

CREATING AN AMERICAN WAY OF MOBILIZATION: THE FEDERAL SYSTEM AND
WARTIME MOBILIZATION IN NORTH CAROLINA DURING THE WAR OF 1812

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ABSTRACT

Margaret C. Martin: CREATING AN AMERICAN WAY OF MOBILIZATION: THE
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(Under the direction of Wayne E. Lee)

This project is an examination of American wartime mobilization and strategic decision making during the War of 1812 using North Carolina as a case study. During the war, the young federal government sought to centrally control and direct its resources. Political culture, local security concerns, and the outcomes of battles and campaigns fought outside North Carolina throughout the course of the war informed public support for the war within the state, a process which in turn shaped federal control and planning. Because the federal government relied on the states for mobilizing militias, and to a lesser extent, for recruiting into the regular army, individual state governments' support for the war effort, which was highly attuned to public attitudes within the state, directly affected the federal government's ability to mobilize resources and therefore shaped strategy. By studying the federal-state relationship from the perspective of North Carolina, the challenges faced by a new, federal republic trying to wage war become apparent. In North Carolina, representative of other states, nationalism served as a substitute for coercive government mechanisms to effect mobilization. The federal government's dealings with the challenges of mobilization during the War of 1812 established precedent for how the American federal system managed at least through the Civil War.

To my family.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In the spring of 1812, as the United States edged toward war with Great Britain, Congress passed several resolutions to put the nation on war footing. The creation of nine military districts to oversee a national war effort required the appointment of district commanders to organize the effort. The federal government selected North Carolinian William Polk, a Federalist, to serve as the Brigadier General in charge of recruiting for the Sixth Military District, encompassing North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Upon receiving the appointment, Polk wrote John Steele, his fellow Federalist and Speaker of the House for the state's House of Commons, asking for advice on whether to accept the appointment. As a Federalist, Polk opposed the nation's move toward war. Still, an appointment as a Brigadier General in the regular army was something to consider. To Steele, he wrote, "Should I refuse the offer; it might be said & will I have no doubt, (should that be the course adopted) that I was actuated by party motives."¹ Polk believed his personal financial obligations, including his position as the President of the State Bank of North Carolina and management of personal lands in Tennessee, as well as his responsibilities to a wife and small children more than justified declining the appointment. Polk ultimately

¹ John Steele and Henry McGilbert Wagstaff, *The Papers of John Steele* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Print. Co., 1924), 672–673.

refused—his insistence on remaining headquartered in Raleigh an impossible condition to meet and a convenient mask for his political preferences.²

By October 1814, following the burning of Washington D.C., Polk's attitude toward service had changed. Still a devoted Federalist, Polk was emotionally affected by the attack on the nation's capital. Polk wrote to Governor Hawkins offering his services. In his own words, he acknowledged that he had turned down a position in 1812, but now observed that the situation was changed—that the country had been humiliated. He declared his willingness to “unite with the government” to compel the enemy to “respect our rights and bring the war to an honorable termination.” Polk, ever the Federalist, was careful to state that he did not necessarily approve of the cause of the war or its progress, but nevertheless felt compelled to serve given the current situation.³

Although William Polk was but one member of the Federalist Party, the minority party in the nation and in North Carolina, and only one of many proposed officer appointments to the regular army, his reluctance to serve and his eventual change of heart demonstrates the importance personal willingness to serve played in the early nineteenth-century American military system. The United States had a small regular army and relied on state militias to augment its forces. When Congress raised the nation's military force for war against England, it also added a significant volunteer component. The United States military had to coordinate all these forces during the War of 1812.

The United States lacked the physical or institutional power to compel military service. Instead, a tradition of semi-compulsory militia service, ideological ties to the

² Instead, James Wellborn, a Republican, was appointed colonel and placed in command of the U.S. Army's Tenth Regiment of Infantry, designed to be raised from North Carolina.

³ William Polk to William Hawkins, October 17, 1814, William Hawkins, Letter Books, North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC.

nation's new political system, the pressure and influence of local elites (the remnants of a hierarchical social structure in which those who held political and economic power could influence neighbors), and public will facilitated the nation's mobilization. Harnessing these diverse resources of manpower and will required the federal government to demonstrate and to assert its legitimacy. The government simultaneously had to claim and to convince a divided populace that popular dissent did not divide sovereignty. Majority rule must *rule*. Nevertheless, the respect of the citizens had to be cultivated, especially those who disagreed with the Republicans, the political party in power. Simply put, the nation's wartime objectives had to resonate with individuals. The presumption of a unitary sovereignty, however, was made more complex in a federal system built up from numerous state governments. That situation was even further complicated by the Constitution's division of military responsibilities between the federal and state governments. The federal government had no choice but to cooperate with the states, even those with priorities that differed from national objectives. North Carolina was presumed aligned with national objectives because of its Republican majority. However, a significant Federalist minority along with real security concerns that deviated from national wartime objectives make the state of North Carolina an ideal case study to explore how the federal government asserted its legitimacy to compel a state and its population to make real contributions to the national cause and how states responded.

The War of 1812 was the first significant wartime test of the new American federal government. The Constitution divided authority over the military between the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. It further assigned responsibility for the militia to the state governments, with provisions for federal control during wartime. Although

these divisions of responsibility were clearly articulated, the Constitution did not provide any guidance for how to implement the system of decentralized military control it conceptualized nor was there any meaningful historical precedent. The Federal Militia Acts of 1792 provided authority for the president to call out the militia and required able-bodied male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to enroll in their state's militia. However, individuals were left to supply their own arms and there were no federal training standards.⁴

Although the Constitution granted the presidential and congressional authorities that shaped wartime strategy, ideological convictions, partisanship, and the continuing contest between state and federal powers affected the nation's ability to wage war and how it chose to do so. Split along partisan lines, the United States declared war against Great Britain in June 1812 to protect "free trade and sailors' rights."⁵ Lacking other options for pressuring Britain, American strategists planned to invade Canada from Detroit and New York in order to wrest economic and diplomatic concessions from Great Britain. Not only was Canada vulnerable to land forces, the majority of the American population was located in the northeast. Despite notable antipathy to the war from states such as Massachusetts and Connecticut, both Federalist strongholds, most battles took place along this northern border. Western states and territories such as Kentucky and Ohio supported the war enthusiastically but did not have the same access as to manpower and economic resources. Notable exceptions to the focus on the Canadian border include Great Britain's burning of Washington, D.C. and the invasion of New Orleans. The war also included British raids on

⁴ Russell F. Weigley. *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1967) 93-94. The text of the two Militia Acts can be found at: http://constitution.org/mil/mil_act_1792.htm, accessed April 15, 2012.

⁵ Paul A. Gilje, "'Free Trade and Sailors' Rights': The Rhetoric of the War of 1812," *Journal of the Early Republic* Vol 30: 1 (Spring 2010), 1-23. "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights" was a wartime slogan that encapsulated the wartime aims of the American government, to protect American free trade and to protect American seaman from impressment.

the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and eventually encompassed the ongoing conflict with the Creek Indians in the Southwest. Fighting in each of these arenas required the federal government to mobilize and deploy resources allocated to the U.S. Army and each of the state-controlled militias.

American mobilization, strategy, and policy were all influenced by societal and cultural factors beyond the control of individual policy makers. American attempts to invade Canada and to carry out other military activity on the northern frontier, for example, were affected by state governors' reluctance to provide militia troops to the federal government, as well as by the reluctance of assembled militia units to cross state and national boundaries. These events are fairly well documented but they suggest the need for a deeper investigation into how local populations' security concerns and personal interests influenced their support for the war. Was that support, or lack thereof, reflected in strategic decisions at the state and national level? How did the public's attitude toward the war influence state governments and their ability to raise militia troops? How did the relationship between the federal and state governments, as defined by the Constitution and the Militia Law of 1792, function during wartime? How did the dynamic political environment resulting from the newness of the federal government affect its ability to wage war?

Two characteristics of the American government influenced the federal government's ability to marshal its military resources. First, as a republic, the government was supposed to represent the people. As such, the ability of the republic to wage an effective war was linked to public support. The government had to balance the tension between generating public support for the war and its need to honor public opinion. Second, the republican problem was magnified, since the central (republican) government was a federation of individual, even

more republican, states. The federal government had to contend with state military and political leaders who in turn were pressured by their local populations to represent local interests. State leaders had to bridge the gap between state-level concerns and the state's obligation to support a unified federal war effort. Furthermore, public support for the war changed in response to military defeats and victories and the local public perception of the (mis)alignment of state and federal objectives. Ultimately, the interaction between public opinion, state governments, and the federal government created a difficult set of circumstances within which the federal government struggled to coordinate an effective strategy.

An examination of the events and political conditions within a single state, North Carolina, illustrates the evolving federal-state relationship and how the ambivalence of the public about the war affected the state's willingness to fulfill its federal obligations. Although North Carolina generally supported the war, I argue that the federal government never had unqualified access to its manpower and financial support. The state demonstrated its war support with a memorial submitted to Congress by the General Assembly and through two successful militia mobilizations. However, up to a third of the voting population supported the anti-war Federalist Party, suggesting these citizens did not support the war. The General Assembly's failure to authorize funds to support military activity and poor militia turnout in some counties also indicated qualified support at best. Furthermore, the governor's responsibility to organize and mobilize militia forces according to his perception of the state's own interests exacerbated disagreements over the number and deployment of the state's resources. These tensions between constitutional provision, republican obligation, federal governing mechanisms, and local interest, and the consequences of those tensions for

the extent of mobilization and even the creation of strategy and policy, are the subjects of this dissertation.

Additionally, as a study of a state geographically removed from the area where the most intense battles were fought, my dissertation illuminates what factors shaped public opinion toward the war and how citizens influenced their state and federal government. Because the most intense fighting of the war occurred far away, the direct threat to North Carolina during most of war remained abstract. Citizens in New York or Kentucky, in contrast, had a tangible interest in the outcome of battles in support of the invasion of Canada; they stood to lose their homes and livelihood. The immediacy and proximity of the war overtly linked their local interests to the national strategic objectives and the existential nature of the threat makes it harder to discern other factors influencing those states' support for the war. North Carolina's major security concern, coastal defense, was hardly central to national objectives in the War of 1812, and other security concerns, such as slave uprisings, were strictly local.

If local concerns in North Carolina were neither existential nor central to the national strategy, there must have been other factors driving support for the war in the state. An important question then becomes, how did the federal government and state authorities justify the physical and financial expense of the war to the citizens of North Carolina? Why did North Carolinians respond to the demands of a newly formed government as they did? Did North Carolinians support the war because they were invested in the success of their very new government and its federal and state construction? What does that say about governance, legitimacy, and authority moving forward? How did competing understandings of republicanism affect support for the war? What other factors motivated North Carolinians

to contribute to the larger war effort? How did North Carolinians respond to the centralized direction of the federal government?

The expectation for wartime policies and strategy to reflect public opinion, mediated through the state-federal relationship, complicated the federal government's ability to wage war. The North Carolina case also illustrates how wartime events illuminated fissures in the state-federal relationship that would be addressed more or less successfully in the aftermath of the war. Many military histories analyze wartime strategic choices as a blend of military calculation and available resources. This study reveals the extent to which local opinion also shaped republican mobilization, and thus strategy.

Historians have attempted to contextualize the War of 1812 ever since Henry Adams's late nineteenth-century treatment of the organizational and political aspects of the war in his nine-volume *History of the United States During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison*.⁶ Modern scholars' attempts to examine the war in a larger context—political, social, and cultural—began in the 1960s.⁷ Reginald Horsman's *The War of 1812* emphasizes military operations and considers the political pressures guiding British strategy and American failures. Horsman identifies the ideology of Jeffersonian Republicanism as a hindrance to the country's ability to finance and prepare for war, factors

⁶ Henry Adams, *History of the United States during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison*, 2 vols (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Viking Press, 1986) first published in 9 volumes, 1889-91.

⁷ Harry L. Coles, *The War of 1812* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965) was the first effort to reinvigorate study of the war. He links the war to a period of growth and expansion that followed; Robert S. Quimby, *The U.S. Army and the War of 1812: An Operational and Command Study* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997) touches on nearly every campaign of the war and includes information on force structure, accounting for both regular and militia troops, and high-level correspondence between general officers and civilian officials. It is a useful reference, but makes little attempt to contextualize the war effort within American society.

which directly influenced operational failures.⁸ Donald Hickey's *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* demonstrates how party differences continually affected raising men and money, and subsequently, the nation's ability to wage war.⁹ Historians such as Horsman and Hickey have demonstrated that party ideology and loyalty affected the federal government's ability to act during the entire war. I will build on these treatments of the influence of political ideology and party politics during wartime but intend to focus on how those factors interacted at the state level.

J.C.A. Stagg's *Mr. Madison's War* also considers the influence of domestic politics on the conduct of the war. Stagg's focus on Madison and the Republicans' political and diplomatic intentions is a top-down examination of the federal government's institutional shortcomings in financing and directing the war effort.¹⁰ Building on his important work, I will explore the complexity of waging war with a republican government from the bottom up, demonstrating how social and cultural influences at the state level shaped the policy and strategic options available to the federal government.

Campaign and battle narratives comprise a large part of War of 1812 literature.¹¹ Campaign studies usually concentrate narrowly on key leaders, the units involved, and battles

⁸ Reginald Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York: Knopf, 1969).

⁹ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

¹⁰ J.C.A. Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783-1830* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983). Alan Taylor's recent publication *The Civil War of 1812* (New York: Knopf, 2010) focuses almost exclusively on the contested area along the Canadian/U.S. border and portrays the war as a continuation of the American Revolution, a contest between empire and republic. At stake was American nationhood and while the war was a struggle to secure American independence, Taylor also considers the war against a backdrop of internal American pressures as part of the nation's struggle to determine the form and function of its government.

¹¹ Although a majority of studies focus on campaigns and battle in the north, Donald R. Hickey, "The War of 1812: Still a Forgotten Conflict?" *The Journal of Military History* 65, no. 3 (Jul 2001): 741-769, provides over fifty examples of scholarship published between 1989 and 2001 focused on each of the five major theaters of operations: The Old Northwest, The Niagara Frontier, The St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain Front, The

and their aftermath, but they can also provide an opportunity to evaluate the public's perception of a specific event. Several studies have drawn connections between battlefield outcomes and recruiting. In the *Fall and Recapture of Detroit*, Anthony Yanik suggests that the fall of Detroit cost Madison the support of New Jersey, New York, and Delaware during the 1812 presidential election. The loss of political support in those states corresponded to increased difficulties in meeting militia quotas.¹² Joseph Whitehorne's *The Battle for Baltimore* not only provides a detailed account of British raids in the Chesapeake Theater, but also suggests that the raiding strategy influenced pro-war attitudes in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. As states realized they would have to assume the manpower and monetary cost of coastal defense against British raiding, opposition to the war softened.¹³ I also plan to link wartime events to state-level activities in North Carolina. Additionally, in *Niagara, 1814*, Richard Barbuto links the failed American invasion of Canada to the inability of the American government to harness and focus its resources for its 1814 campaign; there were never enough regulars to meet American needs.¹⁴ Although he suggests that a

Chesapeake Bay, and The Southwest and Gulf Coast. Canadian scholar Donald E. Graves has written no fewer than three different campaign studies; Donald E. Graves, *Field of Glory: The Battle of Crysler's Farm, 1813* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1999); *Where Right and Glory Lead! The Battle of Lundy's Lane* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1997); *Red Coats and Grey Jackets: The Battle of Chippawa, 5 July 1814* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994). Other recent campaign narrative in this vein are Robert E. Malcomson, *A Very Brilliant Affair: The Battle of Queenston Heights, 1812* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003) and David G. Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion: Plattsburgh, the War of 1812's Most Decisive Battle* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001).

¹² Anthony J. Yanik, *The Fall and Recapture of Detroit in the War of 1812: In Defense of William Hull* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2011).

¹³ Joseph W.A. Whitehorne, *The Battle for Baltimore, 1814* (Washington, DC: Office of the Inspector General and Center for Military History, U.S. Army, 1998).

¹⁴ Richard V. Barbuto, *Niagara, 1814: American Invades Canada* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000).

Jeffersonian preference for militia underpinned recruitment problems for the regular army, he never explicitly examines the issue at the point of mobilization.

Historians examining the war with Spain in Florida and the events of the Creek War have widened the traditionally narrow focus of campaign histories to consider those events within the context of the War of 1812.¹⁵ In *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands*, Frank Owsley explores the relationship between the Creek War and British activity on the Gulf Coast. While his thesis is that the British saw an opportunity to attack the Gulf Coast because of the Creek War, in tying the Creek War to the larger war, he also links Southern motives to go to war in 1812 to expansionist sentiments.¹⁶ This issue is significant to understanding developments in North Carolina because in 1814, North Carolina called up troops to support the Creek War. Although North Carolinians living along the frontier expressed concern for their safety and the state had commercial ties to western states, my research suggests a more efficient process of mobilization rather than popular expansionist sentiment contributed to the success of the 1814 muster intended to support fighting in the southwest.

¹⁵ Campaign histories also have encouraged many works that examine the British invasion of the Chesapeake and the burning of Washington, D.C. Two recent works include Christopher T. George, *Terror on the Chesapeake: the War of 1812 on the Bay* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Books, 2000) and Carole L. Herrick, *August 24, 1814: Washington in Flames* (Falls Church, VA: Higher Education Publications, 2005). Both are focused on military events and of limited use to my project.

¹⁶ Frank Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle for New Orleans, 1812-1815* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000), originally published in 1983. Frank Owsley and Gene A. Smith, *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny, 1800-1821* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997) examines expansion during the Jeffersonian era and cites the appeal of Florida to the South. Additionally, James G. Cusick, *The Other War of 1812: The Patriot War and the American Invasion of East Florida* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2003), focuses on a Southern “pseudo-war” against Spain. His work, along with Owsley’s, reintroduces the question of how strongly expansionist sentiment motivated southern states, most famously laid out by Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812* (New York: Macmillan, 1925).

This study also differs from those state-centered histories that have recounted the participation of individuals and militia units from a specific state.¹⁷ The focus here is on the dynamics of state participation in a federal effort to wage war, building on such work as James Hammack's *Kentucky and the Second American Revolution*, who addresses the friction between state and national government over strategy, command, and supply.¹⁸ Additionally, Victor Sapio considers how Pennsylvanians perceived the causes of the war by examining arguments used to justify the war. Using correspondence, newspapers, speeches, and works of the period, he shows that a preoccupation with national honor, rather than expansion or economic depression, influenced Pennsylvanians' support for the war.¹⁹ The link between local attitudes and state behavior is also a component of my own project. Next, although not a state history, James H. Ellis' regional wartime history of New England emphasizes party affiliation and economic interests as factors affecting support for the war.²⁰ These earlier state and regional histories suggest the need to consider all of these issues together: state-federal friction over strategy, command, and supply; public concerns over national honor; and the role of party affiliation and economic interest. All were clearly at work in North Carolina as well.

Earlier work on North Carolina has tended to focus narrowly on the "what happened" question. For example, in *Frustrated Patriots*, Lemmon provides a detailed account of North

¹⁷ Anderson C. Quisenberry, *Kentucky in the War of 1812* (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1969), reprint of 1915 edition, is a traditional account of battles in which Kentuckians participated.

¹⁸ James W. Hammack, Jr., *Kentucky and the Second American Revolution: The War of 1812* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1976).

¹⁹ Victor A. Sapio, *Pennsylvania and the War of 1812* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1970).

²⁰ James H. Ellis, *A Ruinous and Unhappy War: New England and the War of 1812* (New York: Algora Publications, 2009).

Carolina's military preparation and involvement in the war and concludes that the federal government asked little of North Carolina over the course of the war and the state consistently met its manpower obligations.²¹ Although she addresses Federalist opposition to the war within the state, she does not thoroughly analyze party dynamics and public support for the war. Additionally, in his 1962 dissertation, Edward Wagner asserts that the South, particularly Georgia and Louisiana, deliberately blurred state-federal responsibilities when necessary to get the job done.²² I found, in contrast, that North Carolina's leaders made a concerted effort to press the federal government to honor obligations as the state understood them—particularly to arm and fund the state's militia when mobilized for federal service.

The wider field of military history provides some additional ways to understand the processes of mobilization in emerging modern states. John Lynn's influential essay "The Evolution of Army Style in the Modern West, 800-2000" offers both an analysis and taxonomy to understand changes in army style in the modern west.²³ In describing how Western powers constructed armies, Lynn settles on seven distinct stages: feudal, medieval-stipendiary, aggregate-contract, state-commission, popular-conscript, mass-reserve, and volunteer-technical.²⁴ Chronologically, the War of 1812 fell during the transition between Lynn's state-commission paradigm and the popular-conscript paradigm instigated by the French Revolution. Arguably, the American military did not execute a modern "faceless"

²¹ Sarah M. Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots: North Carolina and the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973).

²² Edward J. Wagner, II, "State-Federal Relations during the War of 1812" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1963).

²³ John A. Lynn, "The Evolution of Army Style in the Modern West, 800-2000," *The International History Review* 18, no. 3 (August 1, 1996): 505–545.

²⁴ Lynn, "Evolution of Army Style," 514.

draft nor was it organized along a true archaic system where feudal obligations compelled men to serve. Rather, it mirrored to some extent the *levée en masse* of the French Revolution, although with less ability to reach directly into the entirety of the populace. Lynn's model will allow me to describe and evaluate the factors shaping mobilization under the American military system at the time.

American military mobilization in the colonial and early republic period has seen a wealth of scholarship that contextualize this study. Mobilization in the colonial era took place against the backdrop of universal military obligation. Colonial towns or counties, depending on population density, organized into a militia company. Every man of legal age, from roughly sixteen to sixty, assembled, drilled, and submitted to inspection on predetermined days to provide defensive capacity for the colony, although various colonies provided different exemptions for certain professions or for other reasons, such as religious affiliation. The militia was not intended as an offensive force, as restrictions on service outside of the colony demonstrate. To raise manpower for military expeditions, authorities assembled a provincial or volunteer army and issued quotas to each militia unit. Units who failed to meet their quota with volunteers used a draft or impressments to fill their ranks.²⁵ John Mahon distinguishes between four types of citizen soldiers: standing militia, volunteer militia, war volunteers, and involuntary servers. His distinction between the standing militia and the two categories of war volunteers and involuntary servers highlights the potential for only a narrow slice of society to actually serve in colonial expeditions.²⁶

²⁵ Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 1–12; Allan Millett, William B. Feis, and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 2012), 1–13; Robert Wettemann, *Privilege vs. Equality: Civil-Military Relations in the Jacksonian Era, 1815-1845* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009), 2–4.

²⁶ John Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1983), 31–32.

