identities, the civ/sav dichotomy was also based on rigid class hierarchies. Officers from both sides benefitted not only from their White skin, but also from their class status as gentlemen. British officers (particularly those from the metropole) may have regarded their American peers as lesser gentlemen, but they were gentlemen, nonetheless; members of "civilized" society and the colonial ruling elite. A temporary loss of control leading to "drunkenness" or acts of "savagery" might be expected of rank-and-file or militia forces (whom, officers assumed, needed to be controlled), but it was certainly not characteristic, in their minds, of (White) gentlemen, who embodied "civility" and self-control. To suggest otherwise would undermine British officers' own position in the carefully constructed "civ/sav" dichotomy.

Consequently, British officers recognized their American counterparts as "brothers" of a sort, men whom they expected would follow the same masculine code of honour in battle (even though they frequently did not).<sup>135</sup> William "Tiger" Dunlop, for example, described Major-General Winfield Scott of the American army as "one of the most gentlemanly men I ever met with," and similarly praised the "high character" of "Colonel Wood of the American

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<sup>135</sup> Morgan, "Remembering 1812 in the 1840s," 56; See also, Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Engineers,” who had been one of his patients.<sup>136</sup> Le Couteur similarly commented that a prisoner in his charge following the Battle of Beaver Dams, Colonel Boerstler, “was most friendly – a fine Gentlemanly Young man.”<sup>137</sup> Despite being *enemies* at war, British officers identified with these fellow gentlemen-officers on a level that they never would with their Indigenous *allies*, even heavily-admired Chiefs such as Tecumseh.<sup>138</sup> A similar dynamic played out in the Peninsular War, with Iberian allies and French enemies, but to an even greater degree in the Canadas. As nations at war, British and American forces may have emphasized their “national” differences, but dynamics of class and race clearly trumped nationalism. In the minds of British officers, these American officers were gentlemen, “brothers,” and “most unnatural enemies.”<sup>139</sup>

In Le Couteur’s narrative of the war, he frequently expressed caring and concern for enemy American officers, directly juxtaposed with his disdain for and racialized characterizations of the Indigenous warriors he was allied to. For example, in his account of the Battle of Lundy’s Lane on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1814:

The miserable badly-wounded were groaning and imploring us for water, the Indians prowling about them and scalping or plundering. Close by me lay a fine young man, the son of the American general Hull. He was mortally wounded, and I gave him some brandy and water, and wished Him to give me his watch, rings, and anything He wished sent to his family. He told me much about Himself and to come to Him in the morning when He would give them to me in charge. When I

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<sup>136</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., [1905] 1908. Gutenberg EBook 44281, 2013), 51, 79.

<sup>137</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 128.

<sup>138</sup> Isaac Brock, “From Brock to Liverpool. York Upper Canada 19<sup>th</sup> August 1812,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 508.

<sup>139</sup> Alexander Maitland, “General the Honorable Alexander Maitland to Major-General Brock. Totteridge, October 8, 1812,” in *The Life and Correspondence*, n.p.

got to Him, He was a beautiful Corpse, stripped stark naked, amidst a host of friends and foes.<sup>140</sup>

In Le Couteur's narrative, we are often left to wonder whom he actually considers "friend" and "foe." The same can be said of many accounts from British officers. They frequently cast Indigenous allies as "cowardly" or "savage," while ascribing positive martial masculine characteristics to (wholly) White American regular forces; describing them, for example, as "a brave enemy," "behaving nobly," and with "great gallantry."<sup>141</sup>

As the sharing of brandy suggests in Le Couteur's account, alcohol consumption also played a role in British and American officers' mutual classed and gendered identity construction, and could be consumed convivially by officers without accusations of a propensity for drunkenness from the other side.<sup>142</sup> In this instance, the "polite" shared consumption of brandy broadcast both Le Couteur and Hull as "civilized" and particularly (gentle)manly to English readers, juxtaposed against the "savagery" of their surroundings. There are numerous other examples of this type of fraternization occurring during the war as well. Le Couteur, for example, when sent to take a group of prisoners to shore near the American piquet at occupied Fort George on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1813, noted that he "got to be excellent friends in a Jiffy," with another American subaltern, "for I talked to Him as if He had

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<sup>140</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 177.

<sup>141</sup> John Tucker, "Lieut.-Colonel Tucker to Major-General Riall. Mississaga Fort, 15th July ½ past 10 p.m.," in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in 1814, Part I and II*, 66-67; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 178-179; Merritt, "Merritt's Journal, 1812-1815" in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 567.

<sup>142</sup> Indeed, Lafferty treats the drinking of British and American soldiers together in her analysis of the war, arguing that "cultural affinities are starkly apparent in the drinking habits of the men." Renée Lafferty, "'The Vice of a Cold Climate: Drink and Soldiering on Niagara's Wartime Frontier (1812-14)," *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 5-36.



been of our mess.”<sup>143</sup> The two gentlemen took dinner together, which included “Capital beef steaks, Potatoes, and a bottle of excellent Brandy.”<sup>144</sup> Afterwards, they went shooting “snipes and Woodcocks” together, along with a “Mr. De Peyster” of the U.S. artillery, to whom Le Couteur remarked, “much pleasanter Sport, isn’t it, than shooting one’s own kindred and language.”<sup>145</sup> The American agreed, noting that his uncle, Colonel De Peyster, had served in the King’s 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment prior to the Revolution. Le Couteur expressed that “we three young Men were like brother officers.”<sup>146</sup> Later, during the Siege of Fort Erie, Le Couteur and the officers of the 104<sup>th</sup> treated recently captured American officers similarly, inviting thirteen of them to dinner, and offering “such comforts in washing & preparation as we might.”<sup>147</sup> Finally, after peace was officially declared in February of 1815, Le Couteur also noted that when several American officers came over from Sackets Harbour with the news, “we received them very well, gave them a dinner, and made our Band play ‘Yankee Doodle’ on drinking the President’s health which gave them great pleasure.”<sup>148</sup> These “polite” performances of shared alcohol consumption not only asserted an officer’s gendered and classed identity in the eyes of his peers (in either army), but also worked to define “civilized” Whites or Christians from “half-savage” ones, and Whites, in general, from “Indians.”

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<sup>143</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 134.

<sup>144</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 134.

<sup>145</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 135.

<sup>146</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 135.

<sup>147</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 199.

<sup>148</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 217.

This chapter has shown that nineteenth-century British officers constructed their own masculine and racial identities in relation to a variety of “others,” ranging from the “savage” American, to the “barbaric” Iberian, and, above all, to the “savage, drunken Indian.” British officers constructed themselves, by comparison, as “civilized” practitioners of “honourable,” manly warfare, who drank like gentlemen. This “civ/sav” dichotomy was established to validate colonial rule, and place Indigenous peoples at the bottom of constructed masculine, class and racial hierarchies in the Canadas. In the years following the war, as the value of Indigenous warriors as military allies declined, these notions of White supremacy and “Indian” inferiority became further entrenched. The next chapter will examine how constructions of British martial masculinity (and, in relation, constructions of “the Indian”) shifted in that post-war period, and reveal that Indigenous warriors continued to be denied agency in the remembering of the War of 1812 as their contributions were erased by the writings of White British officers and colonizers.

## Chapter 5 - Veterans

The War of 1812 formally ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on Christmas Eve, 1814. The treaty was approved by the British Parliament five days later, on December 30<sup>th</sup>, and ratified by the United States Senate on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1815. There was no clear victor, and neither side desired to continue fighting. Consequently, all captured territories and prisoners were returned to their respective nations. With peace secured, a General Order dated March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1815, officially disbanded all active militia forces in the Canadas.<sup>1</sup> In November of 1818, all remaining regular Regiments “on Foreign Stations” were also ordered to be disbanded.<sup>2</sup> Over that three year period between 1815 to 1818, the size of the British army was reduced by half.<sup>3</sup> The majority of Regiments which had served in the Canadas during the war were either reduced in strength, relocated, or disbanded entirely. Surgeon John Douglas’ 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, “Major” John Richardson’s 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Isaac Brock’s 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment, and William “Tiger” Dunlop’s 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment, for example, were all reduced to one Battalion each

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<sup>1</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, “General Orders. Quebec, 1 March, 1815,” in *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. III, Part II, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society, 17; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1928), 704-706.

<sup>2</sup> “Suspension of Mutiny Act. November 1818,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 168, (1816-1818) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 850.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980), 35.

and re-deployed elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> The 103<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, John Le Couteur's 104<sup>th</sup> Regiment, the Glengarry Light Infantry, and Royal Newfoundland Regiment, were disbanded altogether.<sup>5</sup>

The end of the war had brought significant changes to the British army, and to ideals of martial masculinity. While wartime had demanded a more singular, unified vision of martial masculinity in the British army, peacetime presented greater opportunities for multiple definitions to compete for space.<sup>6</sup> As Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue, the post-war period saw a search for “alternate masculine forms of activity,” from wartime.<sup>7</sup> British veterans and army reformers actively contested and negotiated what it meant to be a man in the British army. In the wake of the growing temperance movement and the rise of the middle class in Britain, this debate often centered on alcohol consumption and “sober respectability.”<sup>8</sup>

Few historians have examined the impact of temperance ideologies and the rise of the middle class on the culture of the British army in this period.<sup>9</sup> Even fewer have considered how

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<sup>4</sup> Steve Brown, “British Regiments and the Men Who Led Them 1793-1815: 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot, 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot,” *The Napoleon Series Archive* (Accessed May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019). [https://www.napoleon-series.org/military-info/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c\\_InfantryregimentsIntro.html](https://www.napoleon-series.org/military-info/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c_InfantryregimentsIntro.html)

<sup>5</sup> John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 330; John Tosh, “The Old Adam and the New Man: Emerging Themes in the History of English Masculinities, 1750–1850,” in *English Masculinities, 1660–1800*, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (London: Longman, 1999), 222.

<sup>7</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 19.

<sup>8</sup> A term coined by Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 223.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Burroughs, “Promoting Thrift, Sobriety and Discipline in the British Army: The Establishment of Military Savings Banks,” *Histoire Sociale – Social History* 14, no. 28 (Nov., 1981): 323-337; For a focus on India, see Erica Wald, “Health, Discipline and Appropriate Behaviour: The Body of the Soldier and Space of the Cantonment,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2012): 815-56; For a discussion of the wartime period, see Renée Lafferty, “‘The Vice of a Cold Climate:’ Drink and Soldiering on Niagara's Wartime Frontier (1812-14),” *Social History of Alcohol & Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2013), 16, 27, 29; Most scholars, however, focus

these shifts influenced ideals of martial masculinity in the post-war period. Charles Ludington has examined the impact of these shifts in the civilian sphere, arguing that “sober respectability” increasingly became “the new hallmark of allegedly proper manhood” in post-war civilian society, replacing the warrior ethos which had dominated during wartime.<sup>10</sup> Sober respectability, as he describes it, “helped to define the middle ranks as one large, coherent ‘middle class,’ a class that valued hard work, thrift, domesticity and sobriety.”<sup>11</sup> More work is needed on the martial sphere, however, to determine how these shifts impacted definitions of martial masculinity for enlisted soldiers and officers of peacetime, as well as for veterans.

More work is also needed to determine how post-war shifts in civilian society impacted Indigenous veterans, and racialized constructions of martial masculinity. Cecilia Morgan’s study of the gendered memory and legacy of the war in Upper Canada has revealed that Indigenous veterans, as well as Black veterans, were increasingly marginalized in a post-war society in which masculinity was defined by “manly courage exercised in the protection of feminine virtue” during the war.<sup>12</sup> She argues that relationships of power which had structured discourses of masculinity during the War of 1812 continued to frame and underpin memories and narratives of the war.<sup>13</sup> These narratives, which heavily favoured British accounts and

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on a much later period, for example Fay Wilson, “Booze, Temperance, and Soldiers on the Home Front: The Unraveling of the Image of the Idealised Soldier in Canada,” *Canadian Military History* 25, 1 (2016): 1-36.

<sup>10</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 223.

<sup>11</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 222-223.

<sup>12</sup> Cecilia Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue in a Colonial Context: The War of 1812 and Its Aftermath in Upper Canada,” in *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, eds. Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, [2010] 2011), 308; See also Cecilia Morgan, “Remembering 1812 in the 1840s: John Richardson and the Writing of the War,” *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 29 (Autumn 2014): 39-69; For an American perspective, see Gregory T. Knouff, “Masculinity, Race and Citizenship: Soldiers’ Memories of the American Revolution,” in *Gender, War and Politics*, 325-342.

<sup>13</sup> Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue,” 320.

omitted or obscured the contributions of Indigenous allies, need to be challenged, and the racist constructions which support them exposed.

The post-war writings of veterans such as Richardson, Dunlop and Le Couteur reveal how definitions and understandings of martial masculinity shifted in the post-war period, specifically from 1818 to 1848. John Le Couteur remained in active service a short time after the war, transferring to the West Indies to serve as aide-de-camp to his father.<sup>14</sup> He obtained his long-desired captaincy in 1817, but retired shortly after to marry and settle down in Jersey.<sup>15</sup> In retirement, he worked on a manuscript based on his wartime diary, but it was never published. “Tiger” Dunlop was placed on half-pay following the war, and retired in 1817.<sup>16</sup> He would go on to spend time in India as a journalist, wrote for *Blackwood’s Magazine*, and returned to Upper Canada in 1826 to serve as Warden of the Forests for John Galt’s Canada Company.<sup>17</sup> There he wrote his wartime memoir, which was published in 1847, a year before his death.<sup>18</sup> John Richardson, now a lieutenant, remained in service the longest of the three men, transferring regiments multiple times in order to avoid being placed on half-pay.<sup>19</sup> After a two-year tour in the West Indies, however, he finally retired in October of 1818, got married, and began his literary career. Richardson briefly returned to active service in 1834 with the British Legion in Spain, where he earned a promotion to Major – and a sobriquet which he

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<sup>14</sup> Graves, ed., *Merry Hearts*, 18.

<sup>15</sup> Graves, ed., *Merry Hearts*, 19.

<sup>16</sup> William Dunlop, *Recollections of the American War, 1812-14*, ed. Arthur H. U. Colquhoun (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1905), 100-101.

<sup>17</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 100-101.

<sup>18</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 100-101.

<sup>19</sup> David R. Beasley, “Richardson, John (1796-1852),” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1985) (Accessed September 23, 2021).

[http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/richardson\\_john\\_1796\\_1852\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/richardson_john_1796_1852_8E.html)

would retain even in civilian life.<sup>20</sup> He finally returned to the Canadas in 1838 as correspondent for the *Times* of London, later served as Superintendent of Police on the Welland Canal, and set up short-lived newspapers in Brockville, Kingston, and Montreal. In 1849, Richardson moved to New York to focus on his writing. He died in 1852, as a prolific, albeit not very profitable, author.

As Cecilia Morgan has demonstrated, Richardson's official account of the war, as well as one of his later novels, *The Canadian Brothers*, are particularly valuable for their revealing discourses on wartime martial masculinity.<sup>21</sup> Richardson wrote his first account of the War of 1812 between 1826-27, an essay which he entitled "A Canadian Campaign; by a British Officer."<sup>22</sup> In 1842, he expanded and republished "A Canadian Campaign," as *Operations of the Right Division*, with many sections taken verbatim from the original.<sup>23</sup> This work was intended to be paired with histories of the Centre and Left Divisions, but they were never completed.<sup>24</sup> As such, Richardson later retitled his work, *War of 1812*.<sup>25</sup> Richardson's writings not only provide insight into negotiations of wartime martial masculinities, they also reveal how definitions and understandings of martial masculinity shifted, during a period of relative peace. In his accounts of the war, and especially in his 1844 essay "On Desertion in Canada," which was later expanded upon and retitled as *Eight Years in Canada*, Richardson often

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<sup>20</sup> William F. E. Morley, *A Bibliographical Study of Major John Richardson* (Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1973), xv.

<sup>21</sup> Cecilia Morgan, "Remembering 1812 in the 1840s."

<sup>22</sup> John Richardson, *A Canadian Campaign; by a British Officer* (London: Henry Colburn, 1826-1827).

<sup>23</sup> John Richardson, *Operations of the Right Division of the Army of Upper Canada, During the American War of 1812* (Brockville, 1842).

<sup>24</sup> Morley, *A Bibliographical Study*, 54.

<sup>25</sup> John Richardson, and Alexander Clark Casselman, ed., *Richardson's War of 1812* (Toronto: Historical Publishing Co., 1902).

compared his experiences during the war to the contemporary state of the army in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>26</sup>

A number of Richardson's peers published similar articles in the pages of *The United Service Journal (USJ)*, a British military publication which ran from 1829 to 1896 – to which both Le Couteur and Richardson contributed.<sup>27</sup> *USJ* is another invaluable source for historians studying martial masculinity in the post-war period. It offered former and actively serving military veterans (usually officers) with a forum to dialogue, exchange ideas, and keep up to date with military affairs.<sup>28</sup> The many articles, essays, and letters to the editor featured in its pages not only provide useful insights into negotiations of martial masculinities and the state of the army in the post-war period, they also, like Richardson's writings, influenced how the War of 1812, and the men who waged it, were remembered.

An analysis of these sources reveals that, in the post-war period (1818-1848), definitions and understandings of martial masculinity in the British army underwent significant change. Veteran officers, social reformers, and new soldiers of peacetime all offered differing definitions of what it meant to be a (gentle)man and a warrior. These contestations and negotiations of martial masculinity mirrored similar negotiations in post-war civilian society, in the wake of the growing temperance movement and the rise of the middle-class. Middle-

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<sup>26</sup> For a full transcription of "On Desertion in Canada," see Morley, *A Bibliographical Study*, 115-116; Major John Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada; Embracing a Review of the Administrations of Lords Durham and Sydenham, Sir Chas. Bagot, and Lord Metcalfe* (Montreal: H. H. Cunningham, 1847).

<sup>27</sup> *The United Service Journal* (London: H. Colburn, 1829-1896).

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/010068455>

<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, most wrote under pseudonyms and are difficult to identify.



class army reformers sought to instill domestic ideals of “sober respectability,” and remake the “drunken” common soldier into a more “respectable” figure, worthy of representing a morally upstanding Victorian nation. They even sought to curb the drinking of officers. These efforts, however, met with mixed success, as many veteran officers strongly resisted change. Men such as Dunlop continued to drink heavily and construct their masculine identities through polite socialization, even though this behaviour was increasingly regarded as scandalous. The officer corps was divided, however. Those who had served, suffered, and sacrificed held that they alone embodied true “warrior” masculinity, and they invalidated the masculine status of soldiers of peacetime who lived in comparable ease, had no means of demonstrating gallantry or earning honour in battle, and only drank temperately. Veterans similarly looked down upon those (gentle)men-officers who had been granted their commission rather than earned it meritoriously in combat. And, finally, the writings of these veterans also denied martial manhood to Indigenous veterans, who, despite their gallant and meritorious service, had their wartime contributions obscured by the romanticization of the deeds of the Canadian militia and the veneration of British officers-turned-heroes.

### **Temperance and Middle-Class Respectability**

Changes to martial masculinity in the post-war period were situated within the context of larger social changes in the civilian sphere, namely the rise of the middle-class in Britain.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); For a discussion of the Upper Canadian context, see David G. Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994).

As Davidoff and Hall argue, the post-war period saw the gap between the lower and middling ranks of society grow larger, in part due to an influx of cheap labour from demobilized soldiers.<sup>30</sup> Business-minded individuals from the middling sort simultaneously came to resent the lavish spending and leisure-focused lifestyles of the aristocracy.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, this “middle-class” of people came to define themselves separately from these other two groups. As the newly self-conscious middle-class gained increased political and economic power, they desired to reform society in their image, fueled by a combination of religious, commercial, and scientific ideologies.<sup>32</sup> They valued family, religion, and the home, advocated hard-work and self-restraint, and strove to reshape mainstream definitions of masculinity (at all levels) to create a morally upstanding society, full of “respectable” citizens – and soldiers. These middle-class definitions of masculinity (and femininity) would later come to define the Victorian era, but in this transition period between the Georgian and Victorian we see negotiations between these newer and older ideals.

Ideals of “respectable” masculinity in post-war Britain were further influenced by the rise of the temperance movement across the Anglo-Atlantic world.<sup>33</sup> The temperance movement sought to curb excessive male drunkenness, or “intemperance,” which was regarded as the cause of many societal problems, including gendered violence the domestic sphere.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 19.

<sup>31</sup> Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 27.

<sup>33</sup> For a discussion of the temperance movement in Canada, see Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 51-79; See also Janet Noel, *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusades before Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 68.

This was significant in the Canadas, because, as historian Craig Heron notes, there had been few efforts before the 1820s to encourage, or force, White settlers to stop drinking booze.<sup>35</sup> But temperance advocates (many of them women), argued that reducing male drunkenness would result in a more harmonious and productive society, and accordingly emphasized sobriety as a key aspect of domestic masculinity, and “respectability.”<sup>36</sup> The first temperance societies sprung up throughout Britain and North America in the 1820s and continued to grow through the 1830s. The movement initially advocated for moderate, or ‘temperate,’ consumption of alcohol, but by the 1830s and 1840s also increasingly promoted ‘teetotalism,’ or total abstention from “ardent spirits” – distilled liquors which were so strong they burned going down.<sup>37</sup> As one *USJ* contributor, a self-described “old Captain,” summarized in 1835, “the great object of temperance societies is the prevention of drunkenness by means of a total abstinence from ardent spirits, and a moderation in the use of all intoxicating [fermented] liquors.”<sup>38</sup>

Given its base of support, the temperance movement was heavily gendered and classed. Reformers in Britain focused inordinately on the drinking of the urban poor and labouring classes, and these concerns were largely transplanted to the rest of the empire (even though, in areas such as the Canadas, these class distinctions did not yet exist). Furthermore, as historian Glenn Lockwood argues, the movement in the Canadas also became heavily racialized,

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<sup>35</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 52.

<sup>36</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 56.

<sup>37</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 54.

<sup>38</sup> E. H., An Old Captain, “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” *The United Service Journal* (1835) no. 2 (London: H. Colburn, 1835), 254.

targeting Irish drinkers in particular.<sup>39</sup> For temperance advocates and middle-class reformers, the presumed propensity for drunkenness of these groups posed a serious threat to the establishment of “respectability” both at home and in the colonies. As Ludington notes, however, temperance ideologies simultaneously exerted an influence on constructions of “upper-class” masculinity as well.<sup>40</sup> Reformers from both the middle-class and even the minor gentry came to see heavy-drinking and polite socialization, once hallmark of gentlemanly masculinity, as scandalous.<sup>41</sup> As a result, Ludington argues that the post-war period saw “a precipitous decline in drunkenness among all wine-drinking classes” in Britain, and the decline of the popularity of port wine in particular.<sup>42</sup> These changes, Ludington argues, directly reflected the values of the new British middle-class, “which emphasized the importance of ‘respectability’ above all else.”<sup>43</sup>

Temperance advocates also targeted the British army and its soldiers for “respectable” reform. As historian Kenneth Hendrickson argues, reformers desired that the British Empire be defended and expanded by an army of Christian warriors, who reflected proper Victorian moral values.<sup>44</sup> The army’s poor reputation for licentiousness and drunkenness (whether or not it was warranted), was at odds with new values. Reformers in both the civilian and military sphere thus proposed a series of systematic army reforms designed to create a more

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<sup>39</sup> Glenn J. Lockwood, “Temperance in Upper Canada as Ethnic Subterfuge,” in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 67.

<sup>40</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 227.

<sup>41</sup> Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 21.

<sup>42</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 222.

<sup>43</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 222.

<sup>44</sup> Kenneth E. Hendrickson, *Making Saints: Religion and the Public Image of the British Army, 1809-1885* (Madison: Fairleigh-Dickinson University Press, 1998), 98.

“respectable” soldiery. Evidence suggests, however, that these reform efforts met with considerable resistance, particularly from the established gentlemen-officer class (many of whom were veterans of the late wars), who resisted the invasion of middle-class and domestic definitions of masculinity, and the impositions placed upon their social lives. Those military men who saw drinking heavily in the mess-room as a sign of gentlemanly privilege – and a means by which they established their manliness in the eyes of their peers – were, in general, unwilling to part with their fortified wines and other spirits. As one contemporary observer noted, their establishment in the army was significantly impeded by “the prejudices of officers in general against [temperance societies],” as well as the “individual inclinations of many officers to the use of ardent spirits.”<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, officers who embodied temperance ideals and new middle-class domestic values, such as teetotallers, were often ridiculed by their peers as effeminate, the extreme opposite of the aristocratic dandy.<sup>46</sup> Despite this resistance, however, the sweeping social changes of the post-war era did exert a significant influence on the negotiation of martial masculinities within the army.

The greatest changes came in the 1830s, after the Duke of Wellington, who had famously resisted army reform throughout his tenure as commander-in-chief, in 1833 openly advocated the formation of a temperance society within the army’s most elite unit, the Guards.<sup>47</sup> His endorsement triggered a flurry of publications in *USJ* from contributors expressing their support and suggesting various remedies for intemperance. On contributor, O.

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<sup>45</sup> E. H., “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” 254.

<sup>46</sup> Douglas Peers, in correspondence with the author, May 19, 2020.

<sup>47</sup> “Grenadier Guards. Regimental Orders. Oct. 1833,” *The Mariners' Church Gospel Temperance Soldiers' and Sailor's Magazine* (Jan. 1845) Vol. III, No. 1 (Naval and Military Office, 1845), 416.