Historians have sought to understand who served in the ranks of these armies. In *A Rabble in Arms*, Kyle Zelner conducts a community study of one Massachusetts' county during King Philip's War to determine who was impressed from the general militia to fill quotas for expeditions.²⁷ His work shows that the men who comprised expeditions reflected a stratified society. Older, wealthier men were exempted and the "rabble," defined as men who held little power including young, unmarried men, who were not first born and worked outside of agriculture, men with few ties to the church, those of lower socioeconomic status, and troublemakers, were overrepresented in the towns' quotas. Town militia committees, responsible for mobilizing the quotas, selected those whose loss would least impact the community—and generate the least anger toward them. This deliberate method of selection suggests that even as early as late seventeenth-century New England, local elites retained power and authority to compel social subordinates to serve in the militia. Fred Anderson found some of the same impulses at work during the Seven Years' War. Social elites, such as planters, served as officers in the provincial army, especially once the provincial field officer rank became equivalent to regular rank. Furthermore, the majority of common soldiers were young men who had yet to acquire land and families of their own.²⁸ For some of those young men, militia service offered a road to independence and manhood.²⁹ Harold Selesky found in colonial Connecticut, the promise of bounty money and regular pay attracted men to serve in

²⁷ Kyle Zelner, *A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militiamen During King Philip's War* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); Barry M. Stentiford, "A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militiamen During King Philip's War (review)," *The Journal of Military History* 73, no. 4 (2009): 1320–1322; James D. Drake, "Review," *The New England Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (December 1, 2009): 727–729. Zelner's findings are similar to Robert A. Gross's findings in *The Minutemen and Their World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976).

²⁸ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*, 1st ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf: 2000), 219, 286–293.

²⁹ Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 39.

volunteer regiments.³⁰ My own work investigates the extent to which network-based mobilization existed and the role local elites and other incentives played in mobilizing their neighbors.

Among the many studies of militia mobilization during the Revolutionary War, Rhys Isaac perhaps most clearly identifies an additional important facet of the relationship between local elites and the populace—the dissemination and acceptance of political ideals during the American Revolution.³¹ His work examines the process by which secular political culture, the language of the gentry, was transmitted and embraced by a populace more familiar with a biblical worldview. Isaac identifies communal activities as events key to the translation of ideological and political principles into concepts that resonated enough with people to compel them to lend resources to the war.³² The exchanges that took place at the courthouse not only energized support for the war, but also helped create a newly inclusive, frontier-leaning national identity, which helped transcend the inability of a weak central government to mobilize forces without consent of its people. These revolutionary era difficulties in mobilizing manpower and public will for the war did not fade. During the War of 1812 both the state and federal government struggled to mobilize troops among a populace not fully in support of specific wartime objectives or, in some cases, the war itself. Additionally, because

³⁰ Harold E. Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

³¹ Rhys Isaac, “Dramatizing the Ideology of Revolution: Popular Mobilization in Virginia, 1774 to 1776,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (July 1, 1976): 357–385; James Martin and Mark Edward Lender, *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763-1789*, 2nd ed. (Wheeling, Ill.: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2006), 213–224. Additional scholarship on mobilization during the Revolutionary War includes: John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed*, revised edition (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); John Resch and Walter Sargent, eds., *War and Society in the American Revolution: Mobilization and Home Fronts* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007).

³² Isaac identifies the courthouse as the site for the communal activities such as celebrations surrounding singing subscription lists, incidents of shaming and ostracism to preserve unanimity, and ritual affirmations of frugality and industry to demonstrate moral soundness.

the federal government had to contend with a semi-autonomous state government that had legitimate control over its own resources, it had to cooperate with individual states' apparatus to marshal resources.

Revolutionary struggles to mobilize manpower persisted in the early-nineteenth century militia. In *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, John K. Mahon describes several obstacles faced by the federal government as it mobilized for war.³³ First, he demonstrates political leaders understood the limits of the American military system at the outset of the war. To circumvent known problems, politicians authorized volunteers to supplement regular and militia troops. Proponents of the plan hoped volunteers would be exempt from Constitutional restrictions on militia service and better prepared than newly raised regulars.³⁴ Second, Mahon discusses the obstacles states presented to federal access to militia. At the outset of the war, the governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut refused to place their states' militias under federal control, citing their interpretation of the Constitution.³⁵ In July 1814, Pennsylvania proved unable to meet their quota for the federal requisition as the state had passed a law that removed officers' authority to compel their men to serve. During the war years, South Carolina courts passed a law that made the militia dependent "on the willingness of individuals to serve in it" rather than compulsory service. Mahon discusses command issues as a third obstacle. In a critical moment, Major General Samuel Smith of the Maryland militia, commander of state forces during the Baltimore

³³ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 63–77.

³⁴ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 67. Those opposed to volunteers argued they had no standing under the Constitution and that volunteers would be subject to same restrictions the Constitution placed on militia. Supporters of volunteers characterized regulars as "riffraff." "Riffraff" quoted from the *Annals of Congress*, 12 Congress, 1 Session (November 4, 1811-July 6, 1812), p. 58.

³⁵ Mahon notes that in late 1813 both states placed men in federal service, but only to guard their own coasts.

invasion following the burning of Washington D.C., flatly refused to take orders from federal authorities. Although his forces' defensive stand was successful, his actions offer another example of the weakness of the American military system. Additionally, several states lodged protests against placing regular officers in charge of militia units. Lastly, short enlistment periods prevented comprehensive training and sustained military action. A majority of enlistments were for less than six months.³⁶ Although Mahon's research is surely correct in its details, there is also evidence from North Carolina of the ways that the federal government could overcome these well-understood deficiencies in the American military system.

Analyzing state-federal interaction during the mobilization process moves our understanding of American state formation, and especially its military aspects, beyond electoral results and battlefield outcomes and provides a finer analysis of the dynamics of the federal system during wartime. These types of issues have been largely absent from the historiography of the war so far. The history of the War of 1812 typically generates fewer controversies than studies of other wars. Historians have settled debates over the causes of the war by accepting some combination of maritime concerns and the British practice of impressments, the expansionist aims of Western and Southern states, economic depression, national pride, and internal party dynamics as factors. Similarly, historians have resolved disagreement over “who won the war” by analyzing separately the impact of the war on five distinct groups: The United States, Great Britain, Britain’s North American colonies, i.e., Canada, Native Americans living in the United States, and Native Americans living in Canada.

³⁶ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 71–73, 77. Per Mahon, 398,000 individuals enlisted for less than six months; 60,000 more served slightly longer than six months; volunteers who served 12 months or longer with no restriction on location totaled only 10,000 of the original 50,000 authorized.

With few exceptions, recent work in the military history of the war continues to focus on campaign narratives and battle histories, eliding the social and cultural dimensions of the war.³⁷ One recent work notable for its cultural focus is Nicole Eustace's *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*. Eustace concludes that emotional responses to the language of romantic patriotism shaped political judgment and generated support for the war. Popular culture portrayed an American identity rooted in freedom to pursue love and family, reproduction, and new western lands. Those rights could only be secured by defeating a "rapacious" foe. In her view, political leanings did not determine support for the war, nor was support fostered by great military victories. Rather, the inextricable tie between love of family and love of country translated to patriotism that promoted popular participation. Eustace's work offers a useful explanation for participation in the war despite its unpopularity and evidence in North Carolina newspapers supports her analysis of patriotic sentiment.

Following Eustace's lead, to understand the full context of how the federal government used military force in its first war under the Constitution demands a military history that re-engages with the early nineteenth-century political landscape. Scholars trying to understand the military in context of the early republic have long recognized the influence of republicanism, but republicanism was not a monolithic ideology; different parties interpreted it differently and developed different opinions about the use of force. I build on Reginald Stuart's argument in *War and American Thought*, which asserts how the emergence

³⁷ Exceptions include Alan Taylor's recent work described earlier, Jeremy Black, *The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), and Troy Bickham, *The Weight of Vengeance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

of partisan politics in the early republic influenced strategic options.³⁸ Similarly, the fear of a standing army influenced republican ideology and shaped both the form and function of the American army and militia. Lawrence Cress examines how republican thought influenced public policy concerning the military in his *Citizens in Arms*, which serves as a starting point for my own investigation.³⁹ In *Eagle and Sword*, Richard Kohn chronicles the political battles between Republicans and Federalists and the eventual emergence of a regular peacetime army.⁴⁰ By the time the Republicans ascended to the presidency, many had accepted a distinction between a small frontier constabulary and the militaristic “European” variety the label “regular” or “standing” army evoked. Determining how to wield that army—its growth, management, and employment—challenged the Republicans and the federal government during the War of 1812. My work shows how republican theory accommodated and adapted to actual wartime demands, localized security concerns, and economic interests and further illuminates the vibrant nature of the republican period.

The concept of strategic culture forms the theoretical underpinning for this project. Strategic culture can exist at multiple levels—at the national level, inside the military as a whole, or it can be service specific. In his work, *Modern Strategy*, Colin Gray offers a definition of strategic culture as that which “comprise(s) the persisting socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions, habits of mind, and preferred methods of operation that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community that has had a unique

³⁸ Reginald Stuart, *War and American Thought: From the Revolution to the Monroe Doctrine* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1982).

³⁹ Lawrence D. Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

⁴⁰ Richard Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802* (New York: Free Press, 1975).

historical experience.”⁴¹ Building on Gray’s definition of culture and discussion of strategy, Thomas G. Mahnken defines strategic culture as “that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.”⁴² A national strategic culture, then, reflects society’s values regarding the use of force. In this project, I argue for public opinion—and more importantly public will—as an essential component of American national strategic culture. American public opinion was informed by the debates of the time including the nature of Constitutional authority, the centralization of power, compulsory militia service and influences of the anti-standing army sentiment and complicated locally by security concerns. Because American’s support for the war correlated with willingness to serve, my examination of mobilization through the lens of strategic culture advances the understanding of certain societal and cultural traits that can be leveraged to tap war-fighting resources.

My examination of strategic culture also incorporates the categories that Wayne Lee presents in his cultural study of warfare, *Barbarians and Brothers*. Lee describes four categories with which to analyze restraint and “frightfulness” in war: capacity, control, calculation, and culture.⁴³ Although my project does not focus on the nature of warfare, the categories of capacity and calculation are useful to my investigation of strategic culture. Capacity refers in part to the state’s ability to mobilize force. Part of my research will focus on the way that public support for the war manifested itself in financial and personnel

⁴¹ Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 131.

⁴² Thomas G. Mahnken, “United States Strategic Culture,” 13 Nov 2006; accessed online 9/2011, www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/dtra/mahnken_strat_culture.pdf.

⁴³ Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

commitments, which in turn, affected the state's ability to mobilize forces. Additionally, organizational issues influenced capacity. In the United States, the dual nature of the American military—the militia and regular forces—a result of the Constitution, directly influenced the nature of its force structure and the organization of American society for conflict.⁴⁴

The second of Lee's analytical categories applicable to my project is calculation. Calculation is the "how to" of winning. It is the "continuous balancing of a specific vision of victory against the limits of material reality."⁴⁵ Leaders must consider what they know to be available to them and what they perceive to be available, based on their understanding of society's support for the war. The process and products of calculation are typically articulated in the form of strategy and military orders, for example. Written debate and deliberation between civil and military leaders yield archival sources that often reveal why certain choices were made. The framework of calculation will be useful in identifying influences on the decision-making process.

Much of the argument here is about the role of the "public" in influencing those calculations. But who counts as part of that public? The North Carolina state constitution of 1776 placed restrictions on voting. The only state-level officials elected were members of the General Assembly. Only freemen over twenty-one years old who owned more than fifty acres of land were eligible to vote for senators. Freemen over twenty-one who paid public taxes could vote for representatives to the House of Commons.⁴⁶ Furthermore, militia duty

⁴⁴ For organizational issues and capacity see Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 11.

⁴⁵ Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers*, 6.

⁴⁶ Text of the 1776 North Carolina Constitution, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/nc07.asp, accessed November 15, 2011.

was a male-only responsibility. For most purposes, therefore, the "public" is defined here as a white, adult, male, tax-paying public. There is room, however, to suggest that the values of women and African-Americans, themselves denied formal political participation, nevertheless produced reactions in the male political public. For example, residents' expectations of slave restlessness in the eastern part of the state were one issue that generated local security interests. In this sense, enslaved peoples' desire for freedom affected security calculations.

The actions and attitudes of North Carolinians and their representatives in government can be found in a variety of sources. For commentary, debate, and policies enacted by North Carolina's General Assembly I consulted the *Journal of the House of Commons of the State of North Carolina* and the *Journal of the Senate of the State of North Carolina*. Governors' papers, particularly those of William Hawkins, provided a variety of perspectives on political and military events. The state Adjutant General Letters, Orders, and Returns provided insight into the state's military activities as well as state efforts to coordinate mobilization activity with the federal government. Additionally, private collections of letters contained petitions, memorials, correspondence, and memoirs that spoke to the influence of public opinion on political and military activity at the state level.

Newspapers are essential windows into the political rhetoric that permeated the state's populace. Historians recognize the emergence of a partisan political press to accompany heightened party identity following bitter debate over the Sedition Act of 1798 and Thomas Jefferson's presidential victory in 1800. Newspaper publication expanded in the south in the early nineteenth century, albeit slower than in other parts of the country. In North Carolina, publication clustered around the capital; no newspapers were published west of

Raleigh. Some historians believe the southern press remained a tool of the educated elite and gentry, who would pass on news and opinions to their “common folk” neighbors, and perceive that combined with broadly aligned interests between Republican state and national governments, it meant partisan newspapers as a means to mobilize voters failed to develop.⁴⁷ In North Carolina, however, there was a healthy opposition press, namely the Federalist *Raleigh Minerva*. Even if those papers only targeted elite readers, the presence of open opposition papers suggests the newspapers were an important venue for political discourse. Different perspectives deriving from the papers' party affiliations became apparent when rival papers reported on the same incident, such as the invasion of Ocracoke. As a forum to describe public celebrations, commemorative events that promoted feelings of nationalism, the actions of the federal government, and the progress of the war, newspapers reaffirmed the continued Federalist presence and the importance of cultivating favorable public opinion toward the war.

During the two years of war North Carolina twice mobilized its militia to identify 7,000 men to serve in the federally-mandated detached militia. The federal government then called into service units from the North Carolina Detached Militia in each year of the war. The state also mobilized units identified as detached militia as well as state militia to repel the British invasion of its coast in 1813 and to man coastal fortifications for the duration of the war. The state had to attend to the needs and expectations of its residents and fulfill its obligations to the federal government. At the same time, it attempted to hold the federal government to its commitments to the state and people as outlined in the Constitution and subsequent legislation pertaining to the military apparatus. Over the course of the war, the

⁴⁷ Robert A. Gross and Mary Kelley, eds., *An Extensive Republic; Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840*. A History of the Book in America 2 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 179–183.

state learned to operate within the constraints of the American military system as it had evolved since the Revolution. In doing so they attended to the state's unique security concerns, thereby meeting the expectations of the residents of the state, while meeting their obligations to the national cause and thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of the federal structure. By the end of the war, North Carolina was much more organized and deliberate in how it responded to federal demands.

This evolutionary process of change and adaptation emerges through a chronological examination of the state's response to federal demands and local security expectations. Chapter two focuses on the road to war and provides a glimpse of North Carolina's demographics, economy, and state-level politics. Profiling the state as an actor in federal-state relations shows that although there was a Republican majority, the Federalist presence was significant enough that the state's support could not be taken for granted. Also, although there was no existential threat to the state, residents had real and persistent concerns about the state's security.

Chapter three covers the first federal requisition of troops in 1812 through the British invasion of Ocracoke in July 1813. The demands made by the federal government on the state were significant. Although the state successfully met the federal quotas, it was hardly an organized and efficient allocation of resources. The Ocracoke invasion made clear that the state's concerns and national objectives were not wholly aligned, which potentially jeopardized widespread support for the war, especially considering the continued presence of Federalist opposition to the war.

Chapters four and five emphasize the ongoing efforts of the state to improve its mobilization process. In Chapter four, I examine the state's reaction to the invasion of

Ocracoke through the spring of 1814. Once North Carolina realized its interests did not align perfectly with the federal governments, it pressed the federal government to honor its commitments, in part to secure state interests and assist the national cause, but also to cultivate support for a legitimate republican government. Chapter five begins with the last federal requisition in the summer of 1814, and continues through the end of the war. By late 1814, state political and military leaders thoroughly understood the needs for the federal-state relationship to work to protect the interests of the state's citizens, the state, and the national war cause. North Carolina continued to work within the boundaries of the evolving military system to improve its mobilization and asset management for both state and national concerns.

The conclusion describes North Carolina's efforts to be reimbursed by the federal government for expenses related to militia deployment. Despite the delay in payment, the state remained fully committed to the war objectives and to the Republican Party. Although the state assumed a financial burden, it had successfully balanced state and national concerns and muted a vocal minority opposition to the war. The state's insistence on operating within the parameters of the existing state-federal relations led to improved mobilization procedures in the state and helped shape federal responsibilities to the states. The solidification of pro-war, pro-Republican rhetoric in North Carolina not only ensured the state remained engaged in the national war effort, but also shaped the mobilization efforts at a local level.

Chapter Two: North Carolina on the Road to War

The War of 1812 resulted from concerns that had plagued the United States from the 1780s onward. In its first decades, the country had to contend with European powers' competing claims to land in North America. Continued British presence in Canada as well as traditional British alliances with Native Americans challenged American expansionist aspirations. Spain's presence in Florida and Louisiana was a source of anxiety as well. American economic reliance on trade not only heightened expectations for the development of a navy, but also ensured that American foreign policy revolved around commercial relations with its two most important trading partners, Great Britain and France. From 1793 to 1814, the Anglo-French wars greatly affected American interests.

Beginning with the Neutrality Act in 1794, the United States clung fiercely to the principle of neutrality to protect its commercial trade interests, especially as Great Britain and France challenged the American presumption to trade with both warring nations. Defending neutral rights, President John Adams narrowly avoided war with France in 1799. President Thomas Jefferson responded to the British warship *Leopard* firing on the American warship *Chesapeake* with the Embargo of 1807, a coercive economic policy designed to force recognition of American neutral rights. The Nonintercourse Act of 1808 replaced the widely unpopular embargo, but reinforced the principle of coercive economic policy as the mechanism to secure neutral rights and commercial trade. By 1812 the renewed possibility of war with Great Britain seemed like the culmination of decades of economic conflict with European powers.

Several potential reasons for war emerged from the national debate over war. First among them was the call for “free trade and sailors’ rights.” Many believed the United States must go to war with Great Britain to force the English to rescind its Orders in Council, a series of decrees intended to restrict American trade and enforce a blockage against France, and to stop the impressing of supposed British subjects from the decks of American ships. Others appeared to have expansionist aims. An invasion of Canada would secure additional farmland for Americans and quiet the threat from Native Americans. Northern expansion might also pave the way for the acquisition of lands to the south and west as well. Others feared the war was simply a political maneuver to secure the Republican Party’s supremacy over the Federalists. Still others felt it was a moral imperative, necessary to preserve the republican experiment and national independence.¹ Generally, during the war debate, the Republican Party was the pro-war party and the Federalists formed the opposition.² The division was not so neat, as anti-war factions—“Old Republicans” and supporters of Madison’s political rivals—existed within the Republican Party. Both the Republicans and Federalists, though, had strong ideological reasons underpinning their party’s war stance.

The Republican commitment to preservation of the republic motivated both their domestic and foreign policy. They keenly felt the legacy of the Revolution and believed they had “to prove that republican government not only assured liberty but could be consistent with security of life and property and with protection of national honor and independence.”³

Under Thomas Jefferson, the Republicans felt that protecting American commerce and

¹ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 1–2.

² The political parties of the first party system were known as Federalists and Republicans. Contemporaries also called supporters of Thomas Jefferson Democratic-Republicans or Democrats. Historians now generally refer those who aligned with Thomas Jefferson as Republicans. The two parties adopted distinct political philosophies that created parties with a national reach.

³ Roger H. Brown, *The Republic in Peril: 1812* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 3.

maritime interests was part of protecting the republican experiment. Republicans promoted coercive economic policy to combat foreign restrictions and to instill in foreign powers the “proper amount of respect” for the United States.⁴

Federalist Party ideology included an aversion to war. Although Republican opponents believed the Federalists were militaristic, a claim that stemmed in great part from the Federalists successful creation of a peacetime standing army, the Federalist stance against the War of 1812 was clearly articulated.⁵ The Federalist believed that Jefferson had vetted West Point and officer appointments for political purity, a process Theodore Crackel called a chaste reformation.⁶ The consequence was a political turn by the Federalists away from supporting military growth or military action. Nevertheless, the Federalists viewed war as a mechanism of social chaos and Federalist clergy preached that war was immoral because it undermined the “constitutional balance upon which republican institutions depended.” Wars required a large army, an institution the Federalists now viewed with suspicion. Army life not only corrupted those who served, but soldiers infected the rest of society with their bad habits. An empowered military could use an army to overthrow civil society, or worse, could embolden civil authorities to use the army to curb civil liberties and consolidate power. Finally, Federalists believed war should be waged only as a last resort, and only for defensive purposes.⁷

⁴ Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 16, 13.

⁵ For the creation of the standing army under the Federalists see Richard Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802* (New York: Free Press, 1975).

⁶ Theodore J. Crackel, *Mr. Jefferson's Army: Political and Social Reform of the Military Establishment, 1801-1809* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 180.

⁷ Lawrence D. Cress, “Cool and Serious Reflection: Federalist Attitudes toward War in 1812,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (Summer 1987), 125-126, 131, 136.

Specific Federalist opposition to the War of 1812 stemmed from those ideological beliefs and from pragmatic concerns as well. In general, most Federalists believed all war was avoidable and unnecessary.⁸ The Federalists had objected to the Republicans' series of commercial restrictions because they believed the restrictions hurt American more than British interests, and that they were a ploy to undercut the northeastern part of the country in favor of the South. Federalists believed that a war, ostensibly justified by the British refusal to lift the Orders in Council, was a Republican bluff to make the Republicans look proactive and the Federalists unpatriotic. They believed the impasse over the Orders was not a sufficient cause for war.⁹ The Federalists also asserted that the nation was not prepared for war, that territory acquired from a Canadian invasion would undermine local relationships crucial to republicanism, and that the disruption of war would negatively affect the nation's economy.¹⁰

By 1810, the Republicans had weathered the failed Embargo of 1807, attempted to chart neutrality with a nonintercourse act, and had finally resorted to Macon's Bill Number Two. Macon's Bill lifted restrictions against both Great Britain and France; however, in the event that one of the two powers lifted its restrictions against the United States, the other power was expected to follow suit. Failure to do so would cause the United States to renew its commercial restrictions against the offending country. In August 1810, President Madison chose to interpret a vague letter written by the French foreign secretary, the Duc de Cadore, as evidence of Napoleon's intent to lift the Berlin and Milan Decrees. British failure to lift the Orders in Council after renewed American restrictions demonstrated the failure of

⁸ Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 175.

⁹ Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 162, 166-167.

¹⁰ Cress, "Cool and Serious Reflection," 127, 132, 138.

peaceful economic coercion. Because a Republican failure to protect American commercial interests would be considered a moral failing, a strike against American sovereignty, and a disgrace to republicanism, no choice remained—war, declared in 1812, was the next logical step.

Politics and Party in North Carolina

The Republican Party predominated in North Carolina from 1798 onward. Party spirit manifested itself in newspapers, speeches, and letters.¹¹ Opposition to the Federalists' national policies and the establishment in 1799 of a Republican newspaper, the *Raleigh Register*, strengthened party support. Following the election of 1800, the Republicans assumed a majority in both houses of the state legislature. Federalists retained roughly thirty percent of the seats in the General Assembly through the end of the war, although their popularity spiked in response to the unpopularity of the embargo and leading into the election of 1812.¹² Representative Nathaniel Macon was widely considered the Republican Party's leader in the state. His politics—economy in government, strict construction of the Constitution in favor of states' rights, and the interests of the masses—typified North Carolina Republicans.¹³

North Carolina Federalists had a state-wide presence but were consistently strongest in the Scottish and Scots-Irish counties of south-central North Carolina, such as Cumberland County. Federalists also showed strength in the central coast around New Bern and had a

¹¹ Delbert H. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy in North Carolina, 1789-1816* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 152.

¹² Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 127; James H. Broussard, *The Southern Federalists, 1800-1816* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 364, 373. Gilpatrick goes so far as to characterize the Assembly as having a “rampant Republican” character.

¹³ William S. Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 234-235.

sprinkling of support from the north-central plantation counties and from the western frontier. The representatives from borough towns, which sent their own representatives to the General Assembly, also leaned Federalist. Aside from a slight correlation between towns and Federalism and the persistence of Federalist support in Cumberland County, there was little else to predict Federalist support. From 1800 onward, the Federalist averaged thirty-two percent of seats in the eastern part of the state and thirty-one percent in the west.¹⁴ In addition to a fair showing in the General Assembly, in 1812, two of North Carolina's twelve national representatives were Federalists.

As the debate over war heated up, North Carolina emerged as a pro-war state. As a predominantly Republican state, this was hardly surprising. However, an examination of the health of the state's political party and how they engaged with the debate over war demonstrates that there was meaningful opposition to the war. Any upswing in support for the Federalists had the potential to align the state with war opponents and further undermine the Republican position. Since state support lacked unanimity, the state and federal government had to work to overcome party alliances, in part by addressing local concerns, to fully tap the state's resources.

It is helpful to first examine how North Carolina's voice was heard on a federal level. North Carolina's delegates to the House of Representatives were assigned by district. Several adjacent counties comprised each district. The General Assembly apportioned the districts, which were then codified in the North Carolina State Laws. North Carolina had ten

¹⁴ James H. Broussard, "Party and Partisanship in American Legislatures: The South Atlantic States, 1800-1812," *The Journal of Southern History* 43, no. 1 (February 1, 1977): 50-51; Broussard, *Southern Federalists*, 373-380. Broussard's analysis shows that from 1800-1816, representatives from the following areas divided as described here: Borough Towns: 62% Federalist, 38% Republican; Counties with a Borough Town: 31% Federalist, 69% Republican; Rest of State: 26% Federalist, 74% Republican.

congressional districts in 1792, growing to twelve after the 1800 census and thirteen after the 1810 census.¹⁵

Under North Carolina law at this time, U.S. Senators were selected by the General Assembly. As a result, the majority party was empowered to select a candidate who aligned with party interests. During the war years, North Carolina's two senators were Republicans. The belief that senators should be responsive to the General Assembly and the prevailing party is illustrated by the General Assembly's 1813 censure of David Stone when he voted against war measures.¹⁶ That the General Assembly was responsible for selecting senators projected the influence of the state's majority party into the federal government, which increased the importance of elections for state representatives.

As in the General Assembly, North Carolina's federal representation was dominated by Republicans. Unlike other southern states, however, North Carolina consistently did send some Federalists to Congress. All told, nine of twelve congressional districts regularly sent Republicans to the House of Representatives between 1800 and 1810.¹⁷ Republican support for the war manifested itself in the selection of Senators during the war as well. As mentioned above, during the war period, the General Assembly only selected Republican

¹⁵ Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 166. State law designated the new districts in 1802 and again in 1812.

¹⁶ Not all politicians felt that senators were responsible to the General Assembly. Republican Archibald Murphey voted against the censure because he believed only the people had authority to censure their congressmen, even a senator who was not elected by popular vote.

¹⁷ Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 166. In the 11th Congress (1809-11), 9 of 12 representatives were Republicans. In the 12th Congress (1811-13), that number increased to 10. In the 13th Congress (1813-15) 10 of 13 representatives were Republicans. Although, Cheney has William Kennedy listed as a Federalist, which increases the number in the 11th and 13th Congress by one, other historians consider Kennedy an anti-war Republican.

senators. In 1812, the General Assembly noted David Stone's position as a "war man" as a key qualification when they selected him to succeed Jesse Franklin as a senator.¹⁸

Several national representatives played important roles representing the desires of North Carolina on a national level, while also affecting the state-level political landscape. Nathaniel Macon, the informal leader of the state's Republican Party, was arguably one of the most influential politicians, shaping decisions at both the state and national level. Macon was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1791 and held office until his election to the Senate in December 1815. He served as Speaker of the House from 1801 to 1807 and his voice in national affairs gave him prestige and influence in the state.¹⁹ Macon was from Warren County, a northern county roughly 100 miles from Petersburg, Virginia. His long tenure in government, as well as a reputation for Jeffersonian views, earned him the respect of North Carolinians.²⁰

Richard Stanford was another long-serving Republican in the U.S. Congress. First elected in 1797, he held his seat until his death in 1816. By the opening of the Twelfth Congress in November 1811, Stanford had become decidedly anti-war. His political alliance with John Randolph of Roanoke and the faction known as "quids" or "tertium quids" set him at odds with war supporters. The Quids were a small group of old-style Republicans who, among other things, opposed the expansion of the federal government, including increasing

¹⁸ Samuel Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, vol. 2 (Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Co., 1971), 218.

¹⁹ Hugh Lefler, *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, [4th ed., rev. and enl.] (University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 141.

²⁰ William Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 235; Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots; North Carolina and the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 164–166.

the size of the military.²¹ Stanford's presence demonstrates in part the presence of antiwar sentiment within the Republican Party. His ability to win reelection despite his antiwar stance also demonstrates some North Carolinians' ambivalence toward the war.

The Federalist Party gained strength in the state during elections when voters felt frustration with Madison himself and suffered the effects of series of failed economic policies, including the Embargo and Macon's Bill. For example, in 1809, the people of the Salisbury district, as the Tenth District was known, elected Joseph Pearson. The district included Rowan, Mecklenburg, and Cabarrus counties and Pearson held the seat during the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Congresses.²² Pearson's election was a victory for Federalists, but he did not have unanimous support in his own district. Following his vote against the war, residents of Mecklenburg County met in Charlotte and decried his vote as "flagrantly improper." Residents of Rowan County defended Pearson against the "unmerited and slanderous aspersions."²³ Pearson was eventually defeated in 1815, a casualty, his party believed, of the gerrymandered districts after the 1810 census. In 1813, voters from New Bern, Craven and the surrounding counties comprising the Fourth District, elected Federalist Judge William Gaston to the House. His election in the midst of the war demonstrates the local elites were more inclined to opposing the war than Blackledge's pro-war stance. Gaston was elected for the Thirteenth Congress, too late to sway to decision to go to war, but proved

²¹ William Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography. Vol. 5, P-S [electronic Resource]* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 422–423; David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812*, 1st Naval Institute Press pbk. ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 441–442.

²² Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography. Vol. 5, P-S [electronic Resource]*, 48; William Dodd, *The Life of Nathaniel Macon* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2007), 274–275.

²³ Raleigh *Register*, November 6, 1812, quoted in Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 196.

to be an able Federalist leader.²⁴ The continued presence of North Carolina representatives in Congress who voted against foreign policy issues related to the eventual War of 1812 demonstrated the mixed sentiments within the state.

When the Twelfth Congress convened in November 1811, war with Great Britain loomed, although it was not yet a certainty. The representatives from North Carolina filtered into Washington, D.C. armed with their personal opinions, party loyalties, and the interests of their home state guiding them. In the House of Representatives, Republicans Willis Alston, William Blackledge, Thomas Blount, Meshack Franklin, William King, Israel Pickens, and Lemuel Sawyer joined the influential Macon in generally supporting the move toward war. Across the aisle, Archibald McBryde joined his “tertium quid” colleague Richard Stanford and Federalist Joseph Pearson to complete the delegation of twelve from North Carolina. Republicans James Turner and Jesse Franklin joined them in the Senate.

Military appropriations and war-related issues dominated the first session of the Congress and the House debated a series of six resolutions proposed by the Committee on Foreign Affairs. North Carolinians, particularly the well-regarded Macon, lent their voices to the debate. In early December, the House considered the second resolution to raise ten thousand regular troops. Alston offered the alternative of leaving the “number subject to the discretion of the President, not exceeding fifty thousand men.”²⁵ Alston’s suggestion revealed support for war preparations and flexibility for the President. Alston later voted in favor of a separate resolution (the first) intended to strengthen the military by manning it to its authorized strength, lengthening enlistments, and offering land bounties to enlistees. Congressmen Blackledge, Blount, Franklin, King, Macon, and Pickens all joined him in the

²⁴ Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 170–171.

²⁵ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811–March 9, 1812, 418.

affirmative. Surprisingly, Federalists McBryde and Pearson did as well. Of those present, only Stanford opposed the resolution.²⁶

Nathaniel Macon addressed the House on December 12, 1811 to offer his opinion on war preparations and the situation with Great Britain. Speaking extensively, he insisted that how the nation had arrived at the present juncture was not as important as ensuring “that the Administration ha[d] done everything that could have been expected...to keep the nation at peace.” While he was not yet ready to declare war, he laid the blame for tension squarely at the feet of the British: “If the British Government would cease to violate our neutral and national rights, our difficulties would be at an end.” Furthermore, he viewed British policies as detrimental to the best interests of all—planters and merchants. Macon reiterated his desire for peace and preferred a peaceful resolution that ensured the nation’s rights; however, if no such plan was available, he was willing to go to war.²⁷

Richard Stanford’s steadfast adherence to Republican ideology stood in contrast to Macon’s pragmatic attitude toward war preparation and Alston’s seemingly unqualified support. Stanford opposed the proposed war preparations because of his “honest prejudice against standing armies.” He would not contradict his voting record or his conscience by endorsing a resolution that advocated an additional army, especially when he believed that standing armies “had always proved the bane of free Governments” and that to support one now would compromise the nation’s status as “the freest and happiest people on earth.” Furthermore, Stanford was concerned that the proposed army was destined to wage an

²⁶ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 418. James Cochran had not yet arrived and Lemuel Sawyer did not vote on this resolution. It does not appear that Sawyer voted on any war measure in this session.

²⁷ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 427.

offensive war, which reinforced his inclination to oppose it.²⁸ Finally, he believed an invasion of Canada, while likely to succeed, would cost “much blood and treasure” and would quite possibly fail to secure the desired maritime rights.²⁹

William King was inclined to vote with Alston and rose to speak in direct opposition to Stanford. He derided Stanford’s position as one of submission. Considering North Carolina’s particular situation—its exposed seacoasts and commercial interests—and his constituents whose love of country “burn[ed] with inextinguishable ardor,” he felt he must support war preparations. King, along with Alston, Blackledge, Franklin, McBryde, and Pickens voted in favor of each of the six resolutions proposed by the Committee on Foreign Relations.³⁰

As the Congress began to consider the former resolutions as bills, North Carolinians continued to advance their positions. Israel Pickens, the representative from Burke and the surrounding counties, argued that although “the genius of our Republican institutions...render war unwelcome,” war had become necessary. He made the call to action: “That evils attend our present position is evident to every man; and evils incalculable must visit our country, if we continue to slumber, while rights so essential to our national importance, and individual prosperity, are sweeping away.” In his speech, he defended the administration position point for point: it was a just war; impressment was tantamount to enslavement; natural leaders would emerge over the course of the war; defending the country’s rights made the war defensive, not offensive; every avenue short of war had been entertained; and of course, the only way to threaten Britain was to threaten Canada. While his

²⁸ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 511.

²⁹ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 515.

³⁰ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 418, 545-547, 560.

address did not reveal any concerns unique to North Carolina, he certainly demonstrated that Republicans from North Carolina were well versed in and supportive of the administration's rhetoric.³¹

The North Carolina delegation's support for war preparations extended to financial measures as well. The House considered ten separate resolutions for war taxes as well as a direct tax. Among the proposals were a tax on salt, duties on distillers, taxes on liquor licenses, and a tax on refined sugar. In addition, a \$3 million direct tax was proposed.³² Alston, Franklin, King, and Pickens consistently voted for the taxes. McBryde, Stanford and Pearson voted against almost every resolution. When the House voted to send the resolutions back to the Committee of Ways and Means to be "reported by bill," the delegation split evenly: Alston, Blackledge, Franklin, King, and Pickens in the affirmative, Cochran, Macon, McBryde, Pearson, and Stanford in the negative.³³ North Carolina's contributions to the debates on taxes were markedly lower, and the split reflected party alliances.

Although the Carolina delegation largely supported war preparations, they were hardly hawkish. The floor speeches of the representatives illustrate repeatedly that they believed war had become necessary, the administration having exhausted all pacific measures for resolving tension with Britain.³⁴ That they took their responsibility seriously was evident in personal correspondence. Israel Pickens reflected that he "could not have come to [Congress] in a more serious & Critical moment." Senator Jesse Franklin displayed similar

³¹ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 642-647.

³² *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 1106-1155. There are separate debates over each resolution.

³³ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 1155. Blount had died in office and Sawyer did not vote.

³⁴ Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 65.

apprehension when he wrote, “that there is not a man in the nation wou[ld] be more rejoiced than myself to see some event that Shou[ld] render our Military preparations unnecessary but we must make the best of a bad Bargain.”³⁵ Perhaps Macon captured the mood best when he asked the House rhetorically “Is there a man in the House that wishes another attempt at negotiation, or one that wishes to go to war if it possibly be avoided?” Answering his own question, he declared, “If we cannot fight by paper restrictions, we must meet force by force.”³⁶

Heading Toward War

Debate over the war itself elicited similar arguments and alliances as had war preparation. As expected, the largest portion of the delegation was in favor of resisting British aggression. Nathaniel Macon, William R. King, William Blackledge, and Meshack Franklin, the brother of Senator Jesse Franklin, continued to speak in favor of war. Richard Stanford remained allied to John Randolph and the Quids, and spoke out forcefully against the war. In an exchange between King and Stanford on the house floor, King responded to Stanford’s condemnation of war stating, “Sir, I will not yield an inch of ground when, by so doing, I destroy an essential right of my country, or sap the foundations of that independence cemented by the blood of our fathers.”³⁷

In addition to upholding the legacy of the Revolutionary generation, King also believed that submission to British aggression would result in depressed cotton and tobacco prices. Those economic consequences were too great to bear; the nation needed to fight for

³⁵ Israel Pickens, 6 March 1812; Jesse Franklin to William Lenoir, 15 February 1812, both quoted in Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 60.

³⁶ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 661.

³⁷ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:214. King is quoted in Dodd, *Life of Macon*, 276 and also in Ashe, 214.

its right to produce and export. Israel Pickens joined the two issues—he viewed the right to free trade and the need to secure it—as a direct legacy of the founding generation. Because the right to trade in foreign markets had been secured by the “independence won by the Patriots of the revolution,” protecting the “valuable inheritance” for posterity became an indispensable duty.³⁸

Not only did the nation have a clear duty to protect its trading rights, Pickens viewed failure to do so as tantamount to yielding national sovereignty, which would only encourage more encroachments on national rights. Pickens declared, “History affords no instance of a nation securing, or successfully resisting encroachments on its sovereignty, when this resistance has been weak and timid. On the contrary, does not all experience show that in proportion as a nation is found regardless of injuries, even of minor consequence, in that proportion have exactions been made upon it.”³⁹ That the issue was a matter of securing the nation’s position in the international community was explicitly stated by supporters of the war movement.

The support for war against England was complicated by disagreement over the proposed strategy for the impending war. Not all saw the invasion of Canada, the most likely of course of action, as a useful bargaining chip with Great Britain. Jesse Franklin, one of the two U.S. Senators from North Carolina, wrote to William Lenoir, “A Canadian campaign would not bring Great Britain to respect our commercial rights.” Although he acknowledged that conquering Canada might cause Britain “emence [sic] Injury” by cutting off its naval supply and fur trade and undercutting its influence with the Indians, he doubted that even the “most Complete Success” would settle the purpose of the war, which was securing the

³⁸ Pickens quoted in Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 72.

³⁹ Pickens quoted in Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 72.

nation's commercial rights.⁴⁰ Despite his concern over the proposed course of war, Franklin did acknowledge the need to secure the nation's commercial rights, and eventually voted in favor of war.

Although debate over war strategy bled over into debate over the need to even go to war, there were factions, both Republican and Federalist, which opposed war entirely, regardless of strategy. Federalist opponents to the war offered multiple reasons against war. Joseph Pearson feared that war with Great Britain would create a de facto, if not actual, alliance with France. In private correspondence, Pearson described the war to John Steele, an important Federalist Party leader in North Carolina, as “Democratic folly & wickedness.”⁴¹

Opponents of the war, however, had to contend with widespread expressions of popular support. The North Carolina Representatives used the House to air the pro-war feelings of their home state. On January 1, 1812, Macon read into the records resolutions passed by North Carolina's General Assembly supporting the administration. The Assembly had received the President's opening message to Congress with approbation. They believed that “the evils which the nation has endured have arisen wholly from the unprincipled conduct of the European belligerents” and pledged to support “such measures as may be adopted to promote the interest and secure the union, liberty, and independence of the United States.”⁴² The North Carolina resolution suggested that the General Assembly accepted the justness of the war. The resolution also framed the issue in terms of commercial rights and independence of the nation, benchmarks of the Republican rhetoric. The state government's support for the war matched the voting patterns of its Republican national representatives.

⁴⁰ Jesse Franklin to William Lenoir, quoted in Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 124-125.

⁴¹ Joseph Pearson to John Steele, cited in Brown, *Republic in Peril*, 175. Also, see note 26 p. 174.

⁴² *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., November 4, 1811-March 9, 1812, 607.

Congress voted for war on June 18, 1812. The act passed through both houses by a narrow margin. In the Senate, it passed 19 to 13. Both Senators Turner and Franklin supported the act. The members of the house approved the act in a vote of 79 to 49. Congressmen Alston, Blackledge, Cochran, King, Macon, and Pickens all voted in the affirmative with McBryde, Pearson, and Stanford dissenting.⁴³ The citizenry of North Carolina, at least a portion of it, had displayed a willingness to go war, although the Congressional delegation's split vote represented mixed feelings inside the state. The people of North Carolina would display the same willingness to defend their state when the war arrived at their doorstep. Not surprisingly, however, self-interest and local concerns would temper ideological commitments to the war.

North Carolina: The General Assembly and the Populace

North Carolina's state legislature, the General Assembly, like the U.S. Congress, had two houses, with representation apportioned on a county basis. Two representatives per county were elected to the House of Commons. Each county also had one senator who served in the State Senate. In addition to county representation, seven constitutionally-designated borough towns each elected an additional representative.⁴⁴

Although North Carolina had liberal voting laws, it did not have universal suffrage in the early nineteenth century; voting qualifications were based on land ownership. In order to vote for a state senator, a man needed to own fifty acres of land. All free men, black or white, who paid taxes could vote for members of the House of Commons. To serve as a state senator, a man needed to own 300 acres of land. To serve in the House of Commons required

⁴³ *National Intelligencer*, 20 June 1812; Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 18–19.

⁴⁴ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 250. The State Constitution of 1776 authorized a representative for each of the following borough towns: Salisbury, Hillsborough, Halifax, Edenton, Washington, and Newbern. The town of Fayetteville was added by constitutional amendment in 1789.

ownership of one hundred acres. The state government was therefore controlled by landowners and landowning interests, which meant the eastern part of the state wielded disproportionate power even as the western part of the state grew in population.⁴⁵ Additionally, eastern counties were smaller and more numerous than western counties, which exacerbated the trend toward disproportional representation.

Each year, the General Assembly elected the governor, who was required to own property worth £1,000.⁴⁶ The General Assembly, predominantly Republican from 1800 onward, elected seven different men governor between 1800 and 1814. They selected the Republican candidate eight times and as such, the party thoroughly dominated state politics.⁴⁷ In an interesting aside, however, in 1811 the Assembly elected John Steele, a Federalist from Salisbury, to replace the newly elected governor, William Hawkins, as the Speaker of the House. Although Steele was considered the state leader of the Federalist Party, the nineteenth-century historian Samuel Ashe later opined that he was considered “worthy of the honor.”⁴⁸

In the decade preceding the War of 1812, state politicians and residents addressed several divisive issues. These included: elections to office, salaries and accommodations of public officials, the endowing of the University of North Carolina, the reforms of the judicial

⁴⁵ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 250–251.

⁴⁶ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 251. The state constitution was written while the state still used pounds.

⁴⁷ John Cheney and Thad Eure, *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History*, A revised and updated edition of the 1913 North Carolina Manual. (Raleigh: North Carolina Dept. of the Secretary of State, 1975). Federalist Benjamin Williams (1799-1802, 1807) served three of the fourteen terms in question.

⁴⁸ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:213.

system (superior court), and the creating of banks (private versus state).⁴⁹ The demographics and commercial interests of the state pushed these issues to the forefront. Federalists generally supported funding the state university and private banks; their commercial interests often guided their political stance. As the state Republicans slowly gained dominance in the General Assembly after 1800, they either co-opted Federalist concerns or advanced solutions more in line with Republican principles. An examination of the state's demographics and commercial links is useful to understand why the Republican Party gained strength in the decade leading to the War of 1812 and how the Federalist Party continued to have strong presence in the state, making support for the war a contentious issue.

The state government served a population that historians have characterized as fiercely individualistic, which led the state to be conservative and provincial in its politics.⁵⁰ One example of this individualism comes from President Joseph Caldwell, the first president of the University of North Carolina, 1804-1812, who observed that the people of the state opposed public schools because they objected to laws that they perceived to place restraints on them. In the case of public schools, the people objected to the necessary taxation and mandatory attendance that accompanied public school.⁵¹ North Carolinians regarded government as a necessary evil at best, with three purposes: to maintain order, to protect life, and to safeguard the rights and interests of property.⁵²

North Carolina in 1810 was somewhat backwards relative to its neighbors, perhaps a result of its commitment to limited government. With roughly 555,500 residents in 1810,

⁴⁹ Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 152.

⁵⁰ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 247.

⁵¹ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 247.

⁵² Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 247–8.