C. Proteus<sup>48</sup>, wrote in the 1834 issue of *USJ* that since “the first military authority it appears is favourable to Temperance Societies, having encouraged their institution in the regiment of Guards, of which he is colonel [...] it certainly would be desirable to have such institutions extended to every regiment of the line.”<sup>49</sup> E. H. similarly noted in the 1835 issue that “the sanction given by the Duke of Wellington to temperance societies as a means of diminishing drunkenness in the army should, at least, be entitled to some consideration: there are few officers I hope who would disregard his Grace’s opinion in matters relating to discipline [...] the necessity of some check to the increase of drunkenness is evident to all, and, as I am fully convinced of the benefits that would arise from the formation of temperance societies [...] in every regiment.”<sup>50</sup>

### **Common Soldiers**

Reflecting the influence of temperance and middle-class ideologies, by 1835, numerous contributors to *USJ*, including Dr. William Fergusson, Inspector General of Hospitals and former army Surgeon, argued that “the extent and consequences of the use of intoxicating liquors in the British Army” presented “a subject for serious reflection.”<sup>51</sup> Contributors to *USJ* throughout the 1830s argued that “intemperance is confessedly the soldier’s bane, the besetting sin of a military life; the addiction to this vice is the source of almost every irregularity and

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<sup>48</sup> A pseudonym. The actual identity of the author is unknown.

<sup>49</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional Discipline of the Army,” *The United Service Journal* (1834) no. 2. (London: H. Colburn, 1834), 413.

<sup>50</sup> E. H., “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” 254.

<sup>51</sup> Dr. William Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence and Remedy of Intemperance in the United Service,” *The United Service Journal* (1835) no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1835), 236.

crime of which he is guilty.”<sup>52</sup> Common enlisted soldiers (who were still predominately Irish and drawn from the labouring classes) found themselves a primary target of reform efforts. Furthermore, reformers expressed particular concern regarding soldiers in the colonies, on the periphery of empire, where metropolitan ideals were more difficult to enforce, and where (as demonstrated in the previous chapter) there was an increased importance placed upon having the army represent “civilized” British values in order to justify colonial rule. One anonymous contributor lamented that “offences against subordination and the whole train of delinquencies originating mainly in drunkenness,” had “grown to an unusual amount in the Service, especially amongst corps employed in the colonies.”<sup>53</sup> Thus reformers desired to inculcate “sobriety” as a key element of martial masculinity and curb the drunkenness of enlisted soldiers, particularly those stationed abroad.

Efforts to do so, however, marked a significant shift from wartime approaches. Reformers increasingly advocated rehabilitation through the improvement of the common soldiers’ condition, rather than controlling drunkenness through strict corporal punishment, as had been the case.<sup>54</sup> Historian Neil Ramsey argues that this change reflected shifting public

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<sup>52</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional,” 413; See also A., “Notes on the Army of the United States of America,” *The United Service Journal* (1832) no. 3 (London: H. Colburn, 1832), 155; Anonymous, “Present Discipline of the British Army,” *The United Service Journal* (1834) no. 2. (London: H. Colburn, 1834), 78; E., “Fines for Drunkenness in the Army,” *The United Service Journal* (1834) no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1834), 544; H. B., “Suggestions for the Encouragement of Good Conduct in the Army,” *The United Service Journal* (1835) no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1835), 403.

<sup>53</sup> Anonymous, “The United Service in 1835,” *The United Service Journal* (1836) no. 1 (London: H. Colburn, 1836), 5.

<sup>54</sup> Attempts to reform corporal punishments, particularly flogging, have been well covered by other historians, including Peter Burroughs, “Crime and Punishment in the British Army, 1815-1870,” *English Historical Review* 100 (1985): 545-71; E. E. Steiner, “Separating the Soldier from the Citizen: Ideology and Criticism of Corporal Punishment in the British Armies, 1790-1815,” *Social History* (1983): 19-35; For a discussion of this shift more

perceptions of soldiers in the post-war period, away from fear and loathing towards “a newly found regard for the soldier as a national hero.”<sup>55</sup> Thus, rather than blame soldiers’ brutishness and drunkenness on racial predisposition or socioeconomic status, as had been done in the past, reformers increasingly targeted the culture and systems of the army itself, which they felt were at odds with ideals of “sober respectability.”<sup>56</sup> They increasingly viewed the common soldier as a victim of circumstance, rather than an inevitable dreg, drunkard or criminal. In the words of one 1835 commentator, the real concern was “defects extraneous to the genuine spirit and system of the Army.”<sup>57</sup> Thus reformers felt that even men from “lower-class” or Irish backgrounds could be rehabilitated into productive, respectable soldiers, by reforming the system. *USJ* contributors such as O.C. Proteus optimistically wondered, “what a different being [the common soldier] would become, what might not be expected of him, if constantly in his sober senses; since even now his conduct is undoubtedly above par, as regards the class of persons whence he is originally drawn.”<sup>58</sup>

Contributors to *USJ* proposed a variety of reforms intended to curb drunkenness and improve the moral character of enlisted soldiers, past, present and future. The most common

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generally, see Peter Burroughs, “The Human Cost of Imperial Defence in the Early Victorian Age,” *Victorian Studies* 24, no. 1 (Autumn, 1980), 8-9.

<sup>55</sup> Neil Ramsey, “‘A Real English Soldier’: Suffering, Manliness and Class in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Soldiers’ Tale,” in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men of Arms*, eds. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 136.

<sup>56</sup> Although many still saw class (and race) as a contributing factor, for example: Dr. Fergusson noted that one need only “Vide the gin palaces of our cities, the bane of all that portion of the population out of which our armies are formed,” to find the source of “national infamy, mutiny, madness, murder, suicide, crime in every revolting shape.” Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence,” 241.

<sup>57</sup> Anonymous, “The United Service in 1835,” 5.

<sup>58</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional Discipline,” 413.



suggestion was that savings banks be established for the men.<sup>59</sup> Contributors argued that without any adequate means to save their money, soldiers were all but forced to spend it on consumable goods like alcohol. If soldiers were given the opportunity to safely and reliably save their pay, however, it was suggested they would do so. Furthermore, contributors argued that better savings and pensions plans would attract “a better class of young men” as recruits, induce a “more respectable class of the population to enter the army,” and produce more “respectable” veteran-settlers, who would go on to be productive members of society.<sup>60</sup> It was hoped that these men would not only come to embody desired masculine values, but that they would also go on to transmit those values to others in later life. As reformers watched large numbers of veterans re-integrate into civilian society in the post-war period (for example, the 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which discharged 115 men to remain in Upper Canada as settlers when re-deploying to England in 1815)<sup>61</sup>, they recognized that the questioned moral character of these men could potentially disrupt the idyllic image of society they were trying to create. Burroughs notes that proposals to establish savings banks initially met with much resistance, as “the formation of societies within regiments, whether for savings, temperance or charitable

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<sup>59</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional Discipline,” 413; H. B., “Suggestions for the Encouragement,” 403-404; E. H., “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” 254; Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy,” 386; For an in-depth discussion of the adoption of savings banks in the army, see Peter Burroughs, “Promoting Thrift, Sobriety and Discipline in the British Army: The Establishment of Military Savings Banks,” *Histoire Sociale – Social History* 14, no. 28 (Nov., 1981): 323-337.

<sup>60</sup> E., “Fines for Drunkenness in the Army,” 250; Dr. William Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy of Intemperance in the United Service,” *The United Service Journal* (1835) no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1835), 386-387; see also Anonymous, “The United Service in 1835,” 5; H. B., “Suggestions for the Encouragement,” 406.

<sup>61</sup> Brown, “British Regiments and the Men Who Led Them 1793-1815 – 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot,” *Military Subjects: Organization, Strategy & Tactics, The Napoleon Series* (Accessed May 2nd, 2019).

[https://www.napoleon-series.org/military-info/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c\\_InfantryregimentsIntro.html](https://www.napoleon-series.org/military-info/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c_InfantryregimentsIntro.html)

purposes, was anathema to senior officers in the Wellingtonian army,” but by the 1840s they were widely established nonetheless.<sup>62</sup>

Reformers and contributors to *USJ* proposed a number of other changes as well, again designed to improve the moral character of soldiers and curb drunkenness. One anonymous contributor, for example, suggested that the men be permitted to drink during a certain period of the day, such as at military tattoos and when off duty, in the hopes that soldiers would then confine their drinking to those recreational hours.<sup>63</sup> They argued that this practice would result in fewer courts-martial for drunkenness, which cast shame upon the army and harmed the reputation of the nation as a whole.<sup>64</sup> Dr. Fergusson lamented in an 1835 issue of *USJ*, that the “flagrancy of drunkenness” exhibited by soldiers in the late war, recorded for all time in the General Orders through the process of General Courts-Martial, had irreprovably “stained their country’s fame.”<sup>65</sup> Other contributors, such as H. B., suggested that soldiers be provided with reading-rooms, gymnastics apparatus, rackets, and other amusements for their recreation in order to divert them from idleness, which, he felt, led to excessive drinking.<sup>66</sup> Yet others advocated imposing fines on offenders, arguing that only by “depriving the soldier of the means of indulging in this vicious propensity, a guarantee, to a certain extent, will be offered for his better behaviour [...] Touch a soldier’s pocket, and the effect will be more satisfactory

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<sup>62</sup> Burroughs, “Promoting Thrift, Sobriety and Discipline,” 327, 336.

<sup>63</sup> Anonymous, “The United Service in 1835,” 11.

<sup>64</sup> Anonymous, “The United Service in 1835,” 11.

<sup>65</sup> He recommended that “above all, let us call upon our rulers to expunge for ever so foul a stain from the national records, and in the practice of a wiser code to efface, in as far as it may be possible, the recollection of our degradation, our errors, and our crimes.” Dr. Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence,” 236, 241.

<sup>66</sup> H. B., “Suggestions for the Encouragement,” 405.

than marking his back with stripes.”<sup>67</sup> The contributor O.C. Proteus argued that the forfeiture of pay collected as punishment for habitual drunkenness should furthermore be given to sober and well behaved soldiers, who had to pick up the slack for the drunkards.<sup>68</sup> They further recommended doing so publicly, on parade, in order to humiliate offenders, and communicate this masculine ideal to the entire corps of men.<sup>69</sup> Contributors felt that by these means, “the character of the soldiery [would be] improved,” and “corporal punishment,” another potential threat to the nation’s newly desired “respectable” and civilized image, “might be all but abolished.”<sup>70</sup>

Any reforms which targeted the rum ration (at least that given to White soldiers), however, met with significant resistance. Dr. Fergusson, speaking of his station in the West Indies in 1815, noted that despite the war winding down, and even though their supply of rum had become contaminated, “the time had not arrived for advocating the total withdrawal of what the White troops from long habit had considered their right.”<sup>71</sup> He noted that “the young black troops were saved from the contamination,” however, “by the cheap substitution of sugar or syrup and water (to them a most delightful and wholesome beverage) in place of rum.”<sup>72</sup> In this instance, the Black soldiers had had their rum ration discontinued, or rather substituted, but the White troops had not. This perceived and often realized White masculine “right to

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<sup>67</sup> The money collected, this author suggested, could be donated to “the Hospital, Regimental School, or some charitable fund for soldiers’ widows.” E., “Fines for Drunkenness in the Army,” 544.

<sup>68</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional,” 414.

<sup>69</sup> O. C. Proteus, “Intemperance and Correctional,” 414.

<sup>70</sup> E., “Fines for Drunkenness in the Army,” 250.

<sup>71</sup> Dr. Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence,” 238; See also Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 15.

<sup>72</sup> Dr. Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence,” 238.

drink” signified that these men occupied an elevated place in both the gendered hierarchy (as women were barred from service, and this was viewed a soldiers’ right), but also in a racialized colonial hierarchy. White male military authorities, such as Fergusson, who were often living in close contact with peoples of colour while serving in the colonies, endeavoured to maintain this rigid racial hierarchy, and feared that discontinuing the rum ration of White soldiers would disrupt this. Fergusson, for one, was unwilling to do so, even though he lamented that as a result, “drunkenness, with all that it brings in its train, notwithstanding every exposure and remonstrance that could be made, reigned paramount.”<sup>73</sup>

Military medical authorities also felt that there was a legitimate need for European troops in colonial postings to continue to receive liquor for their health. Soldiers stationed in the West Indies or the Canadas, were regarded as (and indeed often were) particularly susceptible to disease, and (as noted in Chapter 3) it was thought that the regular consumption of spirituous liquors fortified men’s bodies against contracting these climate-based illnesses. Dr. Fergusson, for example, writing in 1835, readily admitted that “the soldier in the bivouac, who, even after victory, must often lie on the cold ground, without food or shelter, does require, if he can get it, a ration of spirits.”<sup>74</sup> Consequently, even after the rum ration was discontinued in the Canadas by General Order on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1815, it continued to be granted “on particular occasions on the special sanction of General Officers commanding Stations and Brigades.”<sup>75</sup> Rum was still given regularly to troops on fatigue, to those serving in inclement conditions,

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<sup>73</sup> Dr. Fergusson, “Remarks on the Prevalence,” 238.