North Carolina had experienced modest growth in the decades since the previous census.⁵³

The white population grew 11.4% to 376,410 inhabitants and comprised 67.6% of the state's population in 1810. Free black inhabitants comprised slightly less than 2% of the state's residents, while the slave population was 168,824 persons, just over 30% of the total.⁵⁴

Educated and elite men of the time were pessimistic about the future potential of the state's population—presumably referring to the white members—pessimism reflected in the results of a questionnaire developed by Thomas Henderson, the editor of the Raleigh newspaper *The Star*. Dr. Jeremiah Battle, a respondent from Edgecombe County, described the conditions of that “typical eastern county.” He noted that only one third of the county residents could read and only one-half of men could write. The rate was even lower for women—only one third of women could write. The source also claimed that out of a white population of roughly 8,000, only 108 subscribed to newspapers. Bartlett Yancey reported similarly dreary conditions from a representative western county, Caswell, where less than one half of the people could “read, write, and cipher as far as the rule of three.” The lack of prosperous plantations and centralized commercial activities during the colonial period resulted in few book collections and print activities, which shaped the state during the early nineteenth century.⁵⁵

Additionally, statewide, education was a low priority. The General Assembly declined to establish public schools, despite the recommendations of various governors from 1806 to

⁵³ Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *North Carolina, the History of a Southern State*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 715.

⁵⁴ Lefler, *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, 262.

⁵⁵ Patrick M. Valentine, “Libraries and Print Culture in Early North Carolina,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (July 2005): 293–294.

1814.⁵⁶ Furthermore, in 1810, the fifteen-year old University of North Carolina admitted only sixty-five students.⁵⁷

Like the relatively poor state of public education, contemporaries bemoaned the state's lackluster economic development. Perhaps the best assessment of the state's economic condition is found in Archibald Murphey's plan for revitalizing the state.⁵⁸ Murphey was a state senator from Orange County from 1812 to 1818 and an active promoter of public education and internal improvements. Although he identified as a Republican, he was elected as an "Anti-Electoral Republican" in 1812, and was prone to defect from the official party line when it contradicted his own opinions.⁵⁹ Murphey argued that although most of the state's wealth derived from agriculture, the state did not have markets of its own. Because there was no large "Commercial City," neighboring states such as Virginia and South Carolina drained trade and profits from North Carolina. To rectify the situation, he proposed that the state improve internal conditions to help generate greater demand for products, which he expected would assist the growth of industry and foreign trade, and generate markets for more commercial activity.⁶⁰

North Carolina's primary economic base was indeed agriculture, but it was also in the process of beginning to create a manufacturing system rooted in cloth. North Carolina farmers had folded the cotton gin (invented in 1793) into their production, and the state

⁵⁶ Kim Tolley, "Joseph Gales and Education Reform in North Carolina, 1799-1841," *North Carolina Historical Review* 86, no. 1 (January 2009): 24.

⁵⁷ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 246; R Connor, *Ante-Bellum Builders of North Carolina* (Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Co., 1971), 5-6.

⁵⁸ Murphey's made his proposal in 1819, but his assessment was based on the recent past as well as the current condition of the state.

⁵⁹ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:218.

⁶⁰ Lefler, *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, 199.

benefitted from the resultant growth of cotton as a commodity. As early as 1800, Edgecombe County produced as much as 250,000 yards of cloth annually.⁶¹ Michael Schenck was reported to have built North Carolina's first cotton mill near Lincolnton sometime about the year 1813. Soon afterward, more than 40,000 looms operated throughout the state. The more than seven million yards of cloth produced exceeded the output from Massachusetts.⁶² The economy, however, remained primarily agrarian through the 1860s.⁶³

North Carolina's agricultural economy was sustained partly by its sizeable slave population. Like land, slave holdings were a major source of property wealth in the state. For example, in 1815, there were roughly 3,000 slaves in Beaufort County valued at \$200 per person.⁶⁴ Similarly, the estimated value of slaves in Edgecombe County in 1815 was a precise \$220.68 per person.⁶⁵ Advertisements for runaway slaves appeared regularly in local newspapers, as they would throughout the War of 1812.⁶⁶ The long history of runaway slaves only served to intensify concerns about slaves running off to join the British or conspiring to rise up against their owners. How fears of slave uprisings affected the deployment of the North Carolina Militia will be discussed in Chapter Three.

⁶¹ Joseph K. Turner and John Luther Bridges, *History of Edgecombe County, North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1920), 341.

⁶² Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 236.

⁶³ Alan Watson, "Benjamin Smith: Brunswick County 'General' and North Carolina Governor, 1810-1811," *North Carolina Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (2010): 55.

⁶⁴ C. Wingate Reed, *Beaufort County: Two Centuries of Its History* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1962), 125.

⁶⁵ Turner and Bridges, *History of Edgecombe County, North Carolina*, 331.

⁶⁶ Lefler, *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, 263. Lefler provides an example of a runaway slave advertisement from 1774. Nearly identical advertisements appeared in the Raleigh newspapers throughout the duration of the War of 1812.

Thriving naval stores and forest products industries also bolstered North Carolina's economy. The heart of coastal North Carolina dominated the nation's naval stores industry, which included the production of tar, turpentine, pitch, and rosin, until the Civil War. The abundant forests provided the raw material for lumber and shingles. Importantly, the navigable rivers of the coastal counties allowed for the transport of naval stores, lumber, and shingles to coastal ports. Additionally, because slave labor was used extensively in the production and transport of these items, the industries contributed greatly to the presence of a large numbers of slaves—and often unsupervised at that—in the eastern coastal counties.⁶⁷

Although neighboring states may have siphoned off some economic opportunities, trade was nevertheless an important source of wealth for coastal parts of North Carolina. Because most of the state's trade was with northern ports, the Embargo of 1807 and subsequent Non-Intercourse Acts had only modest effects on North Carolina. For the most part, trade at Wilmington, New Bern, and Ocracoke, North Carolina's main entrepôts, continued as usual.⁶⁸ The two most important ports were Wilmington and New Bern. New Bern averaged six arrivals and six departures daily, and traded chiefly with New York. Wilmington served as the port for items coming out of the area near Fayetteville.⁶⁹ The port at Washington served as the economic center for Beaufort County. Trade from Washington took place between cities in the North and the West Indies.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ David Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 131–133; 266 (nn. 55–57). Cecelski depicts maritime counties in his prologue as those east of the north/south line running roughly along the western boundary of what would have been in 1810 Halifax, Nash, Cumberland, Johnston, Robeson and the eastern corner of Richmond counties.

⁶⁸ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:215.

⁶⁹ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:216.

⁷⁰ Reed, *Beaufort County*, 124–125.

Regional differences marked North Carolina as well. In the eastern part of the state, planters and large farmers dominated the social and political landscape. Eastern landed aristocrats also tended to dominate politics at a state-wide level. Farmers on small tracts of red clay land filled the central part of the state. These small holdings were often on unfertile land and far removed from markets; a quality exaggerated even further in the western mountains. Life in central and western North Carolina tended to be more democratic. These small farmers were also more likely to see the need for and support state-sponsored public education and internal improvements. Many families were self-sustaining with little ready cash for commercial enterprise or capital investment. Finally, a lack of adequate transportation and communication systems hampered state growth.⁷¹

Partisan politics impeded efforts to strengthen the economy of the state, especially in areas such as banking. In 1804, the General Assembly granted charters for two private banks in North Carolina: the Bank of the Cape Fear and the Bank of New Bern. Although the Republican General Assembly chartered the two private banks, they were widely denounced as “Federalist projects,” because they benefitted commercial interests in Federalist parts of the state.⁷² Eventually, pressure from Republican state leaders led to the incorporation of the State Bank of North Carolina at Raleigh in 1810. The State Bank was designed to absorb the two private banks and function as a central bank with branches at Edenton, New Bern, Wilmington, Fayetteville, Tarboro, and Salisbury.⁷³ This allowed Republicans access to the banking apparatus as the state bank took the place of the Federalist-controlled private banks. Although controversial, the bank’s success in improving banking conditions in North

⁷¹ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 247–9, 252.

⁷² Hugh Lefler, *History of North Carolina* (Lewis Historical Pub. Co., 1956), 286.

⁷³ Lefler, *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, 142.

Carolina justified its incorporation.⁷⁴ Although this marked an attempt to improve the state's fortunes by embracing a traditionally Federalist position, the North Carolina Republicans did not diverge from their peers in other states in their support for the Madison administration. The presence of two distinct parties in North Carolina shaped the state's position on the War of 1812 as well.

Political Parties in North Carolina

Several factors accounted for the decline of Federalism in the state. The end of the threat of war with France, the Quasi War, muted Federalist sympathies. The unpopularity of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 also undermined support for the Federalists. The General Assembly debated passing a resolution approving the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions that had condemned the Alien and Sedition Acts, although the body stopped short of formally condemning the Acts. The Acts also cost the state leaders in the Federal Party as men such as former governor Richard Dobbs Spaight (1792-95) converted to Republicanism in protest. Other leaders, such as former governor William R. Davie (1798-99), retired from state politics, and in Davie's case, moved out of the state. Jeffersonian Republican principals also appealed to areas heavily dependent on agriculture, such as Edgecombe County.⁷⁵ Additionally, as many North Carolinians perceived Federalist support for a centralized national government came at the expense of the "common man," they rallied to the Republicans.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Lefler, *History of North Carolina*, 287.

⁷⁵ Alan Watson, "The Public Meeting in Antebellum North Carolina: The Example of Edgecombe County," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (1987): 21.

⁷⁶ Lefler, *History of North Carolina*, 283.

Even as the Federalist Party lost traction, other events strengthened the Republicans. The departure of able and established Federalist politicians made room for a new crop of dynamic Republicans. Nathaniel Macon's rise in power coincided with Jefferson's election as he gained control of federal jobs with which to reward "Republican faithful." Republicans dominated positions from local justices of the peace up through state and national government posts. Furthermore, the arrival in Raleigh of Joseph Gales, a liberal newspaper editor, helped establish a reliable Republican Party paper. Gales, of London by way of Philadelphia, established the *Raleigh Register* in 1799 at the urging of North Carolina's Republicans in Congress. Shortly thereafter, the *Register* gained the reputation as the best paper in the state.⁷⁷

Another key party issue proved to be changes in the method for selecting presidential electors preceding the election of 1812.⁷⁸ It led to the resurgence of the Federal Party in North Carolina. The state legislatures of individual states determined how to select electors. In North Carolina, each congressional district voted for its presidential electors, a process known as the district method. In the year leading up the 1812 election, the Republican-dominated General Assembly became worried that President James Madison would lose electors in the upcoming election. In an effort to ensure support for Madison's reelection, in December 1811 the Assembly repealed the 1802 legislation that had established the district method and instead authorized the legislature to choose the electors. Federalists opposed this move and declared "A sacred privilege has been forcibly torn from the people by the arbitrary will of a desperate majority" Grand juries in several counties—Iredell, Cumberland,

⁷⁷ Lefler, *History of North Carolina*, 283–4.

⁷⁸ Watson, "Benjamin Smith," 53.

Richmond, Rowan, Pitt, Franklin, Greene, Caswell, and Montgomery—protested the move and published notices of opposition.⁷⁹

The Republican press tried to minimize the discord over the issue. The *Raleigh Register* viewed the protest over the change in mode of electing presidential electors as part of a larger effort of Federalists and British sympathizers to weaken the nation on the verge of war. In fact, the only outcome of the change would be to ensure Madison's reelection, which, according the *Register*, was what "every description of citizens in this State desires." The paper's editors urged those who considered themselves "true friends of the Country" to "cease to foster discontents among themselves on minor matters: and unite, as a BAND OF BROTHERS, to resist any attempt, from what ever quarter it comes, which may be made on the Integrity of the Union, or the Rights and Independence of our Common Country."⁸⁰ The discourse between the political paper, the county grand juries, and political leaders shows the issue as a partisan issue tied to the debate over the future of the nation and its course towards war.

Eventually, the 1811 decision to place the power to elect presidential electors with the legislature, in addition to concern over the then-pending war with England, helped Federalists gain ground in the General Assembly. In the state-level elections, sixty Federalists, including William Gaston, John Steele, and John Stanly, won seats in the General Assembly.⁸¹ Additionally, the emergence of "Anti-Electoral" Republicans bolstered

⁷⁹ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:214. A grand jury from Johnston County also met to declare their opposition but their presentment was not published. To see examples, *Raleigh Register*, 13 March 1812, contains the Cumberland County Grand Jury Resolution; March 27, 1812, contains the text of the Franklin County Grand Jury Resolution.

⁸⁰ *Raleigh Register*, March 27, 1812.

⁸¹ William Gaston was elected state senator from Craven County; John Steele representative from Salisbury; John Stanly representative from New Bern.

the strength of the opposition. For example, Archibald D. Murphey defeated Republican James Mebane, the state senator from Orange County who introduced the electoral measure, for his seat in the State Senate. Although Murphey considered himself a Republican and professed to support President Madison, his position as an “Anti-Electoral” Republican generated hope among Federalists that he might be sympathetic to their positions. The Federalists gained seats in the election, although their victories did not change the balance of power between the parties. The Republicans retained control of the General Assembly and as a result secured three important state leadership positions.⁸²

In spite of Federalist gains, the Republicans successfully placed William Hawkins, only thirty-four years old, in the governor’s seat. Hawkins served as governor from 1811 to 1814, for the majority of the duration of the war. He came from an established family and was the nephew of Benjamin Hawkins, a delegate to the Continental Congress, U.S. Senator, and U.S. Agent to the Creeks.⁸³ Historian Ashe described William Hawkins, “He was brave when bravery was needed, but the ‘small, sweet courtesies of life’ shone brightly in his daily intercourse.”⁸⁴ Hawkins was handily elected governor over three Republican opponents. Adding to the Republican strength in spite of the Federalist resurgence were the elections of Republicans William Miller, who defeated Federalist John Steele, for Speaker of the House and George Outlaw as Speaker of the Senate.⁸⁵

Republicans also sought to assert their presence in the national government. As part of the redistricting process, the General Assembly not only added a new district, but also

⁸² Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:218.

⁸³ Samuel Ashe, *Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present*, “Old north state” ed. (Greensboro, NC: C.L. Van Noppen, 1905), 144–153. (*Biographical History*, Vol 5, 144-153.)

⁸⁴ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:213.

⁸⁵ Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 191–193.

necessarily altered existing districts. In a letter to Federalist Party leader John Steele, Federalist Representative Joseph Pearson discussed the Republican Assembly's redistricting strategy, which affected his constituency. In 1812, the Assembly redrew the existing tenth district of Rowan, Mecklenburg, and Cabarrus Counties to include Rowan, Randolph, and Chatham Counties instead. Pearson supposed the redrawn district was intended to dampen the Federalist strength of his old district.⁸⁶ While the redistricting did add vocal Republicans to the district, the Federalists did not lose the seat until 1815.

The health of North Carolina's two political parties manifested in and was reinforced by the publication of partisan newspapers. One early historian claimed that the press was a "great medium for disseminating information" during this period.⁸⁷ More recently, historians Michael Gross and Jeffrey Pasley have analyzed the role of newspapers in shaping public opinion and politics. Gross describes the evolution of newspapers. In the pre-revolutionary period newspapers spanned the continuum of support and opposition to the government. Following the revolution, the need to mobilize people to support of political activity encouraged the establishment of new newspapers. Pro-government papers in the 1790s advocated republicanism, support for the federal constitution, and helped legitimize a government founded on states in confederation. Bitter contestation of the Sedition Act of 1798 and Thomas Jefferson's presidential victory in 1800, however, facilitated the emergence of a partisan political press to accompany heightened party identity.⁸⁸ Pasley's analysis supports this description. He asserted that the newspapers were fundamental the the

⁸⁶ Joseph Pearson to John Steele, December 12, 1812, in John Steele, *The Papers of John Steele*, ed. Henry McGilbert Wagstaff (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Print. Co., 1924), 698.

⁸⁷ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:209.

⁸⁸ Robert A. Gross and Mary Kelley, eds., *An Extensive Republic; Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840*, A History of the Book in America 2 (Chapel Hill: Published in association with the American Antiquarian Society by the University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 179–183.

existence of political parties as they provided the fabric to hold parties together between elections and connected voters across political levels and geographic space.⁸⁹

Although the press expanded rapidly, the South lagged behind the North and the mid-Atlantic in numbers and supply of newspapers, and papers in southern states tended to cluster around the state capitol. Gross also saw the south as slow to adopt the populist style that dominated Northern newspapers after 1800. Instead, the southern press remained a tool of the educated elite and gentry, who would pass on news and opinions to their “common folk” neighbors. This trend was compounded by the single party nature of southern politics. Gross perceived broadly aligned interests between Republican state and national governments, so in the South, he asserts, partisan newspapers as a means to mobilize voters, failed to develop.⁹⁰ There is good evidence, however, that at least in North Carolina there was sufficient Federalist presence to support a genuine attempt to have an opposition press. Joseph Gales’s bitter rivalry with *Minerva* publisher William Boylan and the corresponding accusation that Boylan was purposely “wring down” Republicans supports this.⁹¹ Multiple Federalist and Republican papers suggest some use of newspapers to mobilize political activity, even if it was at elite levels.

North Carolina newspapers, then, became an important forum for socializing party positions. For example, coverage of the war varied with each paper’s political affiliation in the same way that papers endorsed candidates or political measures based on party

⁸⁹ Jeffrey Pasley, *“The Tyranny of Printers”: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 11.

⁹⁰ Gross and Kelley, *An Extensive Republic; Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840*, 179–183.

⁹¹ Scott King-Owen, “To ‘Write Down the Republican Administration’: William Boylan and the Federalist Party in North Carolina, 1800-1805,” *North Carolina Historical Review* (April 2012): 155–183.

preference.⁹² In 1810, papers tied to the Federalists were printed in Raleigh, Wilmington, New Bern, Edenton, and Fayetteville. Republican papers were published in Raleigh, New Bern, and Elizabeth City. Thomas Henderson published *The Star* in Raleigh, and in his prospectus he declared his intention for the paper to be non-partisan.⁹³ Henderson promised a paper that pursued “a firm, but liberal line of conduct...solicitous always to stifle the baneful spirit of faction, looking with a single eye to the happiness and honour of . . . a country endeared to use by the ties of birth, interest and the many favors we have received from it.”⁹⁴ The *Journal*, printed in Halifax, was for a time also considered a neutral paper.⁹⁵ Places of newspaper publication in the state varied slightly by 1812. Raleigh, Newbern, Wilmington, Tarboro, Murfreesboro, Fayetteville, and Warrenton all had newspapers. Notably, not a single paper was published west of Raleigh.⁹⁶

The *Raleigh Register* was an influential Republican organ printed by Gales, who had been urged by Nathaniel Macon and other North Carolina Republicans to settle in Raleigh in order to establish a newspaper sympathetic to Republican principles. Gales began publishing the *Raleigh Register* on October 22, 1799. Republican leaders subsidized the paper—it was distributed free to readers—which quickly became the leading paper in the state.⁹⁷

⁹² Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 141.

⁹³ Calvin Jones (the state Adjutant General for five years, including the opening year of the War of 1812) and Thomas Henderson, Jr established the paper November 3, 1808 but the partnership was announced dissolved as of 1 January 1811 in an advertisement carried by the paper on February 3, 1815. However, from 1812 onwards the imprint listed only Henderson as the publisher.

⁹⁴ *The Star*, November 3, 1808

⁹⁵ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:211.

⁹⁶ John H. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851, Compiled from Original Records, Official Documents, and Traditional Statements, with Biographical Sketches of Her Distinguished Statesmen, Jurists, Lawyers, Soldiers, Divines, Etc.* (Baltimore: Regional Pub. Co., 1964), 113.

⁹⁷ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 235.

Interestingly, Gales himself followed in the mold of Archibald D. Murphey, and, contrary to agrarian Republican principles, eventually became an advocate of a state bank, increased manufacturing, and public improvements.⁹⁸

Similar to Gales, other newspaper publishers actively promoted party interests. The publisher W.W. Seaton purchased the *North Carolina Journal* of Halifax and converted it to a Republican paper. The tenor of the paper's commentary helped strengthen the Republican Party in that section of the state.⁹⁹ There were also close ties between different publishers. Not only did Seaton and Gales have compatible political preferences, but Seaton also married Joseph Gales's daughter. With Gales's son, Seaton took over publishing the *National Intelligencer* in Washington D.C. in October 1812. The paper continued in its role as a party organ for the Republican administration.¹⁰⁰ The senior Gales's North Carolina paper benefited from its close ties to the nation's capital. Gales, Jr. used an express rider to send his father copies of the *Intelligencer* as it came off the press. The *Raleigh Register*'s distribution and timely connection to the national scene allowed the paper to mold and influence public opinion in North Carolina to a great extent.¹⁰¹

In Murfreesboro', Bryant Bramble began publishing *The Hornet's Nest* with deliberate motives. The proposal for the paper, which appeared in the *Raleigh Register*, laid bare its aims:

To defend the principles of our Republican Constitution from the base aspersions of its domestic foes; to support the general policy of our present

⁹⁸ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:210.

⁹⁹ Halifax County is in the northeastern party of the state, near the border of Virginia.

¹⁰⁰ Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:210.; Samuel Harrison Smith began publishing the *National Intelligencer* on October 31, 1800. Under his supervision, the newspaper was considered the Republican administration's paper. Wagstaff, ed., *Papers of John Steele*, 670.

¹⁰¹ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 235.

Administration; to promote the interests of a pure Democracy; to cultivate unanimity of sentiment among the friends of Union, Order, and our Country's Rights; to recommend and encourage Domestic Manufactures; to promote the cause of Religion, as established on its present unshackled principles; to aid the exertions of the industrious Agriculturist; to encourage a spirit of National Pride, and a just regard for National Honor and Character; to provoke a laudable emulation in the breasts of virtuous Citizens; to oppose the enemies of a Government founded on the mangled bodies of our Fathers, and cemented with the richest blood of patriotic Heroes; to "heap coals of fire on the heads" of Anti Republicans, Aristocrats, and unprincipled Demagogues, who advocate a division of the states; and to direct the lash of sarcasm and the sting of satire against all enemies of the *Nest*, without discrimination,--shall be the constant aim of its Editor.¹⁰²

Bramble's prospectus left no question as to what type of coverage his newspaper would provide.

Federalist sympathizers also used newspapers to support their party's position. The Federalist editor William Boylan moved publication of the *North Carolina Minerva* from Fayetteville to Raleigh to counteract and compete with the *Register*.¹⁰³ The *Minerva* supported Federalist positions and even described war with England as an attempt by the United States to "cut off its own right hand."¹⁰⁴ Smaller towns also hosted Federalist papers. In Edenton, the *Gazette* printed condemnations of the war from New England. The *Carolina Federal Republican* was published in New Bern. The editors of this paper not only criticized William Blackledge, the congressman from the district, for supporting the war and for failing to support commercial interests, they also openly celebrated Federalist gains in the 1812 state

¹⁰² *Raleigh Register*, March 13, 1812.

¹⁰³ Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries*, 235.

¹⁰⁴ *Minerva*, January 15, 1813, quoted in Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 196–197.

elections.¹⁰⁵ These papers provided an outlet for Federalist positions concerning both local and national issues.

Newspapers often served as a vehicle to reprint local sentiments on certain topics. Because toasts given at Fourth of July celebrations, speeches at picnics commemorating George Washington's birthday, and even at militia musters were often pre-written and intended for publication, they serve as evidence of local political ideology in North Carolina. Historian David Waldstreicher suggests that newspapers helped publicize these celebrations and shape the behavior of those who read the printed accounts. This transmission of information helped to engender nationalism and political action.¹⁰⁶ One example in North Carolina comes from the *Star* on July 5, 1811, which reported the Raleigh celebrations of the thirty-sixth anniversary of American independence. The paper chronicled a procession including the cavalry from Wake County and a company of Volunteer Guards from the Court House to the State House, accompanied by the discharge of cannon. After the singing of a patriotic ode, also reprinted in the paper, and a reading of the Declaration of Independence, some seventeen toasts were given. Among toasts reprinted included those to the Constitution of the United States, to the President, to the Army and Navy, to the memory of George Washington, and to "the Union of the States—'The Ark of the American Israel.' Coeval with the birth of freedom, may it be co-existent with time." The toast to the Union, the paper reported, was met with three cheers. The toasts mentioned above demonstrate a sense of

¹⁰⁵ Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 197. Per Gilpatrick, the newspaper celebrated Federalist candidates' victories in Craven County, New Bern, and the surrounding counties of Carteret, Onslow, Beaufort, Pitt, Greene, Wayne, and Jones.

¹⁰⁶ David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 8, 11.

patriotism and national identity tied to the entirety of the country as well as a belief in the exceptionalism of a form of government rooted in the consent of the people.

Three additional toasts reveal a sense of national pride as they recognized the violation of neutral rights by European countries, i.e., England and France, and allude to the expectation of conflict. Furthermore, the final toast recognized the partisan and potentially divisive nature of the looming war. The toast to “Neutral Rights” called for “a hairs breadth never be yielded.” The toast to “The French Tiger and the British Shark”—also met with three cheers—called for “Paring to the nails of the one, and a file to the teeth of the other.” Lastly, the ironic toast to “Lunatic Hospitals” recognized a need to house “the maniacs who seek a separation of the States,” and demonstrated commitment to a unified national entity.¹⁰⁷

Commitment to national identity and national exceptionalism peppered the paper’s publications in the following weeks. The paper reprinted the full text of a Fourth of July oratory given by Mr. Alexander Lucas from the State House in Raleigh. In his speech, lauded by the editor of the paper as “strong and polished language” used to enforce “correct & noble sentiments,” Lucas explicitly celebrated the unique historical significance of the United States. As he outlined the progress of mankind’s search for a just society, he claimed “that until the Independence of the United States, there never had been a single people possessing all those attributes of freedom and those requisites to felicity in which men are entitled and should always aspire.” For the first time in history, American Independence united “all the usefulness of power with the privileges of freedom.”¹⁰⁸

Lucas then transitioned into ruminations on the events threatening the American government and way of life and postulated on changes necessary “for continuing our

¹⁰⁷ *The Star*, July 5, 1811.

¹⁰⁸ *The Star*, July 12, 1811.

admirable system of government and for perpetuating our freedom and independence.” He identified the dangers to America as “the [demonic] spirit of a separation of the states—in ambitious usurpations at home—and in external assaults from abroad.” Lucas was referring to the different party and regional affinity for either France or England. His statements also demonstrate the ideological commitment to republicanism as he linked America’s power and freedom to its republican institutions. To ward off these threats, Lucas asserted that the nation needed to embrace George Washington’s advice, given in his farewell address, to remember the Constitution’s spirit of compromise, and to avoid “artificial lines of distinction between different sections of the union.” Furthermore, Lucas advocated “necessary” military preparations along coasts and frontiers, the upkeep of a small army and navy, and maintenance of the militia to guard against the threat of invasion. All told, he expected that if the United States avoided internal and external threats to unity, that liberty and harmony would be the natural state of affairs and that “moral light of truth” would extend from the United States from West to East and pole to pole.¹⁰⁹ Lucas’s concerns about preserving unity reflected two ideas. First, that the bonds between the states were natural, and that a lack of unanimity over the issue of war weakened those bonds. The second idea was that any sort of disagreement between the states was a sign of weakness to the European nations and provided an opportunity for a state—France or England, in particular—to interfere or intrigue in American politics. Finally, as the newly-minted publisher of the *Minerva*, his comments on unity and avoiding foreign entanglements reflect a Federalist stance against the looming war.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ *The Star*, July 12, 1811.

¹¹⁰ King-Owen, “To ‘Write Down the Republican Administration,’” 181.

Lucas was not alone in his ruminations. Fourth of July celebrations took place all over the state. As historian Simon Newman has noted, Independence Day celebrations were one means to convey “powerfully partisan manifestoes of political sentiment.”¹¹¹ The July 26, 1811 issue of *The Star* provided examples of toasts from several towns and counties around the state and from other states as well, each with different underlying messages. In Salisbury, North Carolina, Federalist John Steele served as the president of the celebrations. The Salisbury celebration toasted the memory of Washington and noted that a return to “his maxims of government would make us once more an [sic] united and happy people.” Clearly the threat of disunity concerned people beyond the state capital. The toastmasters of Salisbury also highlighted the nation’s Constitutional representative privileges, simultaneously recognizing the uniqueness of the American system of government and cautioning against partisan politics. Finally, the Salisbury toast to American foreign relations emphasized the independence of the nation, reminding readers of the American maxim, “Peace and commerce with all nations, entangling alliances with none.”¹¹² The Salisbury toasts barely hid a thinly veiled message against war with Great Britain.

Varying sentiments were reflected around the state. The toast from Caswell County, organized by the Philanthropic Society and two military companies, also praised the Constitution, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, suggesting an alignment more in favor of the Republican Party and the possibility of war. The celebrants in Kinston honored the Constitution, the Army and Navy, and Thomas Jefferson. They also toasted “the great family of the United States” with a two-gun salute, emphasizing the

¹¹¹ Simon Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 93.

¹¹² *The Star*, July 26, 1811.

importance of and appreciation for national unity. The importance of nationalism, liberty, and the American government was also evident in celebrations outside of North Carolina. Toasts reprinted from Baltimore and Clarksburg, Maryland, Goochland and Richmond, Virginia, and Boston, Lynn, and Salem, Massachusetts honored, among other things: the Constitution, the government of the United States, the principles of independence, the people of the United States, the Army and Navy, the militia, and the “surviving heroes of ’76.” These toasts would have elicited cheers from fellow citizens in North Carolina.¹¹³

In addition to sentiments of national unity that were somewhat expected at an event in remembrance of American independence, many of the toasts praised the state government as well. The Salisbury toasts honored the state judiciary and the state constitution. Toasts from Green County also recognized the Constitution of North Carolina. The people of Green County and Kinston toasted the University of North Carolina. Caswell County honored then Governor Benjamin Smith with a toast while Beaufort Town toasted the state itself. Among the numerous honors given to the national system of government and past presidents, consistent recognition of North Carolina and its institutions reflected twin alliances to the nation and to the individual state.¹¹⁴

Local newspapers offered differing perspectives on the possibility of war by publishing toasts from George Washington’s birthday, another opportunity for politically minded citizens to offer comments intended for public consumption, both at the actual event and through reprint. In February 1812, members of the Lenoir County militia regiment and other citizens gathered in Kinston to celebrate Washington’s Birthday. Those in attendance listened to Brigadier General William Croom read a list of resolutions, which they then

¹¹³ *The Star*, July 26, 1811.

¹¹⁴ *The Star*, July 26, 1811.

endorsed and ordered to be published in the *Raleigh Register*. The resolutions clearly indicated those in attendance accepted the Republican arguments for maneuvering the nation into war with England. Among the statements included was an acceptance of Madison's interpretation of the Cadore letter, France's ostensible lifting of provisions in the Berlin and Milan decrees that hampered American trade, although they did condemn French treatment of American ships in French ports. The resolutions condemned the British practice of impressments and plunder by British cruisers. Tellingly, they also determined that continued peace with Britain, given its behavior toward the people and property of Americans, "would be degrading to our national character," and they pledged "to support our government, with our lives and our property, in all such measures as they in their wisdom may think proper to adopt."¹¹⁵

Taking an opposition stance, the New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican* published articles that supported the Federalist position on the war. Federalist alignment with Great Britain and their reluctance to cut ties with that country manifested in arguments demonstrating the futility in taking on British military might. The paper published arguments asserting that war with Great Britain would result in the bombardment of every town on the coast. Alternatively, the paper asserted that even restrained military action, in which Britain eschewed coastal bombardment but "content herself with sweeping every American sail from the ocean and blockading all our ports," would result in indescribable disaster.¹¹⁶ The intent of these arguments was to demonstrate the futility of taking on Great Britain in a military contest even if the cause was just.

¹¹⁵ *Raleigh Register*, March 13, 1812. Although the article says the meeting was "Saturday the 22d inst.," March 22, 1812 had yet to pass and a calendar shows that Saturday the 22nd was in February, not March.

¹¹⁶ *Carolina Federal Republican*, January 11, 1812, quoted in Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 2:214.

In addition to political commentary, state newspapers printed letters to the editor and other state-oriented pieces that captured local attitudes toward the impending war. One “Anti-Jacobin” writing in the New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican* accused the government of “embracing the pitiful intrigues of France” and “pushing us into war with Great Britain.” “Anti-Jacobin” predicted a protracted and bloody war unless the country changed its stance toward Great Britain. Despite the paper’s Federalist affiliation and its willingness to print anti-war missives, it continued to report on local military matters. In May 1812, the paper published a roster of officers receiving Army commissions alongside its oppositional piece.¹¹⁷ One week later, it published the General Order for the militia issued by the Adjutant General Calvin Jones.¹¹⁸ The paper’s anti-administration stance did not prevent it from publishing articles of local interest—war preparations and officer assignments before the declaration of war and following the declaration of war, the events of the war, especially along the North Carolina coast.

The Raleigh *Star* carried much of the same news, but it was presented with a decidedly different tone. On May 8, 1812 the paper printed an exchange of letters between Captain Thomas Henderson of the Wake Troop of Cavalry and Governor William Hawkins. Henderson and his Troop were “influenced by a disposition at all times to obey the call of their country” and made “a tender to [Hawkins] of their services.” Hawkins reply was full of equal rhetorical flourishes. He praised the Troop for their “exemplary conduct” and “conspicuous and honorable proof of ... patriotism.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, May 2, 1812.

¹¹⁸ New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, May 9, 1812.

¹¹⁹ Raleigh *Star*, May 8, 1812.

Thomas Henderson was not the only citizen of North Carolina to offer his services to the state. William Balfour and the Edgecombe County Militia did the same in May. Henry Elliot of Asheborough offered his services as the second major of the Randolph Regiment of the Sixth Brigade of the militia. Andrew Joyner wrote that it was “time for the government to resort to the last appeal of nations and to endeavor to obtain by force that justice which has been denied to entreaty.” A command position would allow him to “obey the call of [his] country.” Letters reached Governor Hawkins from individuals in Raleigh, Fayetteville, Martin County, and Warren County offering their services. Support for the war permeated the letters. Mr. Gray of Randolph County believed “that every means, comporting with our National dignity, hath been used, to attain justice from the Government of Great Britton without effect; the late declaration of war made by our Government...has my support.”¹²⁰ Although the promise of a commission motivated some volunteers, citizens couched their letter in the language of duty and patriotism and the belief that the war was just.

In addition to requests for commissions, news of raised companies also reached Governor Hawkins. A militia commander from Granville County wrote to announce the muster of his troops at the hill in Oxford on June 17. Edmond Jones let Hawkins know about the “general spirit of patriotism” he perceived “to pervade the whole company” he witnessed muster in Wilkesboro. The Raleigh Volunteer Guards offered their services to fulfill the states’ infantry quota. And, the residents of Hertford County reported a company of cavalry

¹²⁰ William Balfour to William Hawkins, May 10, 1812; Henry Elliot to Hawkins, May 14, 1812; Andrew Joyner to Hawkins, June 2, 1812; R. Athimore to Hawkins, June 3, 1812; Illegible to Hawkins, June 4, 1812; Jas. Green to Hawkins, June 19, 1812; Henry Taylor to Hawkins, June 21, 1812; Illegible to Hawkins, June 24, 1812; Alex. Gray to Hawkins, July 3, 1812. Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC.

raised to support troop requirements.¹²¹ As the nation moved closer toward war, the residents of North Carolina at least seemed to display a certain amount of enthusiasm for the war and a willingness to fill the militia ranks.

Reflecting this enthusiasm, in December 1811, the General Assembly drafted a resolution supporting the administration's measures preparing for war. In addition to Nathaniel Macon reading them into the House Record, Governor Hawkins forwarded them to President Madison. In a letter dated January 4, 1812, Madison acknowledged Hawkins's December letter which had included the General Assembly resolution. Madison praised the Assembly's declaration of readiness to co-operate "in vindicating the violated rights of their country." Furthermore, Madison pushed for unity and hoped that, "the state of our national affairs will have its proper influence converting party feelings and prejudices, into united exertions against the aggressions and insults, which the just conduct of our country has failed to avert."¹²² Madison's letter hinted toward the declaration of war that would pass in six months time. His push for unity and cooperation perhaps mirrored actions by the previous General Assembly to alter the election process.

In the years and months leading up to the War of 1812 both the Federalists and Republicans retained a healthy presence in state politics. An outpouring of support for the war and the Republican Party shown in newspapers, letters, and in the actions of the General Assembly—most notably the December 1811 memorial—suggest unqualified support for the national war effort. However, Federalist objection to the war, evidenced by North Carolina politicians at both the state and federal level, indicates some resistance to support. Federalist

¹²¹ James [Spettor] to William Hawkins, May 30, 1812; Edm. Jones to Hawkins, June 6, 1812; Illegible to Hawkins, June 26, 1812; Illegible to Hawkins, July 1, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

¹²² James Madison to William Hawkins, January 4, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

presence meant that the war supporters and the federal government could not take North Carolina's support for granted. In 1812 mobilizing the nation's resources meant mobilizing each of the state's resources. Because the Federalists continued to have a voice in the state government, figuring out how to make "the system" work was an important step for the federal government to access the state's resources.

The next chapter describes the state's response the first federal requisition. Additionally, an examination of Federalist efforts to change voting laws and cooperation with Federalists from other states to unseat President Madison during the 1812 presidential election shows that that even after the declaration of war, Federalists refrained from supporting the war. Finally, the chapter includes a description of the Ocracoke invasion, the state's response, the federal government's lack of action, and the state's decision to stay aligned to the larger war effort. Seemingly, the federal government secured North Carolina's support for the war, so legitimizing state-federal relationships arose as the key mechanism by which to secure wartime mobilization.

Chapter 3: Mobilizing for War: Demands, Disenchantment, and Dependability

President Madison's war declaration on June 18, 1812 was merely the last and most official act acknowledging that a state of war existed between the United States and Great Britain. The peace of 1783 had left behind a host of unresolved tensions, and a series of crises had kept those tensions alive. In the seven months preceding the June declaration, however, the nation took concrete steps to assume a war footing. Events such as Madison convening Congress for the fall session one month early on November 4, 1811, his November 5 address to the body, the series of bills dedicated to war preparations, and the militia authorization of April 1812 all anticipated the final Congressional vote. Madison likely made the crucial decision that war was the only solution as events unfolded between November 1810 and July 1811. His November speech outlined the logic for war and subsequent congressional efforts to prepare the nation for war reflected an acceptance of Madison's logic. By the time Madison put the issue before Congress in June 1812, many key financial and manpower decisions had been decided.¹

North Carolinians in Congress participated in federal preparations for war while the members of the state government considered both the national plan for war and state-level security concerns. The different security priorities of the nation and the state came to a head in the summer of 1813. The governor positioned his troops in a manner that reflected local concerns about invasion and internal security as much as they complied with a national strategy. Any variance between the two seemed to provide an opening for the state to assert

¹ J.C.A. Stagg, *The War of 1812: Conflict for a Continent* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 18–22, 34–40; Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 44.

its rights over national interest, and yet, the state ultimately accepted the federal war plan and priorities, primarily the invasion of Canada.

The state remained committed to the national war cause even after the significant disappointment in the federal government's response to North Carolina's moment of crisis—the Ocracoke invasion in July 1813—because the Republican party ideology moved people to action. National identity rooted in the republican experiment prevailed over any sense of disillusionment with the cause and continuing anti-war and anti-administration sentiment within the state. The federal government's wartime demands were substantial, significantly exceeding any demands it had yet placed on the states since the Revolutionary War. But, as a state, North Carolina had its own security concerns. The invasion of Ocracoke would demonstrate that at a key, even existential level, federal and state priorities diverged. Nevertheless, despite the continued efforts of the anti-war faction within the state, and despite a general sense that the federal government had overlooked the state's real concerns, North Carolinians continued to support the government and would continue to meet federal demands, even in the wake of the Ocracoke invasion.

Demands of the War

The 1812 mobilization against Great Britain was the first significant military action undertaken by the United States following the ratification of the Constitution. The War of 1812 differed from earlier frontier conflicts and the Quasi War against France not only in duration, but also in the increased manpower requirements leveled on the nation as a whole. In 1858, an auditor for the State Department estimated 22,038 troops, “whether regulars, volunteers, draughted [sic] men, or militia,” served in the various Indian Wars following the

Revolution and prior to the War of 1812, in contrast to the 528,274 troops who served during the War of 1812.²

This level of mobilization challenged the nation's finances and illuminates the competing priorities of state- and national-level security concerns. Not only did the federal government ask states to make greater than one percent of their populations available to the Federal government to employ, the Federal government did not always recognize local decisions to activate militia troops—detached or otherwise—as concomitant with national security concerns, thus denying states financial remuneration for the employment of their troops. Under the Constitution, the federal government was responsible for organizing, arming, and disciplining the military. Once the government activated the militia, it became a federal force and the federal government was obligated to pay the troops. Furthermore, shortages in clothing, arms, and pay even for regular army recruits demonstrates that the rate of mobilization exceeded the central government's ability to honor its financial commitments not just to states, but to individual enlistees.

The one percent figure is potentially telling. Historian Azar Gat has explored the impact of a mobilization rate of greater than one percent on a state.³ He discovered that most governments have found it nearly impossible to sustain a professional peacetime army of greater than one percent of the population without serious strain on the state's financial, and ultimately, political health. Additionally, although it was not uncommon to see mobilization rates exceed one percent during wartime, such efforts in protracted wars had destructive

² United States, *Number of Troops in the Last War with Great Britain. Letter from the President of the United States, Communicating Information in Relation to the Number of Troops Engaged in the Service of the United States in the Late War with Great Britain* (Washington, DC: 1858). The auditor derived his information from the *American State Papers*, volume 1, Military Affairs, 5-69.

³ Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 474–480.

effects akin to those caused by large peacetime standing armies. Even in wartime, the largest mobilizations rarely exceeded two percent of the population.⁴ Because of short and variable enlistment lengths, as well as multiple enlistments by the same individual, it is difficult to determine exactly how many men served at any given time during the War of 1812; however, in 1812, the United States, in theory, commanded 185,000 men.⁵ Compared to a total population of 7,239,881 people, the federal government was prepared to active over 2.5 percent of the population. In reality, the government never activated all 100,000 militia at the same time.

Gat's sweeping analysis of provides a comparative context within which to examine the mobilization rate of North Carolinians and supports the anecdotal evidence of the heavy burden placed on North Carolina by the federal government. This was particularly true given the relatively undeveloped financial capacity of the early republic, at either the state or the federal level. This burden, coupled with the state's frustration with the federal government's divergent military plans, illustrated especially by the Ocracoke invasion, suggests that cultural factors, specifically nascent nationalism, republican political ideology, partisan politics, and the power of local elites, were critical to North Carolina's continued commitment to the federal government.

Between the end of the Revolution and the beginning of the War of 1812, the U.S. Army's authorized strength varied between low and lower.⁶ Although it was creeping

⁴ Gat, *War and Human Civilization*, 474–477. Notable exceptions to 2 percent wartime mobilization rate include Gustavus Adolphus' seventeenth-century army, which peaked at 6 percent and Frederick the Great during the Seven Years' War at nearly 5 percent.

⁵ 185,000 comes from the roughly 10,000-man regular army plus the newly authorized increase of 25,000 and the 50,000 volunteers and 100,000 militia held in readiness.

⁶ Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army: From its Organization, September 29, 1789 to March 2, 1903*, Vol 2 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1903), 281. For example, during the five-

upwards by the beginning of 1812, the total authorized strength of the army remained only 9,921. Structured by the Act of April 12, 1808, which provided for a regiment of light artillery, one each of artillerists, light dragoons, and riflemen, and seven of infantry, the army's actual strength fell short of its authorized strength. Secretary of War William Eustace estimated the actual number of men was closer to 5,260, with most infantry regiments reporting in at less than half their authorized strength.⁷ In addition to the paltry regular army, the nation relied on the militia. Militia returns at the beginning of the war estimated there were 719,449 troops available. Militia from the new state of Louisiana and the two territories were not included in this estimate, which was also somewhat outdated—only the returns of nine of seventeen states were current. Revised estimates from 1814, which again excluded Louisiana and the territories, concluded that 711,551 of the nation's 1,102,437 free white men between the ages of sixteen and forty five were enrolled in the militia. Over the course of the war, some 471,662 of the 528,274 soldiers, sailors, and marines who served during the war were men from the militia rolls mustered into the service of the United States.⁸

year period of fighting in the northwest, the U.S. Army grew from a force of 320 regulars and 1,103 volunteers in 1790 to a strength of 2,843 regulars and 2,387 volunteers in 1795. Heitman estimates the Army at 5,563 at the beginning of the War of 1812.

⁷ Robert S. Quimby, *The United States Army and the War of 1812: An Operational and Command Study* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1997), vol. 1:4. In page 4, note 4, Quimby lists the authorized strength for these units as 819 for the light artillery, 1,628 for the artillerists, 666 for the dragoons, 806 for the two infantry regiments in existence prior to 1808, and 849 for the five infantry regiments and for the regiment of riflemen created by the 1808 act. Eustis's estimate of troop strength comes from Eustis to Callender Irvine, February 12, 1811, cited by Quimby.

⁸ Quimby, *The United States Army*, vol 1:4; Robert L. Kerby, "The Militia System and the State Militias in the War of 1812," *Indiana Magazine of History* 73, no. 2 (June 1, 1977): 111–112.; The 719,449 comes from the War Department Annual Militia Return for 1812, February 13, 1813, *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, I, 256. The 1814 revision comes from an 1814 Senate Report of the Select Committee on the Militia (*American State Papers, Military Affairs*, I, 523). Kerby cites Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* and give 458,463 militia out of a total of 527,654 soldiers, sailors, and marines who served in the war. The numbers I have used are slightly different and come from United States, *Number of Troops in the Last War with Great Britain. Letter from the President of the United States, Communicating Information in Relation to the Number of Troops Engaged in the Service of the United States in the Late War with Great Britain* (1858).