<sup>74</sup> Dr. Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy,” 386.

<sup>75</sup> “General Order. March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1815,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, Part II, 704-706.

and on other exceptional occasions.<sup>76</sup> One contributor to *USJ*, E. H., who described himself as “an old Captain,” recognized that this argument, that “when soldiers are exposed to wet and cold weather, it is then necessary for them to use ardent spirits,” served as a significant impediment “against the formation of temperance societies in the army,” at least initially.<sup>77</sup>

This once commonly held perception increasingly came into conflict, however, with prevailing temperance ideologies. Temperance advocates (both civilian and military) continued to view fermented liquors such as beer and wine as healthful – if consumed in moderation – but ardent or distilled spirits such as rum and whiskey, which made up a soldiers’ liquor ration, were increasingly regarded as potentially harmful, and readily associated with un-manly drunkenness.<sup>78</sup> As Dr. Fergusson explained in an 1835 report in *USJ*, “without spirits, fermented liquors will rarely make him a drunkard or impair the man’s bodily powers.”<sup>79</sup> “From beer, then,” he concluded, “the soldiers need not be debarred.”<sup>80</sup> Upon reaching a “frenzy of drunkenness” from spirits, however, Fergusson warned that “there is no crime he would not commit, no abomination he would not practise for its gratification [...] He would drink although the king of terrors stared him in the face; and rather than go without it,

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<sup>76</sup> Carol M. Whitfield, *Tommy Atkins: The British Soldier in Canada, 1759-1870* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Environment Canada, 1981), 43-44.

<sup>77</sup> E. H., “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” 255.

<sup>78</sup> Lafferty, “The Vice of a Cold Climate,” 25; Heron, *Booze*, 53.

<sup>79</sup> Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy”, 385.

<sup>80</sup> Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy”, 385.

he would take that drink out of a jakes<sup>81</sup>, or from the most disgusting vehicles human imagination can conceive.”<sup>82</sup>

By the 1830s and 40s, *USJ* contributors such as E. H. actively refuted the aforementioned argument commonly presented in favour of maintaining the rum ration – that it was necessary for soldiers’ health – and directed those who presented such an argument to:

Make themselves acquainted with the opinion of medical men on the subject [...] that the use of spirits is unnecessary in enabling the constitution to withstand the vicissitudes of weather. If a stimulus is required, hot coffee or tea, or any other of the natural stimulants which are in common use, are proved to be quite as efficacious, without leading to that uncomfortable reaction which is experienced after drinking spirits.<sup>83</sup>

Evidently, those in positions of authority agreed with him. In 1830, the issuance of rum to soldiers across the empire was officially terminated.<sup>84</sup> Ten years later, another contributor, Colonel Maurice Firebrace, acknowledged that drunkenness, the “most prevailing sin of the British Army,” had “nearly been got the better of by increasing the number of the soldier’s daily meals, giving him exercise for his body and mind, and paying him his copper balance every day in place of a monthly settlement.”<sup>85</sup> But in a reference to Macbeth, he reminded readers that “we have scotched the snake, not killed it.”<sup>86</sup> Drunkenness continued to be a problem in the British army, and in the Canadas especially, throughout the 1840s and 50s, and

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<sup>81</sup> A “jakes” is an outdoor toilet or privy.

<sup>82</sup> Fergusson alludes here to an instance of soldiers drinking embalming fluid out of a corpse, as well as consuming “the coarsest surgical medicaments and nauseous drugs,” stolen from his supply. Fergusson, “Suggestions for the Remedy”, 385.

<sup>83</sup> E. H., “Suggestions for Promoting Sobriety in the Army,” 255.

<sup>84</sup> Whitfield, 44.

<sup>85</sup> Colonel Firebrace, “Punishments and Rewards, with a Word on Decorations,” *The United Service Journal* (1845) no. 3. (London: H. Colburn, 1845), 76.

<sup>86</sup> From Macbeth, meaning roughly we have solved one problem, but still have threats to face. Colonel Firebrace, “Punishments and Rewards, with a Word on Decorations,” 76.

even into the twentieth century.<sup>87</sup> Clearly there were still some soldiers who rejected the military's new ethos of "sober respectability," despite its growing influence upon constructions of martial masculinity.

### Gentlemen-Officers

The post-war period also saw significant changes to definitions of martial masculinity for officers. The gentleman-officer tradition did continue, with officers still largely drawn from the upper classes, and gentlemanliness did continue to denote high birth, breeding, and education.<sup>88</sup> Historian Edward Spiers notes that members of the gentry and aristocracy continued to make up the bulk of the officer corps because they had greater access to formal military education, which was increasingly a prime requisite for officers.<sup>89</sup> But how, or rather whether, a man *earned* his commission gained greater importance. Veteran officers who had earned their promotions on the battlefield (or who were deserving but unable to afford a promotion) looked down upon officers of peacetime who had secured their advancement by purchase and influence alone, and especially those who held their commission like a conspicuous commodity, trading upon unearned social capital.<sup>90</sup> Richardson spoke of these

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<sup>87</sup> Burroughs, "Crime and Punishment," 556; Elinor K. Senior, *British Regulars in Montreal, An Imperial Garrison, 1832-1854* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981), 147; See also, Wilson, "Booze," 1-36.

<sup>88</sup> John Tosh, "Gentlemanly Politeness and Manly Simplicity in Victorian England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* vol. 12 (2002), 458.

<sup>89</sup> Spiers, *The Army and Society*, 1.

<sup>90</sup> For many officers, a commission was a status symbol, and indeed it could be traded like a commodity. Officers seeking to switch regiments – often in pursuit of more prestigious (or less dangerous) postings – could sell out of one regiment and buy into another (providing the position was offered to them). The state charged buyer's and seller's premiums, but the transaction was largely between the two officers in question. Illegal over-regulation payments were common. When an officer retired, the sale of his commission provided a nice retirement fund, and absolved the army from the responsibility of providing a pension. For an in-depth

‘new military men’ with contempt; men whose chief object was “not to seek laurels for themselves, but to compliment each other on the gallant deeds performed by their regiments long before they were born, or, at least, out of leading-strings; and to assume a credit for these deeds to themselves.”<sup>91</sup>

In Peninsular War veteran David Roberts’ popular post-war satirical poem, *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome*, the newly desired martial masculine image is clearly revealed, through a juxtaposition of two kinds of military officers: The hard-fighting, capable man of merit who earned (although did not necessarily receive) his promotion, and the leisure-loving glory-hog, who purchased or was granted his commission undeservedly, and accepted praise for deeds not his own.<sup>92</sup> Roberts’ protagonist, Johnny Newcome,<sup>93</sup> meant to represent the everyman soldier, takes a turn playing each of these exaggerated extremes. In the first tale, he performs gallantly in battle as a young subaltern but receives no recognition. When Johnny finally gets his promotion, it is purchased by his wealthy father, rather than given as reward for his merits. Roberts jokes that:

“Young John was well aware to what extent  
To purchase fame a golden guinea went;  
At all the Shops where characters were sold,  
He could be made a Hero for his gold.”<sup>94</sup>

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discussion of the commission system, see Anthony Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army, 1660-1871* (Royal Historical Society, 1980); Alan James Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-63* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1985), 90-91; Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 213-221; See also Kennedy, “John Bull into Battle,” 128-131.

<sup>91</sup> Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada*, 75-77.

<sup>92</sup> David Roberts, *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome. With an Account of his Campaign on the Peninsula and in Pall Mall* (London: Methuen and Co., [1816] 1904. Project Gutenberg eBook #44201, 2013).

<sup>93</sup> British slang for a raw recruit.

<sup>94</sup> Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, 9.



In the sequel, armed with his new promotion, Johnny passes the bulk of his time dining, drinking, and taking credit for the accomplishments of others, occasionally getting lucky on the battlefield and being granted further promotions. With this juxtaposition, Roberts creates sympathy for the former brand of officer, the unheralded subaltern who served gallantly, and mocks the latter. The accompanying footnotes make Roberts' feelings on the topic clear. He writes that "a Badge of Merit is a most honourable Distinction, as the reward of Merit and Gallant achievement," but that "the conferring either Title, or Badge on men who have lolled away their time in Ease, and Affluence, is ridiculous, and truly absurd."<sup>95</sup>

Comments from the Major John Mitchell in the 1836 issue of *USJ* further reveal an expressed desire for meritorious, capable officers, and considerable ire towards men who had received their position through a mixture of purchase and political influence.<sup>96</sup> Writing in response to disparaging comments from Colonel Napier regarding the loyalty and capability of the troops who had served in the Americas during the late war, Mitchell argued that the fault lay instead with those officers (like Napier) "who had sufficient money to purchase commissions and promotion, or interest enough to obtain such good things without purchase," but whose "knowledge and capabilities [...] were things that nobody inquired about."<sup>97</sup> Mitchell, and fellow contributor Colonel Maurice Firebrace were vocal advocates of reforming the purchase system, and much of the debate on the topic (prior to the Crimean War) played

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<sup>95</sup> Roberts, *The Military Adventures*, fn. 108.

<sup>96</sup> Major J. Mitchell, "The British Troops in America," *The United Service Journal* (1836) no. 1. (London: H. Colburn, 1836).

<sup>97</sup> Mitchell, "The British Troops in America," 85.

out in the pages of *USJ*.<sup>98</sup> Mitchell complained that “the British system of promotion, with which wealth and influence are everything, and merit nothing, was exposed during the American contest, in all its blood-stained hideousness,” as it resulted in the armies of England being led by men who were ignorant of their strengths and weaknesses, and easily swayed by the political and economic interests of their patrons.<sup>99</sup> Such poor leadership, he argued, “fell, like a death-bearing pestilence, on the ranks of the army – shone out in all its poor and paltry littleness.”<sup>100</sup> In Mitchell’s view, as in Roberts’ and many other officers, promotions, and the martial masculine honour which accompanied them, were to be earned by hard-work and meritorious conduct in battle. Officers who did so otherwise were sycophants, inferior warriors, and lesser men.

What constituted appropriate gentlemanly behaviour was also contested in the post-war period, specifically with regards to alcohol consumption. As noted, the new British middle-class, and even members of the lesser aristocracy increasingly regarded lifestyles of leisure and luxury, polite socialization, and activities such as heavy-drinking, as scandalous rather than manly.<sup>101</sup> Historian John Tosh notes that British gentlemen in the post-war period were increasingly judged for their restraint, hard-work, and morality, rather than their capacity for polite social performance.<sup>102</sup> Historian Julia Roberts highlights a similar trend in post-war Upper Canada. She argues that existing gentlemanly behaviours, such as socializing and

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<sup>98</sup> Bruce, *The Purchase System*, 98-99.

<sup>99</sup> Mitchell, “The British Troops in America,” 92.

<sup>100</sup> Mitchell, “The British Troops in America,” 92.

<sup>101</sup> Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain*, 221; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 21-22; See also, Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 338.

<sup>102</sup> Tosh, “Gentlemanly Politeness,” 458.

playing billiards in the tavern, came into conflict with the ideal masculine type envisaged by many women, “the domesticated, hard-working, ‘Christian gentlemen,’ [...] who they could trust emotionally and financially.”<sup>103</sup> Roberts notes that while some gentlemen, such as her subject Harry Jones, continued to ascribe to older ideals of “gentlemanliness” – and enjoyed drinking and playing billiards with off-duty officers – they simultaneously expressed concern about these same habits, revealing a larger social shift.<sup>104</sup> Clearly middle-class and temperance ideologies were having an influence upon ideals of gentlemanly masculinity, which, of course, also impacted gentlemen-officers. For example, historian Cecilia Morgan notes that in post-war Upper Canada, the martial masculine ideal shifted towards the “Christian soldier” – a courageous soldier who was willing to sacrifice for his country, and whom “epitomized a morality expressed both in the domestic realm and on the battlefield.”<sup>105</sup>

Richardson’s post-war writings reveal this significant shift in conceptions of gentlemanly martial masculinity within the army. He highlights, as in wartime, a veneration of warrior-like hardiness, fraternity, honour, and devotion to the cause as desirable martial traits, but also scandalizes many elements of gentlemanly polite socialization, including the conspicuous consumption of fine wine. For example, Richardson remarked that:

When I first entered the Army upwards of five and twenty years ago, the soldier was looked upon as the hardy veteran, and not in the manner in which he is now regarded. There was the same attention to his comfort, but not to his luxurious ease – there was the same *esprit de corps*, but it was one of generous emulation in the field, nor was there ever such a thing dreamt of as the Soldiers of one Regiment giving ‘a sumptuous and distinguished entertainment’ to the soldiers of another,

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<sup>103</sup> Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 135.

<sup>104</sup> For a discussion of Jones and “his cronies,” see Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 120-137.

<sup>105</sup> Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue,” 312.

and drinking, over ‘wines of the choicest Kind,’ [...] followed by the farce of the publicity of the ‘festive entertainment’ [their misplaced orgies] in the daily papers, as if the public could be expected to feel the slightest interest in their ‘High life below stairs’ Bacchanalian proceedings!<sup>106</sup>

Richardson frames post-war efforts to improve the situation of the common soldier – the attention paid “to his luxurious ease” – as rendering these new soldiers weak, or less hardy than men of his era. The officers were further emasculated, in Richardson’s characterization, by their scandalous lifestyles of leisure and luxury, including off-hours socializing with their peers and conspicuous consumption of wine. His comment about “High life below stairs” is a reference to the popular 1819 Cruikshank satirical print of the same name (Figure 5), which depicts the Prince Regent and his private secretary General Benjamin Bloomfield getting problematically drunk (like the “lower classes”), while their servants, hidden in the background, watch the debauchery:

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<sup>106</sup> The sections in brackets show Richardson’s updated changes in *Eight Years in Canada*. Richardson, “On Desertion in Canada,” in Morley, 122.



Figure 5: General Bloomfield and the Prince Regent are in the foreground, clearly intoxicated and drinking heavily. In the background, the cook and other servants look on with amusement.

This was a reversal of the idea presented in James Townley’s popular eighteenth-century comedic play *High Life Below Stairs*, in which a rich White landowner looks in on the behaviour of his servants while away, finding them drunk, and foolishly failing to emulate their social betters. Although Richardson claimed that never was “such a thing dreamt of” in his time as officers getting drunk or treating each other to fine wines, this was (as noted in Chapter Two), not uncommon behaviour for officers stationed in the Canadas during the war. Dunlop, for example, fondly recalled being treated to what could be called a ‘sumptuous and distinguished entertainment’ by two regiments “formed of the gentlemen of Montreal,” who presented for his consumption, “casks and hampers of the choicest wines,” amongst other

luxurious viands.<sup>107</sup> Richardson himself was, in the words of his biographer Alexander Casselman, “by no means puritanical [...] In complete accord with the customs of the times among the circle in which he moved in his palmy days, he took his glass of wine.”<sup>108</sup> But, in accordance with the customs of the times in the 1840s, it seems that Richardson’s views on the topic had changed.

Other veterans, however, such as Dunlop, resisted change, and continued to regard heavy-drinking (including port and claret wine), and polite socialization as perfectly (gentle)manly behaviour. Captain R. Langslow of the East India Company, for example, on a post-war 1817 trip to Newark, noted in his journal that he “dined with the mess of the 70th Regt. Port and claret – in profusion. They live well and have a good mess.”<sup>109</sup> Even as late as the 1830s or 40s, Dunlop recalled a similar visit to Kingston, in which he:

Had the pleasure of dining with the agreeable family of the Town Major Fitzgerald, an old soldier who had seen much service, and who well knew how to exercise the hospitality of ‘auld lang syne.’ Dearly, and with the ineffable gusto of a connoisseur, did he love his glass of port wine, and nothing disconcerted him so much as to see his guest commit the sin of neglecting to put the stopper in the decanter when the wine remained with him.<sup>110</sup>

While some veterans, such as Richardson, may have come to regard this behaviour as scandalous and unmanly, there were clearly still some gentleman-officers who had not changed with the times. Their resistance to the adoption of new gentlemanly and martial masculine ideals demonstrates a continuity of wartime masculine ideals, but also shows that these ideals

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<sup>107</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 15-16.

<sup>108</sup> Casselman, ed., *Richardson’s War of 1812*, xlv.

<sup>109</sup> Capt. R. Langslow, “Journal, 1817,” in *Reminiscences of Niagara*, ed. Janet Carnochan (Publications of the Niagara Historical Society, 11. Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Historical Society, 1904), 29.

<sup>110</sup> Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada*, 70.

were strongly contested by various parties, both within and outside of the military. It also suggests that veterans, on account of their wartime service and post-war status as heroes (to varying degrees), had a significant amount of power to define martial masculine ideals in the post-war period.

### Warrior Veterans

“Warrior” martial manliness in the post-war period, both in the Canadas and Britain, was largely defined by loyal wartime service.<sup>111</sup> In the eyes of veterans, only those men who fought, suffered, and sacrificed for their country (or colony) could call themselves true warriors. Men such as the martyred Isaac Brock, who was remembered in the 1840s as possessing a “peculiarly commanding and soldierlike appearance,—a generous, frank, and manly bearing,—and, above all, an entire devotion to his country,” came to embody martial masculinity.<sup>112</sup> Veterans turned writers, such as Richardson, played a key role in defining this post-war martial masculine ideal. Their romanticized wartime narratives, widely distributed in the expanding post-war print culture (which included military publications such as *USJ*), glamourized the patriotic wartime service of those who had served, imbuing them with desired martial masculine attributes.<sup>113</sup> Richardson, for example, praised the gallantry and stature of his comrades in the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment, in an 1846 article in *USJ*, which had come out the prior

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<sup>111</sup> For a discussion of loyalty as central to post-war constructions of masculinity, see Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue,” 418.

<sup>112</sup> Chief Justice Robinson, quoted in Ferdinand Brock Tupper, ed., *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1845), n.p.

<sup>113</sup> Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760–1900: Bodies, Emotion, and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 101; Ramsey, “A Real English Soldier,” 136-137.

year.<sup>114</sup> He described them as “tall, well-built, fearless, careless, full of life, and activity, and union – eager ever to come in contact with the enemy – they were the impersonations of the excellence of the British soldier; and many a handsome cheek and manly form meets my eye in imagination.”<sup>115</sup> He further praised the “manliness and elegance” of the officers, including the, “iron-framed and soldier-like Muir, the handsome O’Keefe, the elegant Bernard [...] the tall and martial Shortt, Bullock, and Gordon, the fiery and impulsive Chambers, [...] and some half dozen others.”<sup>116</sup> Through Richardson’s descriptions, we see that traits such as physical strength and fortitude continued to be seen as particularly manly. But also, we see that even those veterans who lacked in these areas were made manly by virtue of their service. Richardson heaped similar praise on “the almost effeminate Clemow, who had, from his personal delicacy, obtained the soubriquet of Jemmy Jessamy, and yet was covered by honourable wounds in the course of the war.”<sup>117</sup> For Richardson, and likely many of his readers, the veterans in these narratives embodied true martial masculinity.

In the eyes of veterans such as Richardson, it was only in war that soldiers could prove themselves and achieve martial manhood. War and peace, Richardson argued, necessarily rendered “the character of the Soldier [...] dissimilar.”<sup>118</sup> In war, he felt that the mind and body

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<sup>114</sup> Which was meant to a rebuttal of sorts to Tupper’s *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Isaac Brock*. He expressed distaste for Tupper’s characterizations of the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment, specifically his inclusion of a letter from Brock which described the 41<sup>st</sup> as “wretchedly officered,” feeling that it was taken out of context, and that it slandered the reputation of the men who had served.

<sup>115</sup> [John Richardson], “Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment,” *The United Service Journal* (1846) no. 1 (London: H. Colburn, 1846), 446.

<sup>116</sup> Richardson, “Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment,” 446.

<sup>117</sup> Richardson, “Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Regiment,” 446; For a discussion of war wounds, see Jennine Hurl-Eamon, *Marriage and the British Army in the Long Eighteenth Century: The Girl I Left Behind Me*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 90.

<sup>118</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 123.



were actively engaged, and that men were infused with the “vigor of action [...] by a constant series of exciting scenes in which he finds himself an important actor.”<sup>119</sup> The soldier played his part in earning victory for the nation as a whole, and found himself “respected in proportion to the Service he is enabled to render to her – no matter how humble the mode – and it is his pride to know that when a Nations praise goes forth in thanks for an important victory in which he has borne a share, he is one of those to whom that homage is offered.”<sup>120</sup> For Richardson, only wartime service offered a soldier the opportunity to earn honour and glory for his nation, and thusly prove himself. Colonel Firebrace expressed similar sentiments in an 1845 issue of *USJ*. He argued that:

There never was yet a young soldier who did not indulge in day-dreams of glory, flattering to his personal vanity, as having the chance of performing some grand exploit that will make his name famous [...] even in the torments of the drill, he begins to think, in the words of the song, - ‘That perhaps a recruit / Might happen to shoot / Great General Buonaparte.’<sup>121</sup>

Both men felt that only war could satiate youthful male appetites for excitement, danger, and adventure, and only war provided an opportunity to achieve that vaunted status of martial (and national) hero. Richardson argued that in times of peace, “no such state of honorable excitement exists,” and with “nothing to animate the mind, or to excite the attention,” the soldiers’ life becomes like “that of a slave” – a particularly significant comparison in the North American context, where almost all forms of White Anglo-American masculinity celebrated personal independence as a core value.<sup>122</sup> Firebrace similarly noted that “all these motives and

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<sup>119</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 123.

<sup>120</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 123.

<sup>121</sup> Colonel Firebrace, “Punishments and Rewards,” 75.

<sup>122</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 123-124.

means of excitement are entirely lost in peace. A man has then no other prospect in view than to pass four-fifths of his life in distant and sometimes unhealthy colonies, performing his daily duties without change or variety; little to excite him and still less to look forward to.”<sup>123</sup> In the eyes of veterans, peacetime offered no opportunity to achieve martial manhood, and its duties rendered men something less than men. Tosh notes that gentlemen-officers still engaged in hunting, dueling, or rough sport in times of peace, but that ultimately these were regarded as inferior tests of manhood.<sup>124</sup> There were no real-life opportunities for heroism, and so this was relegated to the realm of fantasy, and sought vicariously in the wartime accounts of veterans.

Veterans argued that peacetime conditions and attempts to reform soldiers’ lifestyles rendered this new breed of military men weak. Richardson, for example, highlighted that soldiers in peacetime lived in relative ease compared to their wartime counterparts. He boasted that in his era, “a rasher of Pork, a basin of pease soup, with bread and a moderate portion of good rum, constituted the substantial fare of the men, in which their Officers not unfrequently partook, and this with a relish as keen as nay which is now produced at the sight of what are termed ‘the most luxurious viands.’”<sup>125</sup> Richardson evoked the wartime notion that hard conditions produced hard men, and suggested that soldiers of peacetime had been corrupted by refinement. This “softness” and desire for a life of ease, he argued, led men to desert the army.

Desertion was the ultimate act of disloyalty, and the opposite of dutiful service. In assigning motives for the high numbers of army deserters in the Canadas between 1815 to

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<sup>123</sup> Colonel Firebrace, “Punishments and Rewards,” 75.

<sup>124</sup> Tosh, “The Old Adam and the New Man,” 222.

<sup>125</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion in Canada,” in Morley, 122-123.

1838, Richardson noted that “the first of these, is the addiction to drunkenness which pervades almost all classes of people, and is the besetting sin of the country [...] and which naturally extends itself to the idle Soldiery, who are invited to spend their money, and undermine their health and principles in brutal intoxication.”<sup>126</sup> He noted that even the proud men of the Canadian Rifles were sometimes driven to desertion by “a moment of inebriety, to which the Soldier is so unhappily led in this country, not more from inclination than example.”<sup>127</sup> By suggesting that soldiers of peacetime were more prone to desert, and that they were more prone to drunkenness, Richardson effectively denied them access to post-war constructions of martial masculinity rooted in patriotic loyalty (and sobriety).

In comparison, he cast wartime veterans as particularly loyal and manly, by claiming that during the war “desertion from his colors was, at that period, almost unknown” (which, as we know from Courts-Martial records, was not the case).<sup>128</sup> In war, Richardson argued, “as long as the soldier got his food regularly, and his pay – not at too long intervals – he thought only of being in the presence of the enemy [...] He knew his duties, and he performed them with an alacrity suited to the occasion.”<sup>129</sup> But Richardson imbued his fellow veterans with a level of patriotic loyalty which was arguably undeserved. Wartime records of General Courts-Martial for desertion reveal that a significant number of soldiers stationed in the Canadas did desert during the war, some multiple times.<sup>130</sup> Nonetheless, in Richardson’s revisionist account

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<sup>126</sup> Richardson, *Eight Years in Canada*, 78; Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 127.

<sup>127</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion,” in Morley, 134-135.

<sup>128</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion in Canada,” in Morley, 122-123.

<sup>129</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion in Canada,” in Morley, 122-123.