In preparation for the war, the Twelfth Congress passed several measures to increase the size of the United States' fighting force. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs recommended six resolutions subsequently passed by the members of the House. Four of the six resolutions directly addressed the size of the army. The first recommendation was to meet the current authorized strength. The second was to raise 10,000 additional regulars to serve for three years. The third resolution recommended that the President be authorized to accept up to 50,000 volunteers into federal service. And finally, the House recommended that the President be authorized to order out the militia. Competing proposals from the Senate shaped the legislation ultimately passed into law in the early months of 1812.

Between January and April of 1812 Congress voted on the three bills designed to augment the fighting force. In January, Congress sent a bill to the president authorizing an additional 25,000 men serving 5-year enlistments for the regular army. The force was envisioned as ten infantry regiments, two of artillery, and one of cavalry. In February, Congress passed a bill authorizing the president to accept up to 50,000 volunteer troops, organized in companies of infantry, artillery, or cavalry, for one year of service and officered according to the laws of their state of origin. Guidance as to whether or not the volunteers could serve outside the country was not written into the bill, but was left to the discretion of the president. Finally, on April 10, 1812, Congress passed an act that authorized the president to call out 100,000 militiamen for six months of service. The bill called for the troops to be organized, armed, and equipped by the states, and to be ready to be called up. Each state received a quota to fill according to the relative size of its militia. Secretary Eustis

transmitted the quotas to state governors on April 15 and directed them to comply with the terms of the act.⁹

In response, North Carolina's government issued General Orders on April 29, 1812 listing the artillery, cavalry, riflemen, and infantry apportionment for each of the fifteen state brigades.¹⁰ North Carolina's Adjutant General Calvin Jones informed the major generals and brigadier generals of the state that the President had required North Carolina to prepare 7,000 men, officers included, "organized, armed, and equipped, held in readiness to march at a moment's warning." To ensure the detachment and organization "should be affected within the shortest time possible," Jones addressed the orders first to the brigadier generals, who had more immediate control over the militia at the brigade level. In addition to requesting inspection returns and muster rolls be forwarded to him as soon as possible, Jones also solicited recommendations for "suitable field officers" commissioned in each division, for command of the regiment to be detached. Finally, he requested a list of all officers who volunteered for detached service. By reaching out to his division and brigade commanders,

⁹ Quimby, *The United States Army and the War of 1812: An Operational and Command Study*, vol 1:7–8. During this period, there were essentially three types of servicemen. The United States Army was a standing army under federal control and composed of regular troops. State militias were under the control of the governor unless called into service by the President. As described, during this war, in April 1812 the president was authorized a two-year window to call up 100,000 militia. There was a second, separate requisition in 1814. Each state was given a quota of men, identified from their militia and organized into the "detached militia," who then could be called into service to meet the 100,000-man authorization. How men were identified as part of the detached militia was handled at the state level. States preferred to have men volunteer to be identified as part of the detached militia as opposed to having to draft them. These men, however, were different from Volunteers. Members of Volunteer Companies also came from the ranks of the militia, but were essentially privately organized companies that could volunteer their service to the national government. The important distinction here was that as entities other than militia, Volunteer companies were theoretically free from Constitutional language, which designated them as defensive forces and prevented their use for expeditionary purposes, which would require them to cross national borders.

¹⁰ General Orders April 29, 1812, *General Assembly Session Records, Nov-Dec 1812*, Miscellaneous Reports, Box 3, North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC.

Calvin Jones tapped into a state organization that had been in place in roughly the same form for the past twenty years.¹¹

The Federal Militia Act of 1792 provided for the organization of state militias and North Carolina in turn instituted state laws to specify who should serve and under what terms and how the force would be organized. In 1794, the North Carolina General Assembly amended and repealed existing state legislation to reform its militia.¹² Although there would be subsequent amendments, the terms of the 1794 militia act laid the groundwork that shaped militia force as it existed in 1812. The state required that all free men and indentured servants between the ages of eighteen and forty five enroll in the militia—some exemptions existed for religious or political reasons.¹³ In 1812, the General Assembly again amended the state militia laws, this time to prohibit the enrollment of any “free Negro or Mulatto” in the militia. They did, however, provide for the enrollment of “a sufficient number of such” in any company as musicians.¹⁴

The law also organized the state’s force. It divided each county into militia districts, with one company representing each district. Together, the companies of the county formed

¹¹ Calvin Jones, April 29, 1812. Governor’s Papers, Letters and Papers, William Hawkins, North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins].

¹² The state legislature amended a 1793 state act entitled, “An act to carry into effect an act of Congress, entitled, and act more effectually to provide for the national defence by establishing an uniform militia throughout the United States,” and repealed a 1786 act entitled “an act for establishing a militia in this state.”

¹³ *Acts of General Assembly*, 1794, 121-128, from *The Public acts of the General Assembly of North Carolina* (Newbern: Martin & Ogden, 1804). The act included various exemptions including judicial and executive officers of the United States, members of both houses of Congress, State officials including judges, justices of the peace, and sheriffs, postal officials, university students, members of the merchant marine, and certain veterans of the Revolutionary War. The act also exempted member of certain religious orders, specifically Quakers, Moravians, Dunkards, and Menonists (Mennonites). The only caveat to the exemption was that no person was exempt from “performing duty in case of insurrection or invasion of this state.” The amendments made in 1803 to the cavalry portion of the militia laws and those in 1806 made to amend the infantry portion of the laws did not change the general requirements for who was obligated to serve.

¹⁴ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1812, 1-3.

the county regiment. Finally, regiments of adjoining counties formed a brigade. In 1812, there were sixteen brigades in the state militia, with one more added in 1813. State law required all militia companies and regiments to meet and muster every year. The General Assembly was responsible for electing generals and field officers. In addition to infantry companies, some counties had organized companies of trained cavalry that remained ready for emergency action.¹⁵ For example, the militia companies of several counties were called out to address the threat of slave insurrections the spring and summer of 1802. In response to an attempted insurrection centered in Bertie County, militia in Bertie, Martin, and Hertford Counties patrolled the area, including plantations, keeping enslaved men under guard and seizing suspected conspirators. In Martin County, over 100 enslaved men were imprisoned.¹⁶

The overlap of men serving in positions of military and civil power suggests local influences that would affect the way militia was raised and employed.¹⁷ Analysis of the muster rolls of the detached militia shows those men who occupied other positions of property and status also largely filled militia officer positions. The muster rolls associated

¹⁵ Samuel Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, vol. 2 (Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Co., 1971), 222.

¹⁶ Jeffrey J. Crow, "Slave Rebelliousness and Social Conflict in North Carolina, 1775 to 1802," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (January 1, 1980).; *Raleigh Register*, July 6, 1802. During the American Revolution, Lord Dunmore's proclamation in 1775 played upon and reinforced American's fear of slave uprising. The British used the promise of freedom to slaves who were willing to fight for the British in order to increase the size of their fighting force and to create uprisings that might force Americans to abandon revolution. The successful slave revolt in the French colony of Saint Domingue, which resulted in Haitian independence in 1800, and the unsuccessful slave uprising in Virginia known as Gabriel's Rebellion, also in 1800, reinforced anxiety over slave revolts in the American south. Historian Jeffrey Crow tied the religious activity of the Great Revival in 1801 and 1802 to increased rumors of black slave insurrections in North Carolina. Interaction in large religious gatherings "offered an opportunity for, and was an instrument of, Negro rebellion," Crow, "Slave Rebelliousness," 96. In early 1802, rumors of slave insurrections spread through the northeastern counties of Camden, Bertie, Currituck, Martin, Halifax, Pasquotank, Hertford, Washington, and Warren. Such events contributed to North Carolinians perceived vulnerability to slave uprisings and would shape local attitudes about the use of militia forces during the War of 1812.

¹⁷ John Cheney and Thad Eure, *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: a Narrative and Statistical History*, A revised and updated edition of the 1913 North Carolina Manual. (Raleigh: North Carolina Dept. of the Secretary of State, 1975), 201–358; North Carolina. Adjutant General's Dept., *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812: Detached from the Militia of North Carolina, in 1812 and 1814*. (Raleigh: Raboteau, 1851).

with the 1812 and 1814 presidential orders or called up by Major General Thomas Pinckney, commander of the Sixth Military District, in 1814 list fifty-six different officers in the rank of major or higher. Five officers listed in 1812 repeated service in 1814: Jeremiah Slade, Jesse Pearson, Andrew Joyner, Simon Bruton, and Nathan Tisdale. Of those fifty-six officers, thirty-one had served, were serving, or eventually would serve in the North Carolina General Assembly. Twenty-two of those men, including Major General Montfort Stokes, who served as clerk to the State Senate from 1799-1816, served a term during the war years, 1811-1814. Additionally, service in the General Assembly was often characterized by multiple terms; sometimes consecutive, sometimes not. For example, Edmund Jones of Wilkes County who was listed at the lieutenant colonel commandant of the Cavalry Regiment served eighteen terms in the General Assembly spanning the years 1798 to 1838. This included serving as a representative from Wilkes County in the session convened in November of 1810, 1811, and 1812. Although Jones's service is the highest total number of terms, men such as Slade and Bruton, who each served thirteen different terms, demonstrate that the same men represented their counties over the span of decades. Even those men who did not hold office appeared to have ties to the social elite. For example, sons of the influential Blount and Lenoir family received military appointments. Others still, such as Major Amos Sharpe, headed sizeable households.¹⁸ Officer positions clearly were marks of social status.

Officership may have been confined to the social and political elite, but the size of the federal militia call up cast a wide net over the state's male population. North Carolina's obligation under the culminating April 1812 authorization of 100,000 militia to be detached

¹⁸ Searching the 1810 Census Schedules through Heritage Quest shows Amos Sharpe of Iredell County as the head of an eight-member household that included three slaves. Major John H. Freeling of Rowan County is possibly the son of Henry Freeling, listed in the census as the 67-year old head of a twenty-one person household, including thirteen slaves.

for Federal service was 7,000 troops. Using the unit allotments described by the General Orders issued from Raleigh on April 29, 1812, along with the muster rolls of units detached from the militia of North Carolina and the county level census data, one can build a numerical picture of mobilization rates at both the state and county level.¹⁹ Granted, these numbers are somewhat theoretical as the detached militia was to be organized, armed and equipped, and ready to respond “at a moments [sic] warning.”²⁰ Not all the detached militia were called up and some men did served multiple, short-term enlistments; however the requirement levied by the federal government provides insight into what it thought its manpower needs would be for the war. Additionally, the psychological cost of being selected for deployment at an indeterminate time would undermine a sense of stability and impede local economic productivity.

The governor’s order to militia commanders listed requisitions for 6,990 troops.²¹ The eventual muster rolls of the Detached Militia for 1812 show the state coming up short by 154 men and officers. The largest shortfall was in infantry troops, which lacked 124 men, followed by an 87-man deficit among riflemen. Excess numbers in the cavalry (49) and artillery (8) mitigated the shortfall, but not entirely. Although it appears the state missed its militia quota, historians and contemporaries generally categorize North Carolina as having met its manpower obligations. Nevertheless, comparing the numbers on the detached rolls against county census data reveals the rate of mobilization imposed by the federal militia requisition. Analyzing this data against the entire the white population (slave and free blacks

¹⁹ North Carolina. Adjutant General’s Dept. and Raboteau, *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812*; Cheney and Eure, *North Carolina Government*.

²⁰ Calvin Jones, April 29, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

²¹ No reason is given for the number being ten short.

were then excluded), reveals that 58 of 62 counties exceeded a one percent mobilization rate. Given that Gat's argument centers on economic health and productivity, however, it is important to consider the entire population, regardless of eligibility to serve. Even factoring in the slave and free non-white population, 37 of the 62 counties exceeded a one percent mobilization rate, with the highest rate being 1.99% in Rutherford County.²² These rates do not include the estimated 1,700 to 2,000 men from North Carolina who served in the regular army, nor do they consider volunteer regiments or the rest of the state militia establishment.²³ Although Gat's theory focuses on standing military forces, the logic of his observations extends to this situation where the federalization of troops along with other manpower demands created a situation where the manpower toll for the state exceeds the one percent threshold, creating a real and noticeable strain on state resources as North Carolina struggled to meet financial, material, and strategic demands of war that held little if any existential threat to the state itself. Furthermore, the differences between state and national military priorities heightened the stressfulness of that significant wartime contribution. Although the state articulated its vulnerabilities to the federal government and received little support in return, residents and politicians of the state continued to offer their own time and money to the war effort.

North Carolina's Vulnerabilities

A war with Great Britain threatened North Carolinians in three ways: the enemy could attack along the state's lengthy coast; the war might encourage slave uprisings; and it

²² Cavalry and artillery troops were listed by military district and not by county on the rolls. Where able, I have assigned those troops to a specific county, but in some instances, men serving in cavalry or artillery positions are not credited to their county, artificially deflating the percentage of those who served.

²³ Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots; North Carolina and the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 56. In note 2 Lemmon cites a letter from A.G. Glynn to Calvin Jones, September 6, 1812 for the estimate of regular soldiers.

could also tap into Indian hostility on the frontier. Not insignificantly, these vulnerabilities mirrored those perceived by the state's political ancestors during the American Revolution.²⁴ That the issues were rooted in long standing fears gave credibility to the state's concerns. The issue that garnered the most attention was the seaboard. North Carolina's pine woods and the associated production of naval stores (especially of turpentine and tar) provided a tempting target for the British Navy, and North Carolinians believed their coast was vulnerable to enemy attack. Although the 175-mile long Outer Banks from Cape Lookout to Currituck protected much of the mainland coast, several shallow inlets allowed access through the banks.²⁵ Ocracoke was the most popular route through the banks, although it was also possible to pass through Currituck Inlet. Edenton was the chief port of the Albemarle Sound and Washington and New Bern were the chief ports of Pamlico Sound. As the coastline stretched southward, Fort Hampton guarded the seaport of Beaufort. At the southern end of the state, Wilmington, on the Cape Fear River, served as the state's best seaport. Fort Johnston, next to the town of Smithville, guarded the entrance to the river.²⁶ Due to the natural barrier provided by the Outer Banks, it was widely believed by engineers, if not necessarily residents, that the two forts provided the coast sufficient protection.²⁷ Beginning in 1810, though, Governor Benjamin Smith prodded the General Assembly to take steps to

²⁴ Wayne E. Lee, *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 141–145, 164.

²⁵ Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *North Carolina, the History of a Southern State*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 18-19.

²⁶ Sarah M. Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 120-122. Ocracoke was also written as Ocracock or Occacock at the time.

²⁷ Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 122. Lemmon cites several sources including an engineering report presented to the House of Representatives during the 19th Congress (1825-26), 1st session to make this point.

strengthen defenses along the coast. He addressed the topic again in his 1811 address to the legislature and went so far as to offer guidelines on how to improve coastal protection.²⁸

Although the state regarded its coastline as an important defensive asset, the state of its militia reflected a lack of emphasis placed on military matters. Reports from coastal militia companies suggested a lack of preparedness and organization that made identifying detached militia difficult. As the militia mustered in and around Wilmington in May 1812, the militia commander Major John Lillington reported that the company was in a confused state because of the high rate of officer turnover. He assessed that the troops did their duty in a “miserable manner” and during musters over the last two years before the war, “no more than one half of the men appeared on the parade ground and them without order or discipline.” In addition to the desperate state of the militia, the formation of volunteer companies exacerbated the situation. Volunteer companies drew men away from the “regular” companies and of the volunteer companies in existence, only two were in “any tolerable order.”²⁹

In addition to organizational difficulties, a lack of sufficient arms pervaded the state. From Fayetteville, John Cameron inquired of the governor when and if he planned to distribute arms provided by the national government to the state militia. His former company composed of 130 men contained many unarmed men who were “anxious to have their hands on effective arms.” It was May before North Carolina Governor William Hawkins authorized Cameron’s February request. The commander from Rockingham also needed to know if his troops needed to furnish their own arms if called out, or if they would be supplied at their

²⁸ Alan Watson, “Benjamin Smith: Brunswick County ‘General’ and North Carolina Governor, 1810-1811,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (2010): 45, 48, 51.

²⁹ Major John Lillington to William Hawkins May 26, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

rendezvous.³⁰ Heeding concerns about readiness, and aware that the General Assembly had not passed any legislation to arm the militia, Hawkins corresponded with Secretary of War William Eustis to insist that the federal government arm state troops per the Act of 1808. Hawkins first pressed for access to U.S. Army weapons deposited in Fayetteville for arming volunteer companies. Eustis agreed to the demand and Hawkins used at least 130 stands to arm the volunteer company of John Cameron in Fayetteville. Later in June, after portions of the detached militia had been called out, Hawkins was also successful in securing an additional shipment of arms; Eustis ordered 2,000 additional stands of arms sent to Fort Johnston near Wilmington to arm the militia companies garrisoning Fort Johnston and Fort Hampton. This was the first disbursal of arms to North Carolina under the Act of 1808 and the state stored the remainder in the Fayetteville arsenal, intended for later use.³¹

As war loomed, in May 1812 Secretary of War Eustis ordered Governor Hawkins to place the 7,000 detached militia provided by North Carolina under the command of Major General Pinckney, commander of the Sixth Military District, as a precautionary measure for defense of the coast.³² In July and under Pinckney's direction, Hawkins ordered Major General Thomas Brown of the detached North Carolina militia to call up four infantry or artillery companies to garrison both Fort Hampton and Fort Johnston in order to discourage

³⁰ J.A. Cameron to William Hawkins, February 1, 1812; William Hawkins to Winslow, May 15, 1812; Campbell to William Hawkins, June 18, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

³¹ William Hawkins to William Eustis, April 26, 1812; Eustis to Hawkins, May 6, 1812; Hawkins to Eustis, June 3, 1813; Eustis to Hawkins, June 26, 1812, Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor's Letters and Papers, Box 24 (Corresponds to Governor's Letter Book #18), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Hawkins Letter Book 18]. For information on the Act of 1808, see Carl Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 12, 52. The Act of 1808, passed on April 22, 1808, provided \$200,000 annually for the distribution of arms to state militias. The state returns would determine the amounts of arms apportioned and distributed to each state.

³² Calvin Jones, 29 April 29, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA; William Eustis to William Hawkins, May 21, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

British attacks. By the end of the summer of 1812, Major John Lillington commanded nearly 250 men from the companies from Bladen, Brunswick, New Hanover, and Duplin counties, all near the town of Wilmington, and manned Fort Johnston. Slightly more than 300 men from the Lenoir, Beaufort, Craven and Onslow county companies assembled under the command of Major Nathan Tisdale to occupy Fort Hampton.³³

The use of detached militia to man the seacoast certainly met with local approval in light of the concern for coastal security; however, the call out of the state troops generated problems supplying the troops. Governor Hawkins complained to detached militia commander Major General Brown that it was a matter of “serious concern” that he, as the governor, could not control the supply for state troops called into service; however, he hoped that the Secretary of War had made all the necessary arrangements. Seemingly, the federal government had made arrangements because Major General Pinckney ordered the U.S. Army quartermaster on duty in North Carolina to furnish the detached militia with the “necessary quantity of camp equipage and other articles.” However, as Brown soon reported, troops remained destitute of blankets, ammunition, tents, and other items.³⁴

While the governor looked to the federal government to provision his troops, commanders in the field turned to a more familiar, and more local, chain of command. In a letter that reached the governor, Major Tisdale reported to the state Adjutant General Calvin Jones that he had dismissed some troops for lack of camp equipment. His men in and around

³³ For troop estimates: North Carolina. Adjutant General’s Dept., *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812*, 9–18, 24–25, 66. William Hawkins to Calvin Jones, July 9, 1812; Calvin Jones to William Hawkins July 10, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18. Thomas Brown to William Hawkins, July 17, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA. Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 122–123.

³⁴ William Hawkins to Major General Brown, July 17, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA; HQ Georgetown, July 31, 1812; Major General Brown to William Hawkins, Aug 1, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

Fort Hampton had finally decamped from a church and a court house into newly-built barracks. As they approached October, Tisdale worried about cold weather as many in his battalion were poor men and “very thinly clad.” He prevailed on the Adjutant General to petition the General Assembly early in its session for an allowance so they could purchase needed supplies. He also noted that several other states had been “patriotic enough” to grant uniform bounties. Tisdale observed that the men at home were “at ease” and should remember their fellow citizens “on duty, suffering every privation in the service of his Country.” Additionally, while his troops had muskets, they lacked powder, ball, and cartridge boxes.³⁵ The issues provisioning and arming the troops revealed problems with command and control over the troops. The detached militia stationed within North Carolina revealed the state’s competing impulses. While the state fought to retain input on where the detached militia was stationed, it also expected the federal government to pick up the expense of provisioning and arming its troops.

The desire to direct militia assignments was generated and reinforced by repeated reports of local security issues tied into the movement of militia around the state. Letters such as the one from General Brite, First Brigade, reminded the governor of Currituck County’s exposed position. It was, Brite stated, thinly inhabited and had large quantities of livestock and surely would be a target for the squads of British cruising the coasts. Brite requested the detached militia from Currituck and Camden be exempted from deployment as they had been during the American Revolution in order to guard the long coastline. Besides, he noted, they were “entirely destitute of arms fit to take the field.” Hawkins assured the general he would inform Madison and Eustis of the area’s unique situation and refrain from ordering the militia

³⁵ Calvin Jones to William Hawkins, September 15, 1812 and Tisdale to Calvin Jones, September 6, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

away unless the whole quota was called into service.³⁶ The continued input of local militia commanders as well as the concerns of state citizens shaped the governor's attempts to continue to control his militia, even as it was called into federal service.

Other than drill, the detached militia stationed at Fort Hampton and Fort Johnston remained idle. In August, citing the success of army recruiting and the looming availability of regular army replacements for the garrison, Pinckney ordered one company from Fort Johnston and two companies from Fort Hampton sent home. Hawkins, however, concerned that General William Hull's surrender in Detroit would require sending additional regular troops to Canada, queried both Secretary Eustis and General Pinckney as to whether detached militia should really be dismissed—and even posited more might be required. However, Pinckney's discharge orders stood, although not without input from Hawkins as to which units should be dismissed and which kept on orders. Major Lillington was empowered to decide which company he would dismiss from Fort Johnston. Similarly, Major Tisdale selected the two companies discharged from Fort Johnston. By January 1813, regular army forces had replaced the militia in both forts.³⁷

In coastal towns and counties, the high priority of defending the coast merged with another of the state's security issues, guarding against slave insurrections. Coastal counties such as New Hanover and Brunswick had slave populations that exceeded the free white

³⁶ Jeremiah Brite and Brickhouse Bell to William Hawkins, undated; Hawkins to Bell and Brite, August 6, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

³⁷ William Hawkins to William Eustis, September 13, 1812; Hawkins to Lillington, September 26, 1812, Hawkins Letterbook 18; Nathan Tisdale to William Hawkins, October 8, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA; Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 122-123.

populations.³⁸ As militia companies deployed to Forts Hampton and Johnston, General Brown also requested cavalry be “ordered to Fort Johnston to guard against a rebellion of the blacks so probably and so much dreaded in this section of the state.” In reply, Governor Hawkins assured him that even with the detached militia in service he retained the authority, per the state laws of 1798, to order out cavalry and infantry in the event of insurrections.³⁹ Although there is no evidence a cavalry company was stationed near Fort Johnston for the purpose of patrolling against slave insurrections, it is clear that the governor knew the extent of his authority with regard to such an event and was prepared to exercise his prerogative.