<sup>130</sup> For examples, see “General Orders. Montreal. 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1812; 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1812,” “General Orders. Montreal. 27<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1812; 29<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1812,” “General Orders. Quebec. 24<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1812; 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1813,” in *Select British*

of the war, veterans such as himself were portrayed as particularly dutiful, dedicated, and loyal, in keeping with post-war (and his own) understandings of martial masculinity. They were further remembered as men of strong moral character, and temperate drinking habits, who “enjoyed the intervening hours, in a spirit which could leave no cause for lament that he had chosen the noble profession of a Soldier.”<sup>131</sup>

Dunlop, on the other hand, saw new military men as less manly than wartime veterans precisely because of their temperate drinking habits. His recollection, contrary to Richardson’s, was that men of their era, true warriors, did drink hard, and that this in-part defined them as martial men. Dunlop recalled that he and his fellow messmates, whom he described as “a fine jovial unsophisticated set of ‘wild tremendous Irishmen’”:

Rarely went to bed without a respectable quorum of them getting, a leetle to the lee side of sobriety. ‘Tempora mutantur,’ says Horace, but I very much doubt if ‘nos’\* (that is such as are alive of ‘nos’) ‘mutamur in illis.’<sup>132</sup>

\*The Army is very different from what it was in my day, sadly changed indeed! It will hardly be believed, but I have dined with officers who, after drinking a few glasses of wine, called for their coffee. If Waterloo was to fight over again, no rational man can suppose that we would gain it after such symptoms of degeneracy. Such lady-like gentlemen would certainly take out vinaigrettes and scream at a charge of the Old Guard, and be horrified at the sight of a set of grim-looking Frenchmen, all grin and gash, whisker and moustache.<sup>133</sup>

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*Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, vol. I, ed. William Wood (Publications of the Champlain Society, 13; Toronto: Champlain Society, 1920), 327-329, 338-339, 341-342; “General Order. Kingston, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. II, 476-477; “General Order. Kingston. 21<sup>st</sup> Jun. 1813,” “General Order. Montreal. 8<sup>th</sup> Jun. 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, vol. III, pt. II, 676-678, 696-701; “General Order. Kingston, Oct. 15, 1814,” *British Military and Naval Records* (RG 8, C Series), Vol. 166 (1814-1815) (Library and Archives Canada: Mikan record: 105012, Microform: c-2774), 145.

<sup>131</sup> Richardson, “On Desertion in Canada,” in Morley, 122-123.

<sup>132</sup> “tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis” roughly translates to “the times change, and we change with them.”

<sup>133</sup> Dunlop, *Recollections*, 27-28.

Times had indeed changed by the 1840s, in the wake of increased professionalization, sweeping army reforms, the rise of temperance, and of the middle class. But Dunlop argued that the (surviving) veterans of the war, like himself, had not changed with them. For them, hard-drinking, social drinking, and successful drinking, continued to act as a barometer of martial manliness. Real officers, real soldiers, real men, drank heavily, and bore the effects well. The new generation of military men, in Dunlop's view, were made effeminate, or "lady-like," and poor warriors by their temperate habits. His comments highlight that while both the army and concepts of martial masculinity underwent considerable change in the post-war period, many veterans resisted that change, and continued to evoke their own wartime brand of martial masculinity. Although times of war had demanded a unified ideal of martial masculinity, peacetime clearly permitted (and created) the co-existence of multiple, conflicting ideals.

### **Indigenous Allies**

The end of the War of 1812 not only brought about significant changes for the British army and definitions of martial masculinity, it also marked the end of formal military relations with Indigenous peoples in the Canadas. The British Crown abandoned their former allies in order to secure, and later to maintain peace with the United States. Indigenous veterans denounced the army for deserting them.<sup>134</sup> As historian Robert Allen argues, Indigenous

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<sup>134</sup> Robert S. Allen, *The British Indian Department and the Frontier in North America, 1755-1830* (Canadian Historic Sites Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History, 14. Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1975), n.p.; Colin Calloway, *Crown and Calumet: British-Indian Relations, 1783-1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 248-250, 257.

peoples went from “warriors to wards” in the eyes of British-Canadian policy makers, and responsibility for “Indian affairs” transferred from military to civilian authorities.<sup>135</sup> The post-war civilian government, which no longer valued Indigenous peoples as trading partners or military allies, increasingly enacted policies aimed to civilize and Christianize, established reserves and residential schools, and attempted to assimilate Indigenous peoples into White society.<sup>136</sup> But while Indigenous peoples were increasingly forced to conform to White definitions of manhood, they were simultaneously barred from access to the self-defined and defended White right to drink (and a gentleman’s right to drink to excess).

Strict liquor restrictions were imposed upon Indigenous peoples, while “Whites” enjoyed a veritable “right” to drink.<sup>137</sup> Indigenous peoples were inordinately targeted by early temperance movements in Upper Canada, and an *Act to Prevent the Sale of Spirituous Liquor to the Indians* was passed in 1835, followed by another *Act to Prevent the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Indians* in 1840.<sup>138</sup> Both Acts, along with a host of others, would later be consolidated under the *Indian Act* in 1876, which continued to prohibit alcohol sales to

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<sup>135</sup> Robert S. Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies: British Indian Policy in the Defence of Canada, 1774-1815* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 168; See also Robert A. Campbell, “Making Sober Citizens: The Legacy of Indigenous Alcohol Regulation in Canada, 1777-1985,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d’Études Canadiennes* 42, no. 1 (Winter 2008), 106-107; J. R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Native-Newcomer Relations in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018.

<sup>136</sup> Campbell, “Making Sober Citizens,” 117; see also Scott Sheffield, *The Red Man’s on the Warpath: The Image of the “Indian” and the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 4-5.

<sup>137</sup> Julia Roberts, ““A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’: Race and Tavern Space in Upper Canada,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 102, s.2 (July 2021), 436.

<sup>138</sup> F. Laurie Barron, “Alcoholism, Indians and the Anti-Drink Cause in the Protestant Indian Missions of Upper Canada, 1822-1850,” in *As Long as the Sun Shines and the Water Flows: A Reader in Canadian Native Studies*, eds. Ian A. L. Getty and Antoine S. Lussier (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, [1983] 1990), 192, 192-196; Scott Thompson and Gary Genosko, *Punched Drunk: Alcohol, Surveillance and the LCBO, 1927-1975* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2009), 172-173.

Indigenous peoples in Ontario until the 1950s.<sup>139</sup> Widespread prohibition efforts targeting the White settler population would not be enacted until the early 1900s in Canada, and they were repealed in the 1920s. As historian Robert Campbell argues, liquor restrictions, in this way, “helped to define who was an Indian and who was not,” in the mixed post-war society, creating a binary distinction that did not exist in reality.<sup>140</sup> This strengthened the constructed dichotomy between “civilized” and “savage,” which was made increasingly impermeable for Indigenous peoples. As Indigenous peoples were increasingly marginalized, the crucial role which Indigenous warriors had played securing Canada from American invasion, the bravery and martial skill which they had shown, and sacrifices they had made, were either invalidated or forgotten. Indigenous veterans were effectively denied access to post-war constructions of martial masculinity, which were heavily tied to loyalty, service, and sobriety.

Indigenous warriors *had* been recognized by men on the ground, during wartime, as skilled combatants and valuable allies. There are numerous instances of British officers, for example, remarking upon their “courage,” “bravery,” and general martial skill.<sup>141</sup> Even Le Couteur, who frequently disparaged Indigenous warriors in his writings, admitted in June of

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<sup>139</sup> For further discussion, see Thompson and Genosko, *Punched Drunk*, 182-183.

<sup>140</sup> Campbell, “Making Sober Citizens,” 109; see also Heron, *Booze*, 11.

<sup>141</sup> For example, Henry Proctor, “From Procter at Sandwich to Evans at Fort George,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. I, 6-7; Henry Proctor, “From Procter at Sandwich to Sheaffe at Fort George,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 7-9; Henry Proctor, “From Procter at Sandwich to Prevost at Quebec,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 33-37; Edward Baynes, “General Order. Kingston, 28th June, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 167-168; Charles de Salaberry, “From de Salaberry at Chateauguay to de Watteville at Morrison’s,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 387.

1813 that, “most valuable allies they were – no surprises with Nitchie<sup>142</sup> on the lookout.”<sup>143</sup> But, in the post-war memory, these warriors were relegated to a secondary, supporting role, or worse. Le Couteur’s comments in an 1831 issue of *USJ* reflect this shift. He noted that it was “the judicious and firm measures of the gallant Gen. Brock, assisted by the then formidable auxiliary Indian force, which the General well knew how to humour and to wield, [who] saved the Upper Province from being occupied by the enemy in 1812.”<sup>144</sup> His comment, “then formidable,” shows that Indigenous warriors were no longer valued for their martial skill in the post-war period, at least in the minds of British officers. In the minds of British gentlemen, such as John Howison (who traveled through the Canadas between 1818-1820), Indigenous warriors were “feeble & useless allies [...] of little benefit to us during the last war, being under no discipline or subordination; & generally taking to flight at the commencement of an action and returning at its termination, that they might plunder the dead of both armies.”<sup>145</sup> These characterizations from gentlemen and officers reinforced gendered and racial stereotypes deployed by British officers during the war, effectively dismissing the valuable contributions made by Indigenous warriors, and any wartime recognition of their martial skill.

In the Canadas, the important role played by Indigenous warriors was primarily obscured, however, by the post-war writings of prominent Upper Canadians, such as

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<sup>142</sup> Donald Graves explains that “Sago Nitchie,” was a corruption of the Ojibway greeting “Shaygo Niigii,” meaning “Hello friend” or “Hello comrade.” Le Couteur frequently referred to Indigenous allies of the British as “Nitchie” in his writings.

<sup>143</sup> Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 129.

<sup>144</sup> John Le Couteur, “A Winter March in Canada, in 1813,” in *The United Service Journal* (1831) no. 3 (London: Henry Colburn, 1831), 177.

<sup>145</sup> John Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada, Domestic, Local, and Characteristic: To Which are Added, Practical Details for the Information of Emigrants of Every Class; and some Recollections of the United States of America* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, High-Street, 1821), 151.



Richardson, Reverend John Strachan, David Thompson, and Egerton Ryerson, who promoted a “militia myth” in their re-telling of the war.<sup>146</sup> These men suggested, in the words of Ryerson, that it was “the Spartan bands of Canadian Loyalist volunteers, aided by a few hundred English soldiers and civilized Indians,” who had “repelled the Persian thousands of democratic American invaders, and maintained the virgin soil of Canada unpolluted by the foot of the plundering invader.”<sup>147</sup> They argued that it was the manly, patriotic men of the militia who had ‘saved Canada’ from the “barbaric” American invaders, and desired to make this the official narrative of the war. Strachan declared that “it will be told by the future Historian, that the Province of Upper Canada, without the assistance of men or arms, except a handful of regular troops, repelled its invaders, slew or took them all prisoners, and captured from its enemies the greater part of the arms by which it was defended.”<sup>148</sup> Richardson in particular wrote his history of the war to educate the young men of Upper Canada of the “gallantry,” “loyalty,” and “courage” “displayed by their immediate progenitors.”<sup>149</sup> These narratives constructed Canadian militiamen as particularly manly warriors; celebrated their bravery, gallantry, and defense of women and families, and their unwavering loyalty to the Crown, while

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<sup>146</sup> John Strachan, “York, 22d November, 1812. An Exhortation Pronounced after the Sermon, or Rather in Continuation of it, to Induce the Inhabitants to Contribute to the Comfort of the Militia Fighting upon the Lines,” in *The Report of the Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada, with an Appendix and a List of Subscribers and Benefactors*, ed. The Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada (Montreal: William Gray, 1817), 366; David Thompson, *History of the Late War between Great Britain and the United States of America: With a Retrospective View of the Causes from Whence It Originated* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp, [1832] 1966), 262; Egerton Ryerson, *The Loyalists of America and their Times : From 1620 to 1816* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1880), 379; For a secondary source discussion, see Morgan, “Gender, Loyalty and Virtue,” 311-312.

<sup>147</sup> Ryerson, *The Loyalists of America*, 379.

<sup>148</sup> Strachan, “York, 22d November, 1812,” in *The Report of the Loyal and Patriotic Society*, 365.

<sup>149</sup> Richardson, *Richardson’s War of 1812*, 2.

simultaneously obscuring the realities of widespread wartime disloyalty and desertion.<sup>150</sup> These narratives also obscured the contributions of Indigenous veterans, who had fought equally as bravely and gallantly to defend their homeland, but were denied access to post-war constructions of martial masculinity, which were reserved for White veteran-settlers. Several histories of the war have since come to show the important role actually played by Indigenous warriors, but the “militia myth” dominated the post-war British-Canadian mindset of the 1820s, 30s, and 40s.<sup>151</sup>

Indigenous contributions were further obscured in official British accounts of the war, as documented by officers. One of the most prominent examples was in the re-telling of the Battle of Beaver Dams; a relatively minor engagement which catapulted Captain James FitzGibbon (and, much later, Laura Secord) to heroic status in post-war Upper Canada.<sup>152</sup> The official account of the battle, entered into General Orders by then Adjutant-General Edward Baynes, read as such:

The Commander of the Forces has great satisfaction in announcing to the Army that a report has just been received from General Vincent, of a most judicious & spirited exploit achieved by a small Detachment of the 49th Regiment [...] under Lieut'. FitzGibbon, and a band of Indian Warriors — which terminated in the defeat and entire Capture of a considerable detachment of the American Regular Army [...] Lieut'. FitzGibbon on reconnoitering the Enemy's position, and finding him too numerous to oppose with his small force, with great presence of mind kept him in check, while he sent and summoned him to surrender in the name of Major De

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<sup>150</sup> For an analysis of militia desertion rates, parole records, and general wartime disaffection, see George C. Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

<sup>151</sup> Including, most notably, Carl Benn, *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*, (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1998).

<sup>152</sup> Secord would not receive her accolades until the latter half of the nineteenth century, but FitzGibbon, a self-made officer and favourite of Brock, rode this victory to a Captaincy in the Glengarry Light Infantry, and considerable post-war fame in Upper Canada.

Haren, [...] by whose vigorous co-operation, the Capture of the Enemy's Forces [...] was effected on the Field. Not a single British Soldier is reported to have fallen on this occasion.— The Indian Warriors behaved with great steadiness and courage, and His Excellency has great Satisfaction in learning that they conducted themselves with the greatest humanity and forbearance towards the Prisoners, after the Action.<sup>153</sup>

As we can see, the Indigenous warriors present were imbued with certain positive martial masculine qualities – discipline and courage – however, they were simultaneously racialized and othered by the remark that they did not act “inhumanely” towards the prisoners after the action (not-so-subtly suggesting that they were wont to do so). Furthermore, Baynes emphasizes the role played by FitzGibbon and the regulars, while the contributions of the “Indian Warriors” are presented as secondary.

In reality, numerous eye-witness accounts directly contradict this official account of the battle, and instead emphasize the crucial role played by Indigenous warriors. Accounts from Mohawk Chief Major John Norton, Captain Dominique Ducharme, and Colonel William Claus of the Indian Department, all note that the flag of truce was raised before FitzGibbon and his men even arrived.<sup>154</sup> Ducharme notes that “neither Lieutenant FitzGibbon nor Colonel DeHaren took any part in the action. The victory was entirely due to the Indians, who were not only deprived of the booty which had been promised them but of the honour and glory which they had won.”<sup>155</sup> Norton, in later life he was reputed to have said that “the Cognawaga Indians

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<sup>153</sup> Edward Baynes, “General Order. Kingston, 28th June, 1813,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 167-168.

<sup>154</sup> John Norton, and Carl Frederick Klinck and James John Talman, eds. *The Journal of Major John Norton, 1816*. (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1970), 320; Dominique Ducharme, “E12 Dominique Ducharme’s Account of the Battle of Beaver Dam. Lake of Two Mountains, June 5, 1826,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations: A Collection of Documents on the Indian Lands of the Grand River*, Publications of the Champlain Society, Ontario Series: 7, ed. Charles M. Johnston (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1920-1928), 202; William Claus, “E17 Claus’ Military Report. December 4, 1813,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations*, 210.

<sup>155</sup> Ducharme, “E12 Dominique Ducharme’s Account,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations*, 202.

fought the battle, the Mohawks or Six Nations got the plunder, and FitzGibbon got the credit.”<sup>156</sup> Even Claus, who often disagreed with Norton, remarked that “every notice was taken of the Troops and Lieut. Fitzgibbon, and nothing said of the Indians who did *every thing* [sic] [...] the troops always get credit for what is done by the Indians.”<sup>157</sup> While these men may have had a personal interest, given their closer ties to Indigenous allies, the testimony of American Major Isaac Roach, who was taken prisoner at the battle, confirmed that “all this time I saw but one red coat,” and that “the Indians behaved with uncommon bravery.”<sup>158</sup> FitzGibbon himself acquiesced to this version of events in 1818, in a letter to Captain William Kerr of the Indian Department, writing that “not a shot was fired on our side by any but the Indians.”<sup>159</sup> This did little to tamp down his fame in post-war Upper Canada, however, while Indigenous veterans of the battle never received, in the words of Ducharme, their due martial honour and glory. Those present may have recognized Indigenous actions and skills as fundamental to success, but constructions of White martial masculinity relied upon obscuring and othering in official accounts of the war, in order to present British officers as particularly heroic, loyal, and manly.

The maintenance of constructions of “civilized” White masculinity in post-war Upper Canada further relied upon perpetuating racialized stereotypes about Indigenous “savagery”

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<sup>156</sup> William Hamilton Merritt, “Notes by Capt. W. H. Merritt,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, ed. Lieut.-Colonel E. Cruikshank (Welland: Printed at the Tribune Office, 1903), 123.

<sup>157</sup> William Claus, “E17 Claus’ Military Report. December 4, 1813,” in *The Valley of the Six Nations*, 210, 216-218.

<sup>158</sup> Isaac Roach, “From the Journal of Major Isaac Roach, Published in the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, July, 1893,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part II (1813), June to August 1813*, 148.

<sup>159</sup> FitzGibbon to Captain William Kerr, quoted in *Select British Documents*, vol. I, 66.

and “drunkenness.”<sup>160</sup> The myth of the “drunken Indian,” juxtaposed with the “militia myth,” was propagated as a means of validating British paternalism and colonial expansion. Accounts from British officers which confirmed stereotyped preconceptions and seemingly gave evidence to support these racist constructions consequently dominated post-war narratives, while accounts which countered them were ignored. Authors such as Richardson laced their histories of the war, and even fictional accounts set in the time period, with embellished racist tropes.<sup>161</sup> The unmanly “Indian” became the foil for the manly British (or Canadian) soldier.

Worse yet, many of these accounts – particularly accounts of the Battle of Frenchtown – were taken at face value by later historians of the war, dating from the late nineteenth to the twenty-first century.<sup>162</sup> In taking these accounts as fact, and uncritically repeating them in their histories of the war, they have effectively perpetuated racist colonial stereotypes about Indigenous peoples for hundreds of years. Even the current *Canadian Encyclopedia* entry for the aforementioned Battle of Frenchtown, or “River Raisin Massacre” as it is all-too-commonly referred to, states that “the battle bled into a massacre. After the battle was over, a group of drunken Aboriginal soldiers killed 30 or more American prisoners, many of whom

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<sup>160</sup> Julia Roberts has shown that the “drunken Indian” stereotype was well ingrained in the minds of post-war Upper Canadians. Roberts, “‘A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’”, 436.

<sup>161</sup> For example, see Richardson, *Richardson’s War of 1812*, 153-154; See also Morgan’s analysis of his fictional work Morgan, “Remembering 1812 in the 1840s”; and Julia Roberts, “John Galt and the Subaltern’s Wife: Writing the History of the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 97, no. 3 (Sept. 2016): 315-345.

<sup>162</sup> Including, but not limited to E. A. Cruikshank, *The Employment of the Indians in the War of 1812*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 322, 326, 335; George F. G. Stanley, “The Indians in the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 31, no. 2 (June 1950), 153, 162; Reginald Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York: Knopf, 1969), 136; Pierre Berton, *The Invasion of Canada and Flames Across the Border* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980, 1981), 25; For the Battle of Frenchtown in particular, see Jon Latimer, *1812: War With America* (London: Belknap Press, 2007), 119; Donald Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 86.

had been wounded.”<sup>163</sup> Some descriptions, such as historian Jon Latimer’s, are much worse, and the evidence marshalled by these historians to support their claims is often quite suspect.<sup>164</sup> Many cite heavily biased American accounts of the battle, and others offer no citations at all. Those who cite British accounts, such as Donald Hickey, point to a lone report from General Henry Proctor to General Roger Hale Sheaffe, dated January 25<sup>th</sup>, just days after the engagement.<sup>165</sup> While Proctor does remark in his report that a large part of the American force was “killed by Indians” during the battle, he goes on to note that after the battle he had convinced the Indigenous warriors present “to consent to the Sparing of [the prisoners’] Lives.”<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, Proctor praised their actions, adding that “the Indian Warriors displayed their usual Courage.”<sup>167</sup> Another account, in a letter from fur trader and militia officer John Askin to the Upper Canadian lawyer and politician William Dummer Powell, similarly noted that the Indigenous warriors present “behaved with the utmost bravery,” and makes no mention of drunkenness or the killing of prisoners.<sup>168</sup> Thus, by their selective reading of the sources, these historians have deliberately chosen (much as post-war British officers

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<sup>163</sup> Jason Ridler, “Battle of Frenchtown,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada (Published online October 23, 2011, last edited March 4, 2015) <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/battle-of-frenchtown>; Even Carl Benn, in a footnote to Norton’s account, writes that “On 23 January, 50 warriors, apparently angered at brutalities committed against natives earlier, and having drunk heavily, murdered some of the Americans in an event known as the Raisin River Massacre.” Carl Benn, ed., *A Mohawk Memoir from the War of 1812: John Norton – Teyoninhokarawen*, ed. Carl Benn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 151.

<sup>164</sup> Jon Latimer, *1812: War With America* (London: Belknap Press, 2007), 119.

<sup>165</sup> Donald Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 86; Proctor, “From Proctor at Sandwich to Sheaffe at Fort George,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 7-9.

<sup>166</sup> Proctor, “From Proctor at Sandwich to Sheaffe at Fort George,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 7.

<sup>167</sup> Proctor, “From Proctor at Sandwich to Sheaffe at Fort George,” in *Select British Documents*, Vol. II, 8.

<sup>168</sup> John Askin, “John Askin to Hon. Wm. D. Powell,” in *The Documentary History of the Campaign upon the Niagara Frontier in the Year 1813, Part I (1813), January to June 1813*, 49-51.

did) to represent Indigenous warriors in a particular way in their narratives – to racialize them as “drunken” and “savage” and inferior to “Whites,” in order to elevate British (or American) soldiers and officers, by comparison, as particularly honourable, “civilized,” and manly warriors.

This chapter has shown that in the post-war peacetime era, multiple definitions of martial masculinity competed for space. Middle-class social reformers, temperance advocates, and even some veterans sought to remake the character of soldiers, to produce morally superior and “respectable” men, chiefly by curbing their drinking. Other veterans resisted these attempts at reform, and continued to adhere to wartime definitions of martial, and gentlemanly masculinity, including a taste for port and claret, and a penchant for polite socialization. They were able to do so largely as a result of their status as veterans. Wartime service was the surest indicator of martial manliness in the post-war era, so much so that those who had not served, or who had not sacrificed to earn their position, were effectively denied martial manhood in the eyes of veterans. Veterans-turned-authors emphasized their own service in post-war writings on the war, and promoted their specific brand of martial masculinity. They sought to differentiate themselves from those new military men of peacetime who had never seen combat. These new soldiers were cast as inferior warriors for not having served, and for having no opportunity to prove their manhood. Some veterans even cited the temperate drinking habits of this new breed of military men as evidence of their inferiority and weakness. But not all veterans shared in this elevated status in the masculine hierarchy simply on account of their service. Indigenous veterans had their wartime contributions obscured by veneration of the

deeds of White settlers turned militiamen, and British officers turned heroes. Rather than be remembered for their bravery and gallantry, Indigenous veterans were remembered simply as “faithful subjects,” or, worse yet, as “savages,” or “drunken,” both in official accounts of the war, and, unfortunately, even in modern histories of the conflict.



## Conclusion

In their own minds, and in their writings, British officers who served in the War of 1812 were many things. They were domestic patriarchs, both in their own families and, in a surrogate fashion, to the men under their command. They were brother officers with their fellow messmates, and even sometimes with their enemy. In the public eye, they were gentlemen, well-versed in the intricacies of polite socialization. In battle, they were brave warriors, strong of body and mind. In the “savage” wilderness of Upper Canada, and beset on all sides by supposedly “drunken” enlisted soldiers and Indigenous warriors, they were models of White “Christian” civility. And finally, they were both hard-drinkers, and temperate drinkers, depending on the situation, audience, and fashion of the day.