In Wilmington, Brigadier General William Jones of the Third Brigade informed Governor Hawkins that he had a company ready to volunteer its services to protect the town and its vicinity. He advised the governor that the “peculiar situation of the town as respect to the enemy and the negroes” had induced him to exclude the company from the draft for the detached militia. Instead, he advocated their use for local defense and requested the company be supplied with seventy five stands of arms, as they only had muskets.⁴⁰ Governor Hawkins, sensitive to both the fear of British raids and potential insurrection, agreed to his recommendations and had the company armed from the stores supplied to the state by the United States.⁴¹

³⁸ Census of 1810. Other coastal counties such as Onslow, Chowan, and Bertie also had slave populations exceeding fifty percent and up to one hundred percent of the free white population. The other concentration of slave holding counties was in the northeast corner of the state, along the border with Virginia.

³⁹ Thomas Brown to William Hawkins, July 14, 1812; Hawkins to Brown, July 17, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1798, Chapter 6.

⁴⁰ William W. Jones to William Hawkins, 13 July 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA. Governor Hawkins responded to the appeal as he directed Robert Cochran to provide 75 stand of arms to Capt Callender of Wilmington, to be returned when needed for the detached forces. William Hawkins to Robert Cochran, July 18, 1812, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁴¹ William Hawkins to William Watt Jones, July 18, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

As in Wilmington, residents of Onslow County, the coastline of which lay south of the protection of the Outer Bank and was exposed directly to the Atlantic Ocean, continued to feel vulnerable in spite of defensive preparations. Because the company of volunteers had been stationed more than thirty miles away at Fort Hampton and subsequently dismissed, residents petitioned Governor Hawkins for increased protection. They feared the British could, “ravage the county around and collect a number of negroes.” They advised the governor that the black population was more numerous than the white, and in fact, the 1810 census reveals the slave population exceeded fifty percent of the total population. Although they paired their concern about “collecting” slaves with raiding cattle—which was also abundant—it appears the petitioners were concerned with more than property loss. The inclusion of the fact that blacks outnumbered whites indicates they felt vulnerable to slave uprisings in the absence of the militia, which would normally have performed patrolling duties. The county’s “scattered population of whites...poor and generally without arms and ammunition” left them totally defenseless—against British depredations and potential slave insurrection.⁴²

In addition to petitioning the governor, the Onslow memorialists had also “transmitted to Congress through our Representative” their need for additional aid. The dual nature of the military under the federal system provided two separate avenues for the residents of Onslow to make their petition. The seriousness of their situation moved them to use both. Because they feared response from the federal government would be too slow in coming, they included in their letter suggestions for additional defensive measures. The Onslow petitioners suggested a force of one hundred militia stationed at Swansboro, with at

⁴² Onslow Memorial, January 23, 1813, Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor’s Letters and Papers, Box 25 (Corresponds to Governor’s Letter Book #19), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Hawkins Letter Book 19], NCSA.

least half of the force cavalry, would be able to effectively patrol the county and be ready “to move with speed” to any area in need of support. Although not specific as to what would generate a need for support, again, the implication is that they feared both British marauders and the potential for insurrection. Furthermore, they were quite sure men would volunteer for the duty—certainly one Mr. James Taylor who they recommended for command of the proposed force, in light of his patriotism and his military and naval knowledge.⁴³ Evidently, local security concerns influenced both requests for military support and willingness to serve.

Residents in the western part of the state also feared enemy incursions, but it was Indians, not the British, they feared. In April 1812, members of the Haywood County militia sent the governor the results of an interview of Andrew Bryson, who had lived among the Cherokee, conducted to get a sense for security along the frontier. Bryson reported contact with two men friendly to the United States but living in the Cherokee Boundary. Both men provided information that indicated potential border hostility. One man reported a good source of information about the Cherokee stealing upward of 100 horses from the Georgia border. The other relayed an account of altercations between white men and Indians involving stolen horses. An Indian told one white man looking for his stolen horse to “go about his business” or he would “kick his arse [sic].” Another man was attacked after recovering his stolen horse. His Indian attackers claimed the horse in question as one belonging to the Cherokee nation.⁴⁴

The men from Haywood pointed out to the governor that South Carolina had taken steps to defend her frontier, and that North Carolinians should do the same. In their minds,

⁴³ Eleven memorialists of Onslow County to Governor Hawkins, January 23, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁴⁴ Bryson interview forwarded by Col John Stevenson, et al, to William Hawkins, April 16, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

the Bryson deposition clearly demonstrated the potential for Indians to harass frontier inhabitants. Furthermore, they were certain that the inevitable war with Great Britain meant an Indian war would follow. As the regiment led by Colonel Stevenson, one of the letter's signers, was the only regiment for the sixty-mile frontier stretched between Georgia and Tennessee, the citizens requested a company of rangers be authorized for their area. To be sure, exercising their accustomed privilege as militia, they also suggested a commander, one Captain William Dever.⁴⁵

General Thomas Love, commander of the Fifteenth Brigade of North Carolina Militia, offered more detailed information about the likely conflict with Indians and the steps neighboring states had taken to ready themselves. The Tennessee militia had arrested a trader accused of selling powder and lead to Indians accused of committing unspecified depredations. Additionally, General Johnston of Tennessee had marched 800 to 1,000 men against a body of 600 Indians accused of murdering six people earlier that spring. His opinion mirrored that of his subordinates, that a war with England ensured a frontier war with Indians. He suggested that the 150 or 160 men detached from Haywood and Buncombe County be used to guard the frontier and not be called to duty elsewhere, especially as he suspected the six ranger regiments authorized by Congress in January 1812 would be used on the frontier with Canada.⁴⁶

The state government heeded their western citizens' concerns. In "An Act for the distribution of Arms received by this state" passed by the 1812 General Assembly, Haywood

⁴⁵ Colonel John Stevens, et al, to William Hawkins, April 16, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA. The current counties of Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Macon, and the western part of Swain County comprised what was then designated Cherokee Lands.

⁴⁶ Thomas Love to William Hawkins, June 15, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA. The Fifteenth Brigade included Haywood, Burke, and Buncombe Counties. Congress gave the President authority to raise six Ranger regiments for frontier duty on January 2, 1812. Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization*, 43.

and Buncombe became the only two non-eastern counties named in the first allocation of arms.⁴⁷ Additionally, Governor Hawkins relayed his state's frontier fears to Secretary Eustis. Echoing the members of the Haywood Militia, Hawkins noted that there was a sixty-mile stretch along the frontier that was vulnerable to Indians and requested Major General Pinckney release 150 or 160 troops from the detached militia to serve in that area.⁴⁸ The War Department did not agree with the governor's assessment of the threat. In his reply to the governor, Eustis informed him of the "friendly disposition" of the Cherokee in that area and that no additional military force was needed on the North Carolina frontier.⁴⁹ Differing opinions of the Indian threat proved to be just one of the divergent priorities between the state and federal government.

The appearance of Admiral Sir George Cockburn and his fleet off Norfolk, Virginia in February 1813 reinforced the North Carolinian's fear of attack. By the spring, the British fleet from Halifax to Bermuda consisted of "six seventy-four gun ships, thirteen frigates of various sizes, rated from thirty-eight to thirty-two guns, and eighteen sloops of war rated from eighteen to twenty-two guns."⁵⁰ North Carolina's newspapers carried news of the fleet's movement along the Atlantic coast.⁵¹ Arguably, the fleet's appearance triggered many of the letters addressed to the Governor in the spring of 1813. Brickhouse Bell, a member of the House of Commons representing Currituck County and a militia lieutenant colonel,

⁴⁷ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1812.

⁴⁸ William Hawkins to William Eustis July 26, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

⁴⁹ William Eustis to William Hawkins, July 31, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 18, NCSA.

⁵⁰ Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch of the Second War Between the United States of America and Great Britain*, Vol. I. Embracing the Events of 1812-13., 194

⁵¹ The Raleigh *Register* reported fleet movement on several occasions including February 5, 1813, April 12, 1813, April 16, 1813, May 21, 1813 and June 4, 1813.

communicated concern about the “exposed situation on the coast.” He noted, “that we have frigates on our coast almost daily [sic] in sight of our land.” Bell expected the British would land following the spring gales in order to pillage and requested the governor send arms.⁵²

Letters arrived from communities further down the coast as well. The Wilmington magistrate of police wrote to address the defenseless state of the port. He requested some assistance from the governor because he feared “we are in every respect completely exposed, being unprotected against the attack of the most trifling Force.”⁵³ The citizens of Beaufort requested 150 to 200 men be garrisoned there as they felt similarly exposed: “Fort Hampton which is present our only protection, is situated one and one half miles from this place, on the opposite side of the sound.”⁵⁴ Local security fears seemed to demand the mobilization of more forces. A volunteer company from Washington County wrote to Governor Hawkins to announce their readiness to march to wherever needed a moment’s warning. As “young men that ha[d] no families to attend to and but little other business,” their commander, one Captain Brooks, assured the governor they were anxious to be in service. So anxious, in fact, that if the company was not needed, they would offer their services to the town of Norfolk.⁵⁵

Perhaps most ominously, from New Bern Nathan Tisdale, now a lieutenant colonel in the Craven County regiment, reported disturbing activities to the governor. In a letter dated June 1, 1813, Tisdale relayed the suspicious behavior of a British tender entering nearby waters. The tender lured four American pilots on board by pretending to be an American privateer, flying American colors, and expressing a wish to come within the bar to get water.

⁵² Brickhouse Bell to William Hawkins, March 23, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁵³ William Giles to William Hawkins, April 20, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁵⁴ Henry McCooke, et al to William Hawkins, May 18, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁵⁵ Capt Brooks to William Hawkins, May 22, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

Once on board, the pilots revealed information about navigating the inlet, the depth of the water, the preparation of defenses at Ocracoke, New Bern, and Beaufort. Although the British sailors released the pilots, they intimated they would be back “when they should be better prepared.” A vessel dispatched to reconnoiter the coast of North Carolina added to the certainty of Tisdale’s fellow citizens that the British were coming.⁵⁶

In response, Tisdale reported that he called out the two town companies and inspected arms and ammunition. He assessed his strength at one hundred well-armed men, each with twelve rounds of ball cartridge. Frustrating his efforts was a lack of gunpowder, which he requested the governor supply. Unfortunately, the governor responded, powder was in short supply in Raleigh as well. Tisdale also struggled with various town residents who claimed exemption from service. Again, the governor’s reply was hardly satisfying. While Hawkins agreed the men’s behavior, given the circumstances, was hardly exemplary, they could not be compelled to serve.⁵⁷

Finally, in June 1813, Cockburn’s forces struck the coast of Virginia. After a failed assault against Norfolk, Cockburn and his forces sacked the Virginia port of Hampton. A force of 2,000 British men easily overran the 450 militiamen defending the town. Citizens reported that British forces terrorized the town, committing rape, pillage, and murder. Those

⁵⁶ Nathan Tisdale to William Hawkins, June 1, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA; At this time, Nathan Tisdale had been discharged from the detached militia where he was a major, and promoted to Lieutenant Colonel commandant of the Craven County Militia. He was acting as North Carolina militia and not called out as detached militia when he called out local militia. This situation exemplifies the overlap of militia and federal service as detached militia at this time.

⁵⁷ Nathan Tisdale to Hawkins June 1, 1813; Hawkins to Tisdale June 19, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

reports were then widely circulated and condemned in the newspapers.⁵⁸ Cockburn's lasting reputation as a "notorious freebooter" was due in part to these depredations.⁵⁹

Cockburn's raid on Hampton also undoubtedly amplified concerns about the security of the slave population. The British understood American sensitivity to a slave uprising. British reports stated, "the Black population of the countries evince...the strongest predilection for the cause of Great Britain" and that "the White inhabitants have suffered great alarm from the discovery of parties of Negroes...exercising with arms in the Night."⁶⁰ The presence of British warships emboldened slaves to run away from coastal Virginia plantations, 600 of who escaped to the British and supposedly were offered either the choice of uniformed service or emancipation to the West Indies.⁶¹

The presence of the British off the coast and their various incursions lent a sense of urgency to North Carolina's defensive preparations. In compliance with an 1812 General Assembly act, the governor distributed federal arms, generally in quantities of sixty-four stands each, to the coastal and easternmost counties. From April onward, militia commanders

⁵⁸ Donald R. Hickey, *War of 1812*, 154.

⁵⁹ Charles J. Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States of America and Great Britain*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1845), 195. Although the phrase was Ingersoll's, contemporary newspapers savaged Cockburn's reputation. The *Niles Weekly Register* reported "...the wantonness of his barbarities then have gibbeted him on infamy." *Niles Register* 5 (January 8, 1814) 279, also quoted in Hickey, *War of 1812*, 154. The *Raleigh Register* assessed Cockburn's 1814 expeditions in Virginia as "villainous conduct" that "defie[d] comment." *Raleigh Register*, December 30, 1814.

⁶⁰ Admiral Warren to John W. Coker, May 28, 1813 quoted in C.J. Barlett and Gene A. Smith, "A 'Species of Milito-Nautico-Guerilla-Plundering Warfare,'" in *Britain and America Go to War*, eds. Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2004), 187.

⁶¹ Hickey, *War of 1812*, 154; Hickey reports the number of 600 runaways and the choice of settlement in the West Indies. Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch*, 203: Ingersoll's history published in 1853 states "Cockburn and his followers began to steal slaves; not to emancipate them but to sell them in the West India Islands." The fear of slave uprisings was real, but Ingersoll's inflammatory interpretation may reflect either contemporary attempts to further discredit the British or pre-Civil War sentiments about the paternal nature of slavery in the American South. Barlett and Smith, "Plundering Warfare," 188-189. Barlett and Smith report that Admiral Cochrane issued a proclamation in April 1814 "offering freedom for any slave who would enter 'into His Majesty's service.'" Runaway slaves did sign up as "Colonial Marines" and serve in subsequent raids along the coast.

from Bertie, Perquimans, Currituck, Camden, Gates, Pasquotank, Chowan, Hertford, Martin, Halifax, Washington, and Northampton provided their Commander in Chief with receipts for arms received.⁶² In May, the governor ordered arms shipped to Haywood and Buncombe in the west, and to Edgecombe, Pitt, Beaufort, and Hyde Counties. Receipts sent to the governor show those eastern counties were quickly supplied.⁶³ Furthermore, the governor received confirmation that arrangements for supplying the eight additional counties of Brunswick, Columbus, Bladen, Onslow, Jones, Lenoir, Duplin, and Sampson were being made.⁶⁴ From Wilmington, Major General William Croom, commander of the Sixth Division, reported receiving a shipment of arms, but assessed that his troops were still in short supply. He also requested arms for the adjacent counties.⁶⁵

Although North Carolinians fully expected an attack, those planning the larger war effort did not share their concerns. In May 1813 the governor wrote to Secretary of War John Armstrong and reminded him of the state's "exposed and defenceless [sic] situation." He enclosed the letter from Wilmington's Chief Magistrate of Police to illustrate the state's vulnerability. The Secretary of War's rather bland response informed the governor that "general measures for defense of the sea-board will, in a few days time, be submitted to the national Legislature," and that North Carolina would be considered. Undoubtedly, activity in the north—the U.S. forces' captures of York (now Toronto) and Fort George at the north end

⁶² Receipts from: Thomas Worley, April 19, 1813; Francis Toms, April 23, 1813; BH Bell, April 24, 1813; Timy. Savill, April 25, 1813; April 22, 1813, JB Sumner, April 22, 1813; April 26, 1813, Thomas Banks, April 26, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA; Additional receipts from: Lt Col McDonald, April 24, 1813; William Jones, May 5, 1813; Andrew Joyner, May 15, 1813; 2nd Regiment of Halifax, May 18, 1813; Lt Col Flowers, May 25, 1813; Northampton, June 13, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁶³ William Hawkins to General Davis, May 8, 1813; and receipts from Howell Cobb, Pitt County, May 16, 1813; May 17, 1813, Thomas Latham, Beaufort County, May 17, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

⁶⁴ Charles Hooks to William Hawkins, June 24, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁶⁵ William Croom to William Hawkins, May 10, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

of the Niagara River—occupied Armstrong’s attention. With no better information, Hawkins in turn copied Armstrong’s phrase in nearly all of his replies to those who had written expressing their concern for coastal defense. Furthermore, he pledged that in the event of “unreasonable delay” on the part of the federal government, he would ensure Wilmington, Beaufort, and other exposed places would be adequately defended by state troops.⁶⁶

To ensure that the interests of North Carolina were represented to Congress, Hawkins also wrote to Senators David Stone and James Turner to give them a detailed report of the defenseless nature of the coast so they could “ascertain from the President whether some measures would not promptly be adopted for their protection.” He also included copies of the memorials from Wilmington and Beaufort and letters from individuals in New Bern and Washington to help the senators press the state’s case. The most hopeful news that the state received was from Senator Stone, who informed Governor Hawkins that the Secretary of the Navy intended to station five gun-boats along the Carolina coast, the Secretary of War planned to order into service four companies of militia, and that the state could expect the federal government to pay for ammunition because it could not. Unfortunately, before any of these measures were put into action, the British invaded the state.⁶⁷

North Carolinians’ fears of an attack on their own communities were realized when the British launched a relatively large-scale attack at Ocracoke. British suspicion that the Americans were using Ocracoke as a substitute port for Norfolk prompted the attack. The British were also aware of the port as a potential source of supplies for themselves—

⁶⁶ William Hawkins to Secretary of War, May 6, 1813; Secretary of War to Hawkins, May 25, 1813; Hawkins to Giles, May 30, 1813; Hawkins to Cochran, May 30, 1813; Hawkins to Cooke, June 19, 1813, Hawkins, Letter Book, NCSA. President Madison replaced Secretary of War William Eustis with John Armstrong following his reelection in 1812.

⁶⁷ William Hawkins to Senators Stone and Turner, June 11, 1813; Stone to Hawkins, June 22, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

suggesting that accusations of illegal trade taking place out of North Carolina ports had some merit. Major General Robert Taylor of the of the U.S. Army's Tenth Regiment had written Governor Hawkins in June expressing concern over reports of illegal trade taking place out of ports in North Carolina.⁶⁸ The British probed the North Carolina coast, conducting at least one raid in Currituck County where they landed and demanded supplies. When locals refused to comply, the British burned two windmills and damaged other property.⁶⁹ The crisis peaked, however, when Cockburn sailed through the Ocracoke inlet with the *Sceptre*, *Romulus*, *Fox*, *Nemesis*, *Conflict*, and two tenders to investigate the area and to land forces.⁷⁰

The British landing at Ocracoke began before dawn on July 12, 1813. A division of boats with armed seamen and marines led the invasion, intending to draw the fire of any armed vessels. They were followed by boats laden with men and artillery and smaller vessels and tenders carrying additional troops to shore.⁷¹ The British took possession of Ocracoke and the nearby island of Portsmouth, and had landed and pitched tents for 700 men. Men on the scene reported the British naval force consisted of one seventy-four, six frigates, two privateers, two schooners, a number of small vessels, and sixty to seventy barges, all under Admiral Cockburn's command. The force included 2,500 infantry and marines. The British captured three vessels in the harbor, including two private armed vessels. Locals interpreted the landing party and the fact the force put up tents as an indication they planned to remain in

⁶⁸ Robert Taylor to William Hawkins, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁶⁹ Cartwright Bell to William Hawkins, June 17, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁷⁰ Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 131.

⁷¹ Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 131.

the area and likely launch an attack against New Bern. Furthermore, the size of the force seemed to hint at future incursions against Beaufort and Wilmington as well.⁷²

Anticipating the British arrival, the military commanders and committee of safety at New Bern had provided a bleak assessment of the defenses there. The town had no cannon, powder, or balls, and was short of all items necessary for defense of the town. The governor believed most towns on the Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds and those to the south were similarly poorly supplied. As a whole, the state was short of munitions, muskets, and bayonets. Although the governor had ordered arms distributed to eastern counties, in many cases the detached militia did not possess them. Additionally, the arms had been so widely distributed that they could not be easily collected to use in one location.⁷³

Governor Hawkins had taken some steps to prepare the coast. Although the state was destitute of powder, lead, and flints, and short of suitable arms, there was no choice but to oppose the enemy, lest they “enter and let loose in our towns their brutal soldiery to perpetrate every species of horrible outrage upon the persons and property of their inhabitants,” which would “fix an indelible stigma on the character of the state.” To preserve the honor of the state and protect its inhabitants, the governor directed that powder, lead, and flint be purchased from the surrounding area and moved to vulnerable points along the seaboard, even though the General Assembly had failed to pass authorization for military spending during the previous session. Furthermore, he directed that arms belonging to the federal government be distributed from their stored location in Wilmington.⁷⁴

⁷² Hawkins’s synopsis of the invasion came from letters from New Bern; from the town’s Committee of Safety, General Croom, and Colonel Tisdale; also detail the units mobilized; *Journal of the House of Commons of the State of North Carolina*, 1813, 4-7.

⁷³ *Journal of House of Commons*, 1813, 4-5.

⁷⁴ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 5.

Once notified of the invasion, the governor called into service portions of the detached militia he deemed necessary to deal with the emergency.⁷⁵ In addition to mobilizing militia and resources to combat the invasion, the Governor notified the state's Senators so that they might relay the situation to the President and Secretary of War and departed Raleigh to tour the affected area. Accompanied by a detachment of Raleigh militia, an aid de camp, the Adjutant General of the North Carolina Militia, and the Wake dragoons, Governor Hawkins travelled to New Bern.⁷⁶ There he was met by 400 troops commanded by General William Croom, who reported that although a supply of lead and powder had been acquired, troops still lacked guns. Additionally, during the governor's stay, recently purchased ammunition arrived in the town, as well as detached militia under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Simon Bruton of the Second Regiment. The local militia supplemented the defensive preparations, which in the governor's estimation "placed us in a situation to contend with the enemy."⁷⁷

Even in North Carolina's moment of crisis, the tone of the ensuing newspaper coverage varied depending on the party affiliation of the paper. North Carolina newspapers promptly reported details of Cockburn's arrival on July 12, 1813 and the subsequent activities at Ocracoke and the neighboring island of Portsmouth. Although reporting nearly identical facts, differing emphasis and tone in how papers portrayed the invasion demonstrates the continuing strength of anti-war sentiment in the state. For example, on July

⁷⁵ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 5-6.