Drink featured prominently in the lives of these men, and strongly influenced their perceptions of self, and others. Convivial and shared drinking established familial bonds between officers, and with their men. They enjoyed (relatively) unrestricted access to alcohol, while simultaneously regulating enlisted men’s access, which reinforced class hierarchies. Officers often consumed conspicuously, drinking expensive fine wine and brandy (whether or not they could afford it) as a means of demonstrating wealth and refinement, establishing them as gentlemen in the eyes of their peers and perceived social inferiors. Off-field they drank heavily at public dinners and balls, in polite socialization with members of colonial “high society,” and with fellow officers (British and American) in the relative privacy of the officers’ mess. In these settings, the manliest of men were marked not only by their refined tastes, but also by their ability to drink heavily – consuming multiple bottles of port while keeping up polite appearances and conversation. Here they established internal hierarchies of manliness

within a group which saw itself as superior to all others. Officers held that successful heavy-drinking both demonstrated, and bolstered a man's physical strength, fortitude, and martial courage; whether he was in "battle" against his comrades in the mess, in the field against the enemy, or even lost in the Upper Canadian wilderness, fighting against the elements. Conversely, an inability to hold one's liquor marked a man as inferior. Any man labeled "prone to drunkenness," and unable to control himself, was no gentleman at all, and did not belong among the ranks of the officer class. He was regarded as like an animal, or at best a child, in need of being controlled. This label of "drunken" was applied not only to enlisted and Irish soldiers, but most notably, in the Canadas, to Indigenous warriors allied with the British. The application of this label reinforced gendered and racialized constructions of Indigenous "savagery" in an attempt to elevate British officers by comparison as "civilized" warriors, masters of "the art of getting drunk," and justified colonial rulers.<sup>1</sup> Drink continued to inform popular perceptions and play a prominent role in the lives of officers in the post-war period as well, as hard-drinking was increasingly scandalized, and drunkenness was further condemned as unbecoming a responsible husband or father, a polite gentleman, or a meritorious professional officer. According to some veteran-officers, however, an ability to drink heavily continued to distinguish strong warriors from the weak.

This dissertation has revealed that officers' writings about drink, however, about themselves and about others, did not always reflect reality. It has challenged officers' classed, gendered and racialized characterizations of the enlisted men under their command, and in

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, *Life of [Samuel] Johnson* (New York: Oxford University Press, [1791] 2008), 1022.

doing so has disputed historical interpretations which have taken these characterizations at face value. It complements similar works which have attempted to rehabilitate the character of enlisted soldiers in this period in terms of their class origins and their domestic responsibilities by considering their drinking. It demonstrates that enlisted men were not inevitable drunkards, kept in line only by strict discipline. Instead, unlike their officers, they drank moderately throughout the war and used drink as a means of re-creating domestic-style masculine relationships while in service, rather than getting drunk to abandon their domestic duties. Enlisted men were encouraged to be temperate drinkers by military authorities, as well as prevailing ideals of domestic manhood. They were not “alcoholics,” as some historians have claimed.

More work, however, is needed. This dissertation has focused primarily on officers, and their perceptions vs. reality. But how did enlisted men feel about their own drinking? How did they feel about officers? How did they understand and define their own brand of martial manhood? Did they feel marginalized as some scholars have suggested, and if so, did they respond to that marginalization by drinking? Unfortunately, very few enlisted soldiers left accounts of their experiences which can speak to these questions. The account of Private Shadrach Byfield, which was used in this dissertation, stands out as perhaps the only published account of the War of 1812 from the perspective of a British enlisted soldier. The records of Regimental Courts-Martial, however, many of which are kept at individual regimental archives in England, offer a possible way forward for researchers. This dissertation has shown the value in using records from General Courts-Martial to examine negotiations of martial masculinity

among the officer class, and the Regimental records should present a similar opportunity to study the enlisted ranks.

This dissertation has similarly challenged existing historical interpretations, and some present-day mindsets, regarding the character of Indigenous warriors who fought alongside British forces. It has revealed that British officers' racist characterizations about their Indigenous allies' propensity for "savagery" and "drunkenness" were deliberate constructions, with colonial and gendered aims. Furthermore, that these characterizations did not reflect the reality of the situation on the ground. Even within the heavily biased accounts of British officers we find evidence of Indigenous warriors abstaining from alcohol and condemning drunkenness, compared with White and Indigenous observers chastising British gentlemen and officers for their hypocrisy and frequent bouts of inebriety. This dissertation has thus exposed the hypocrisy of British officers in their writings about Indigenous warriors and challenged popular narratives of the war which perpetuate racist caricatures of Indigenous peoples found in this source base. It demonstrates that the writings of British officers reveal more about their authors than their subjects, and that consequently they must be interpreted through a gendered (and racialized) lens, and within the context of pre-temperance perceptions of drink and drinkers. These insights remind us that stereotypes are created in imbalances of power, and that it is important to question taken-for-granted identities.

This dissertation has further challenged historical interpretations of the character of, and role played by Indigenous warriors during the War of 1812 by confirming that British veterans, many turned settlers and authors in the Canadas, obscured the deeds of Indigenous veterans in their accounts of the war – in some instances claiming them for their own.

Specifically, it shows how they painted a lasting image of Indigenous veterans as “savage,” “drunken,” and unmanly. This chapter has exposed these common post-war histories as fabrications, aggrandizations, and attempts at (proto-)national myth-making. It has demonstrated, as other (but ultimately too few) historians of the War of 1812 have, that Indigenous warriors did make valuable contributions to the war effort, specifically at the Battle of Beaver Dams. In doing so, this chapter has revealed that Canadian histories of the War of 1812 inordinately favour British officers’ narratives of events, and, as a result, frequently perpetuate racist colonial myths and stereotypes – whether knowingly or unknowingly.

Specifically, this dissertation has directly addressed the largely unchallenged colonial stereotype of the “drunken Indian.” It has applied established theories and frameworks from the fields of alcohol studies and gender history to a topic previously dominated by anthropological and medical approaches. While these prior approaches sought to disprove the “firewater myth” on a biological level, and to better understand Indigenous drinkers (with an aim to address health crises in certain communities), this dissertation has focused on better understanding historical perceptions which underpin long held stereotypes about Indigenous peoples. For decades there has been a *scholarly* consensus that the “firewater hypothesis” is indeed a “myth,” but these stereotyped narratives about Indigenous peoples, embedded within commonly taught histories of the War of 1812, continue to impact popular mindsets. This has had a direct impact on settler-Indigenous relations in Canada today. Consequently, more work is needed to reveal these persistent stereotypes about Indigenous peoples as deliberate colonial falsehoods, perpetuated by British officers and Canadian historians alike. More work is also needed to better understand Indigenous perspectives in this period; to consider Indigenous

warriors' perceptions of manhood, drink, and of British officers. This dissertation has contributed a valuable analysis of British officers' perceptions of self and of others, but we still have only one side of the story.

These challenges to existing historical narratives show the value of applying a gendered lens to the study of the War of 1812, to permit fresh readings of evidence from the past. This dissertation has applied existing theories and frameworks as a tool to a study a source base which, although well-known to historians, has yet to be used for this purpose. It continues the lengthy historiographical trend away from traditional military and political focused approaches to the study of the War of 1812, towards social and cultural analyses, and, most recently, a focus on gender, class, and race. This dissertation has revealed that a consideration of martial masculinity is crucial to an understanding of the war, its primary actors, and relations between them. It has demonstrated that how British officers presented themselves publicly, how they conducted themselves privately, and how they behaved towards both friend or foe, were all significantly influenced by negotiations and performances of martial masculinity. Their writings, which dominate the historical record, must therefore be viewed through a gendered lens.

But this dissertation has also complemented several existing historical interpretations, in addition to challenging others. It confirms the scholarly consensus that gentlemen-officers held a dual masculine identity, beholden to both masculine ideals of politeness, as well as a warrior ethos. It reveals how one identity was constructed and maintained through polite socialization and heavy drinking with peers of equal status in both in public and private engagements, and how another was negotiated on the battlefields against friendly foes, and in

the cold, rugged Canadian environment. Both identities, each exerting different and sometimes conflicting demands upon officers were, however, held simultaneously, and expressed through a common medium, the consumption of alcohol. This dissertation thus confirms that the British army of the era was host to a variety of competing masculinities, and that British officers held various identities simultaneously.

Taken together, these chapters provide several important insights into processes of identity formation and expression, specifically with regards to masculinity and drink. They demonstrate how collective identities and social boundaries were established in (homo)social performances and by controlling access to drink; how smaller groups were created within a larger community; and how alcohol served to create, mediate, and unite different groups without dissolving those categories. For example, homosocial drinking in the officers' mess, which was off-limits to enlisted men but permissible for lower ranking officers of varied social origins, defined a collective officer identity but also simultaneously marked inexperienced officers as lesser men within the group. Instances of shared alcohol consumption between these three distinct groups united them all as men of war, suffering under the same sky, however, existing divisions remained firmly in place and were regulated by access.

Furthermore, this dissertation demonstrates that masculinities were contingent on specific historical circumstance; that the way in which people perceived their own drinking and the drinking of others, and how they constructed masculine identities around these perceptions, was fluid, and influenced by a host of factors. In the British army in the War of 1812, these factors included war, peace, location or posting, rank and class status, ideas about race, individual wartime experiences, and prevailing social and cultural norms. This

dissertation demonstrates an attempt by British military and civilian authorities in the metropole to establish hegemonic ideals of masculinity within armies on the periphery of empire, but also concerted resistance from men on the ground to conform to those ideals, and frequent negotiation of identities based on circumstance.

The first contingency revealed is place. While there were considerable attempts by British military and even civilian authorities to transmit certain gendered expectations to the troops through General Orders and the proceedings of Courts-Martial, British officers stationed in the Canadas were forced to negotiate and modify their understandings and performances of manliness based on the difficult climate and terrain, availability of men and military resources, and the nature of the people they found themselves fighting against, and alongside. For example, when gentlemen-officers found themselves far from the “high” social circles of London, they socialized with the highest members of colonial society instead. When they could not procure or afford the requisite supplies to drink conspicuously, they made do with what was available. When officers failed to hold their liquor in bouts of heavy-drinking with more senior (and more seasoned) gentlemen, they denigrated those whom they perceived as their social (and racial) inferiors as “drunks.” When they found little opportunity to prove themselves in combat, officers instead tested their mettle against the elements. When they found themselves outnumbered by an invading “Christian” enemy, they sought out alliances with unfamiliar allies, and waged an unconventional war. British officers in the War of 1812 thus rarely fulfilled the martial masculine model set by authorities in Britain, but they certainly tried to.



This realization suggests that in the colonial Canadian context, gendered ideals were constructed *in situ*, through colonial encounters and interactions, rather than directly transferred from the centre to periphery. Furthermore, that masculinities are relational, and not always constructed in relation to women, but also other men, particularly the racialized “other.” This confirms similar findings by historians of the British army in India, and on the Iberian Peninsula, that White British officers deployed gendered and racialized tropes to construct their colonial subjects as inferior, which in turn underpinned their justifications for colonial rule. White masculinity was defined in relation to supposedly inferior races in British colonial society, and gendered discourses were employed by both colonizer and colonized to negotiate political power and racial privilege. This dissertation has shown that a similar process played out in the Canadas, but that here, perhaps more than anywhere else in the Empire, drink and drunkenness played a prominent role in racial “othering.” This was even more so the case in Upper Canada following the war, as racialized governmental restrictions placed upon access to alcohol were employed as a tool to differentiate “White” settlers from “Indians,” and “normal” drinkers from “problematic” ones. These restrictions and divisions have significantly impacted settler-Indigenous relations in present day Canadian society, and not for the better.

The second contingency revealed is time. What is considered hegemonic is always subject to change, and reinterpretation. In this case, what made “a man” in the martial sense changed significantly after the war. During the war, the British army (and, to a lesser degree society at large) promoted a narrow vision of masculinity – a warrior identity – which was emphasized above all other forms. Officers largely agreed as to what made a man. After the war, however, in peacetime, when there was more room available for other masculinities to

compete for space, we see more disagreement – much of it centered on drink. After the war, we see veterans increasingly offering up their own definitions of martial masculinity, based on their own individual experiences in the war, and their goals in post-war society. New visions of martial masculinity exerted greater influence, including one which shunned heavy drinking rather than embraced it. Temperance ideologies made significant inroads in the army, influencing ideals of martial masculinity towards “sober respectability.” Many veterans from the Canadian campaign, however, strongly resisted these changes, and continued to express their manhood in performances of polite, and heavy drinking.

As historians of masculinity and the British army in other theatres of war (e.g. Europe or the Iberian Peninsula) continue to produce high-quality scholarship, it is incumbent on Canadian scholars to do the same. The Canadian campaigns have, until now, represented a significant blind spot. This dissertation has shown, however, that accounts from officers who served in the Canadas and records of Courts-Martial – many of which do not deal directly with drink-related themes or offences and were thus beyond the purview of this study – offer an excellent avenue for future research into ideals, negotiations, and performances of martial masculinities. Officers’ accounts include, for example, abundant mention of dress and uniforming, which established European and Peninsular-centered studies have demonstrated played a key role in officers’ performances of public-facing martial masculinity. Officers’ accounts, as well as records of Courts-Martial, also include further praise of desired masculine qualities such as gallantry or bravery, and admonition of undesired qualities such as cowardice

or failure of duty, beyond drink-related offences or instances. Consequently, both source bases offer promising avenues for future research.

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