⁷⁶ This unit was commanded by Major Thomas Henderson who was also the editor of the *The Star*. A letter offering their services, and the governor's reply, was published in the Raleigh papers in May 1812 and discussed earlier in this dissertation.

⁷⁷ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 4-5. John F. Smith and others to William Hawkins, July 14, 1813; General William Croom to Hawkins, July 16, 1813; Nathan Tisdale to Hawkins, undated, Hawkins Letter Book 19; Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 133.

17 under the headline “INVASION,” the weekly *Carolina Federal Republican*, a Federalist Party paper published in New Bern, first reported the landings. In a detailed report, the paper somewhat calmly announced, “1 Seventy-four, four frigates, two brigs, and two schooners were discovered at anchor off Occacock Bar, and nineteen barges with men proceeding from them actually within the bar.” The paper also reported that thirty additional barges, carrying about forty men per barge, had landed men at Portsmouth. Inhabitants who had been permitted to leave the island, “speak in the highest terms of honorable and polite deportment of the officers toward the ladies, who are on the Island and of the regular behavior of the privates.” Only one act of violence marred the situation; Richard Casey, “who was attempting to leave the Island in a boat, was shot by a musket ball through the body—hopes are entertained of his recovery.”⁷⁸

The paper reported the British treatment of property in a similarly sympathetic fashion. The British confiscated several hundred cattle and sheep, but they had promised to pay for them, and had in fact begun to pay some people. Although soldiers destroyed property left in abandoned houses, it was only in retaliation for “offensive suspicion of improper behavior.” The neutral, nonchalant tone of the *Carolina Federal Republican*’s coverage contrasted with the excited tone in the Raleigh papers.⁷⁹

Two Raleigh-based papers, the somewhat neutral *Star* and the unabashedly Republican *Raleigh Register*, reported the Ocracoke invasion via a letter from Thomas S. Singleton, the Collector of the Port of Ocracoke, to Governor William Hawkins. There were some factual variations between the two accounts; for example, the number and types of

⁷⁸ New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, July 17, 1813.

⁷⁹ New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, July 17, 1813.

British ships, the number of landing barges, and the number of British soldiers. However, Singleton's report characterized the American response to the invasion as spirited and heroic, whereas the *Carolina Federal Republican* portrayed almost no American resistance. Perhaps because it was a letter solicited by the Republican governor, or perhaps published by the two papers because it better fit the sentiments of their Republican readership, Singleton's letter had a much livelier and pro-war tone.⁸⁰

Singleton's accounts of daring acts began immediately. Inhabitants of Ocracoke observed the arrival of the British ships and alerted the town of Portsmouth before the invasion began. The privateer brig *Anaconda* and the letter-of-marque schooner *Atlas* "commenced firing very spiritedly" on the British barges. The revenue cutter *Mercury* narrowly escaped the port carrying the Custom House's money and bonds and sailed to New Bern to alert the town to the attack.⁸¹

In contrast to the Americans' noble efforts, British behavior was dastardly. In both Ocracoke and Portsmouth there was "the most wanton, cruel and savage-like destruction of property....furniture of all kinds split and broke in pieces; beds ripped open and the feathers scattered in the wind; women and children robbed of their clothing." Books were torn to pieces with "savage fury." The British paid for livestock they plundered, but paid far less than their worth in order to preserve "the reputation of being a generous enemy, without actually deserving it." Most tellingly, the man fired on while trying to escape the boat, Richard Casey, was a "decrepit old man," who was shot while complying with British orders

⁸⁰ Raleigh *Star*, 23 July 1813. Raleigh *Register*, July 30, 1813. Singleton reports three versus four frigates, one versus two brigs, and three versus two schooners; he mentions only 21 barges, but estimates there were "no less than three thousand men ...inside the bar and crossing it together." His report of several hundred men at Portsmouth including 300 soldier and 400 marines, and an estimate of the same at Ocracoke, matches the number of about one thousand in each town given by the *Carolina Federal Republican*.

⁸¹ Raleigh *Star*, July 23, 1813. Raleigh *Register*, July 30, 1813.

to turn his vessel back to shore.⁸² Singleton's depiction of the British undoubtedly contributed to Charles Ingersoll's later assessment of the raid as a "piratical incursion" that was "as harmless as it was unmanly."⁸³

Newspaper coverage extended to post-invasion activity as well. Alerted to the British invasion, New Bern began its own preparations for conflict. The *Carolina Federal Republican* noted a committee of safety convened to assist local militia had mounted "several peices [sic] of heavy Cannon," erected temporary fortifications, and collected ammunition from the surrounding area. Locals prepared to house two thousand additional men, expecting the militia from surrounding counties to encamp in the town. Additionally, the two local banks moved their specie to Raleigh. The paper also noted with a tone of recrimination that promises for two additional Gun Boats along the coast made by the Secretaries of War and of the Navy to their congressman, the Federalist William Gaston, had yet to be honored.⁸⁴

Cockburn's fleet and the marines departed Carolina waters on July 18, 1813, but the Republican papers continued to describe the flurry of military activity following in his wake. The *Raleigh Register* reported that Governor Hawkins traveled to Ocracoke Inlet to select a location for a proposed new fort. The Raleigh Guards marched into Ocracoke and "their appearance seemed to light up in the face of every looker-on an expression of Patriotic feeling." In Wilmington, five gun boats anchored below the town, ready for action. The *Register* also reported a long list of militia companies newly arrived to take up Wilmington's defense. Forces arrived from South Washington, Holly Shelter, Black River, Masonboro',

⁸² *Raleigh Star*, July 23, 1813. *Raleigh Register*, July 30, 1813.

⁸³ Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch*, 198.

⁸⁴ New Bern *Carolina Federal Republican*, July 17, 1813.

Moor's Creek, and Fayetteville.⁸⁵ One national newspaper praised the North Carolina militia for its rapid response and declared that North Carolinians "will at least have the proud satisfaction of knowing, and their neighbors will see, that they have shewn a disposition to perform their duty as citizens and men by fronting the first appearance of danger."⁸⁶

Regardless of party affiliations, state newspapers widely reported defensive preparations and conveyed nearly universal support for local protection. One exception, though, was the Federalist Raleigh-based *Minerva*, which thought the whole affair was much fuss about the loss of a few books and beds in Portsmouth.⁸⁷ Additionally, letters to Governor Hawkins further suggest strong support for post-attack mobilization. The major of a battalion from Hillsborough wrote Hawkins to inform him of a muster held so "that we may be in readiness to meet your Excellencys [sic] orders more promptly." The same major sent an additional letter asking for guidance as to how his unit could be most useful.⁸⁸ From New Bern, Major General Croom reported, "Recruits are daily coming, and a formidable force will soon be accumulated."⁸⁹ Reports from Wilmington indicated newly arrived forces detailed to Wilmington, Smithville, and Fort Johnston.⁹⁰ Facing a threat to their coastal towns, North Carolina's citizens rallied to defend their state.

As the immediate threat faded, additional localized concerns turned attention away from coastal defense. On July 16, in the middle of the Ocracoke incident, a letter from

⁸⁵ *Raleigh Register, and North Carolina Gazette*, July 30, 1813

⁸⁶ *National Intelligencer*, July 22, 1813, quoted in Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 137.

⁸⁷ *Raleigh Minerva*, August 6, 1813, quoted in Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 136.

⁸⁸ Major of Hillsborough Battalion to William Hawkins, July 19, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins,, NCSA.

⁸⁹ Major General Croom to William Hawkins, July 16, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁹⁰ Robert Williams to William Hawkins, August 7, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

Beaufort related the capture of a runaway “Negro Fellow” who reported a conspiracy in the western part of Carteret County. The White Oak Company requested release from their duty at Beaufort in order to “go and endeavor to find out whether the negroes were rising or not and to act accordingly.” Their request was granted on July 20.⁹¹ Business concerns motivated the Fayetteville Volunteers to request discharge from their posting in Wilmington in August. Adjutant General Robert Williams supported the request, as the company was a force additional to the detached militia and would be “at least as prompt to another call as any men in the Country.” Military commanders brought other practical matters to the governor’s attention as well. Colonel Thomas Banks of the Pasquotank militia reported that he had discharged his men as soon as he learned the British has put to sea. He politely inquired of the governor for directions on how to pay his men, reminding him that should they not be paid, “we may not be able to command men at any future time.”⁹² In both these cases, interests closer to home competed with defense of the state.

In the aftermath of the invasion, the governor discharged all but six companies of militia. Four remained stationed at Deep Water point under the command of Major John A. Cameron of the Fourth Regiment. Captain Abner Pasteur commanded an artillery company at Fort Hampton, which replaced a company of U.S. Infantry. A company of infantry remained in service at Beaufort. When the governor addressed the General Assembly in November, two of the companies stationed at Deep Water point had been discharged and a company of artillery had been order to Currituck Inlet.⁹³

⁹¹ Matthew Norris on behalf of John Roberts to William Hawkins, July 12, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁹² Robert Williams to William Hawkins, August 7, 1813; Thomas Banks to Hawkins, July 19, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁹³ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 5.

Despite the governor's evident pride in the state's prompt response to the invasion and his ultimately optimistic assessment of coastal readiness, his tour of the coast was designed to provide the federal government an assessment and plan for its further protection and defense. He identified Ocracoke, Old Topsail, and Bogue Inlets to the north of the Cape Fear as points that required improved defensive works in addition to better protection of the Main and New Inlets at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. He provided the General Assembly a summary of his findings and recommendations for improving the state's defensive situation. Furthermore, upon his return to Raleigh in August, he communicated his concerns to the Secretary of War.⁹⁴

Divergent Priorities

Governor Hawkins and his commanders were disappointed by the War Department's response to the state's requests. The Secretary of War's office acknowledged the receipt of the governor's letter, but basically shunted his concerns aside, referring him to Major General Pinckney "for such further advice and arrangements as might be necessary." As for Pinckney, although he indicated a general support for the state's desire to improve defenses at Fort Johnston and Fort Hampton, he offered neither men nor materiel. Pinckney's September letter to Hawkins actually made no mention of the events at Ocracoke, and focused instead on halting illegal trade out of Currituck, to which end he suggested moving troops from Deep Water to Currituck, rationalizing forces and hopefully putting a stop to "such scandalous and injurious practices."⁹⁵ The governor's attempt for increased support generated the same lackluster and non-committal responses he had received to appeals before

⁹⁴ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 6.

⁹⁵ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 6; Pinckney to Hawkins, Sept 14, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

the state's moment of crisis, an indication it was a rather insignificant event to the federal government when considered against the entire war effort.

Coastal defense remained a high priority in the state, and various coastal counties turned to the state legislature for additional defensive measures. In September the citizens of Ocracoke petitioned for at least an additional one hundred men to ward off the enemy. The petitioners reminded the General Assembly about an incident reported earlier in the summer in which a small schooner lured pilots to its side and then had taken them captive, ostensibly to guide British forces through the inlet. Their fears must have seemed justified given the events just passed. Petitioners from Lenoir County also expressed concern over the defensive preparations of the state. Their remarkably parochial suggestion to reallocate forces, to include providing one "good company" of cavalry in *every county* to help check any attempted invasion, was referred for further study.⁹⁶ These petitions indicate that the citizens of North Carolina expected the state government to use its militia to provide security for its people and property, even in the absence of federal assistance.

That they continued to feel vulnerable into the fall months is clear from an October letter from Brickhouse Bell to the governor. Bell, whose seven years of service in the House of Commons fell in the years before and after the coastal invasion of the state, reported from coastal Currituck County that a privateer had recently appeared in the water off of New Inlet, at the mouth of the Cape Fear. Eighteen men, including eleven black men "supposed to be slaves," landed in an attempt to "cut out some vessels" but were apprehended by members of the local militia. Although the raiding party was apprehended and the "slaves" claimed as prize property, the presence of black men in the group must have reinforced concerns about the use of escaped slaves by the British and fears over slave uprisings. To secure the area,

⁹⁶ *General Assembly Session Records, Nov-Dec 1813*, Box 2, Folder: Petitions, miscellaneous, NCSA.

Bell suggested a standing patrol of twenty-five to thirty men be sanctioned. Furthermore, regular observation of British ships off Cape Hatteras upset his constituents. A patrol might also help calm the uneasiness felt by Bell's people.⁹⁷

Aware of the continued appeals for improved defense and dissatisfied with federal support for coastal defense, the state government drafted an appeal to the President during its fall session. On November 29, 1813, the Senate approved language for a "Memorial of the Senate and House of Commons of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina to the President of the United States." In the opening passage, the General Assembly clearly articulated their disappointment with the federal government, "that upon the declaration of war by the United States against Great Britain, your memorialists hoped and expressed that measures would have been taken by the federal government to defend the seacoast of this State. In this hope and in this expectation we have been disappointed." The remonstrance accused the federal government of ignoring information provided by the governor for coastal defense. The General Assembly further suggested "that a comparatively small expenditure of money...would have placed North Carolina in a state of safety from the predatory incursions." The dramatic conclusion sounded the alarm: "The enemy are off our coast: we know not at what hour or what place they may land and plunder our towns and country on the sea board! We beg you, sir, without delay to inform us whether measures will be taken immediately for our protection."⁹⁸ They would be disappointed with the President's response.

Governor Hawkins submitted President Madison's reply to the General Assembly on December 18. Madison reminded the assembly that the defense of the nation must be considered as a whole. He offered that "[t]he officer allotted to that which includes the state

⁹⁷ Brickhouse Bell to William Hawkins, October 25, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁹⁸ *Journal of the Senate of the State of North Carolina*, 1813, 15.

of North Carolina, will be instructed, as soon as practicable, to visit and examine the situation of the exposed parts of the state, with a view to improvements which may be properly made in works of Defence.” The officer to whom Madison referred, General Thomas Pinckney had responsibility for coastal defense from North Carolina to Florida and had been tasked to oversee the Creek War after the Fort Mims massacre in August 1813; he did not visit the North Carolina coast until 1814. Furthermore, Madison assured Hawkins and the legislature that the Secretary of the Navy was aware of the requirements for coastal defense and making equipment available as it came ready for service. Although Madison encouraged the state to make its own provisions for defense, he offered no further federal assistance.⁹⁹

Madison’s reluctance to prioritize North Carolina’s request most likely stemmed from the priorities on other fronts, which had hardly been successful. The first military action after the formal declaration of war took place near Detroit and ended in the surrender of Detroit to the British in August 1812. Subsequent invasion attempts into Canada along the Niagara frontier in October and a push against Montreal in November practically stalled before they started. The planned campaign to invade and occupy Canada ended in failure.¹⁰⁰

The results of 1813 were only slightly more promising. Americans suffered further setbacks near Detroit at the River Raisin Massacre in January. However, American forces were able to raid York and occupy it for a few weeks in late April as well as repel British attacks at Sackets Harbor, New York in May. While Sackets Harbor cost the Americans control over Lake Ontario, success on Lake Erie allowed the Americans to enter into Upper Canada. American success was highlighted by victory at the Battle of the Thames in October, which allowed troops in the Northwest to retake Detroit and the surrounding region.

⁹⁹ *General Assembly Session Records, Nov-Dec 1813*, Box 2, Folder: Governor’s Messages, NCSA.

¹⁰⁰ David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *The War of 1812* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 58-63.

Campaigning along the Niagara frontier and the Lake Champlain-Montreal region was less successful and those areas remained vulnerable to British invasion.¹⁰¹

North Carolina soldiers made modest contributions to the campaigns of 1812 and 1813. Colonel James Wellborn enlisted enough men into the U.S. Army's Tenth Regiment by August 1812 to send one company of men to Fort Hampton and one company to Fort Johnston to relieve North Carolina militia garrisoned there. Three companies of men who had enlisted in late 1812 and early 1813 departed from Salisbury, NC to Norfolk, Virginia under the command of Major Taylor. In June, these men marched north as part of a battalion meant to reinforce Sackets Harbor and joined Major General Wade Hampton on the Canadian front in the fall. Wellborn, meanwhile, raised an additional 324 men who marched to Washington, D.C. in November, and spent the winter in camp at Green Leaf Point. North Carolina also contributed roughly 70 men to the Rifle Corps, under the command of the colorful Major Benjamin Forsyth. Beginning in April 1813, approximately 140 North Carolinians served in the Second Regiment of Artillery at posts along the South Carolina Coast.¹⁰²

The Politics of “Unanimity”: North Carolina Stays the Course

By the end of 1813, the state had endured an invasion, however brief, and in the process had learned that its primary security issue was of little to no importance in federal officials' eyes. In spite of this disappointment, the state remained committed to the war effort. Its political leaders continued to articulate positions supporting both the administration and the war, much as they had done before the Ocracoke incident. Emphasis on unity and unanimity in support of the war was evident in state-level political action in 1812 and remained important in the aftermath of Ocracoke as well.

¹⁰¹ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 74-85.

¹⁰² Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots*, 56-75.

In November 1812, at the first legislative session since the declaration of war, Governor William Hawkins addressed the General Assembly. In the address, Hawkins discussed the meaning of the war for the nation and the state. In doing so, he artfully reiterated the Republican position on the need for war and the potential consequences had the nation failed to act. He reminded the legislature that the United States had made “just and equitable” overtures to the British government, which had not only refused them, but had chosen to place the “rights and priveleges [sic] of the British nation” above the “established rights ... and safety of Independent Nations.” The United States had “exhausted all resources in order to preserve peace on honorable terms” and had been forced to embrace the proverbial “last resort,” war.¹⁰³

Hawkins believed it was the duty of the “General and State Governments, and indeed the whole of the American people” to give the war effort “*vigorous and effective*” support.¹⁰⁴ That he identified the “General” and “State” entities separately shows an appreciation for the partnership he perceived between the two. Also, he addressed the “people” as a having separate but concomitant responsibility. An heir of and participant in America’s revolutionary-era republican ideology, he no doubt firmly believed that the government’s authority was rooted in the consent of the people, and yet, he recognized a distinct role for the population to play. Ostensibly, he recognized that not all people personally approved of the war, yet he believed it was the duty of the general population, and the General Assembly, to put aside partisan bickering in order to support the war effort.

About such partisanship Hawkins was explicit. He urged the Assembly to “consign to oblivion” party distinctions. That “*unanimity*” was especially important for “representatives

¹⁰³ *Journal of the House*, 1812, 4-5.

¹⁰⁴ *Journal of the House*, 1812, 4-5.

of free people contending for their *sacred rights and priveleges* [sic].”¹⁰⁵ Hawkins stress on unanimity again demonstrates republican understanding of a representative government. Unanimous support for the war among the representatives reflected a united population. A united population indicated the nation was committed to the defending its national sovereignty and rights and less likely to bend in the face of English aggression—enhancing the status of the nation as a formidable foe.

For the pro-war members of the Republican Party in North Carolina, providing a unanimous front was one important way to demonstrate to England the legitimacy and resolve of the U.S. government, but the Federalists were an effective opposition party that the Republicans felt compelled to contain. Unanimous support for President Madison’s 1812 reelection bid served as a surrogate measure for showing support of the war. The North Carolina General Assembly passed an act in 1811 that changed the method of selecting presidential and vice-presidential electors to appointment by the General Assembly. This was a change from previous elections, when electors had been chosen by popular vote in electoral districts. The Republicans pushed through the change to the electoral process during the 1811 session in order to ensure President Madison received all the state’s electoral votes—a total of 15 following reapportionment from the 1810 census. The change was widely agreed to be antidemocratic in practice and was immediately repealed following the selection of electors for the 1812 election, but Republican’s defense of the act shows a high level of commitment to the Madison administration. The Federalists, anxious to retain some voice in North Carolina at both the state and federal level, spent the better part of 1812 working to undo the new law.

¹⁰⁵ *Journal of the House*, 1812, 4-5.

John Steele of Salisbury was at the center of Federalist efforts to reverse the new state law. Steele and his fellow Federalists felt that they could not “look back upon the conduct of Mr. Madison without sentiments of the most unqualified disapprobation, and entertaining such sentiments it would be dastardly, if not criminal, to fold our arms and silently acquiesce in the continuation of his power.” The Federalists hatched two plans to unseat the president. The first plan was to petition the governor to convene the legislature before the accustomed date; early enough to repeal the law and return the vote “to the people.” In addition to writing the governor, Federalists planned to have their petitions printed in the Raleigh papers to generate a groundswell of opposition to the antidemocratic measure. The second plan was to approach Republicans perceived to be lukewarm on Madison and gauge the potential for them to support a Republican opposition candidate—DeWitt Clinton—who held some appeal to Federalists, especially with the right vice-presidential partner.¹⁰⁶ While the bid to generate support for Clinton seems to have stalled, the petitioning campaign proceeded apace.

The grand jury from Mecklenburg County petitioned against the “antirepublican and highly aristocratic” law that they viewed “as a sacrifice of correct political principles.” The law disenfranchised citizens and established a dangerous precedent. They requested that the governor convene the next session of legislature in early October to return the state to a system of popular vote by districts. Furthermore, the petitioners also highlighted the importance of changing the law because of the looming war. They implied the law was a threat to the sovereignty of the people, not unlike the threat of France and England to the

¹⁰⁶ John Steele, *The Papers of John Steele*, ed. Henry McGilbert Wagstaff (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Print. Co., 1924), 679–680. Steele to Joseph Pearson, August 31, 1812. Clinton ran as an opposition Republican; he expected to capture the support of anti-war and anti-embargo Republicans as well as the support of Federalists. Ultimately, he carried all of New England but Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and 5 of 11 from Maryland, although he lost the election, 89 votes to 128.

nation's sovereignty. A similarly worded petition from Moore County arrived in June followed by a petition from Montgomery County in July.

The petition on behalf of Lincoln County suggested that the governor had enough evidence to demonstrate "a majority of the counties are much dissatisfied." It also reminded the governor about the importance of the issue as related to the now-declared war. The petition urged the repeal of the law so that all people had "confidence in the constituted authorities." The signers believed "the people will be unanimous in support of their government against foreign aggression [but] will have a poor consolation if they think their liberties endangered by internal regulations..." Petitions poured in through September. The petition from Iredell County protested the change of method of selecting electors with no fewer than 170 signatures. Steele's hometown of Salisbury submitted its petition jointly with Rowan County. They also claimed the new legislation had an aristocratic bias. Petitions from Craven County and the town of New Bern, Carteret, Wayne, and Greene Counties all requested that the governor convene the legislature early enough to make changes to the existing law.¹⁰⁷

The governor demurred on convening the legislature early and left the issue of selecting the electors to the General Assembly.¹⁰⁸ When the House of Commons convened on Monday, November 16, 1812, Republican Joseph Wilson of Stokes County introduced a

¹⁰⁷ From the Grand Jury of the County of Mecklenburg, March 1812; Moore County, June 30, 1812; Montgomery County, July 8, 1812; Lincoln County July 13, 1812; Salisbury and Rowan County, August 22, 1812; Craven County and Newbern, August 1812; Carteret County, September 2, 1812; Wayne County September 15, 1812; Greene County, September 17, 1812, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

¹⁰⁸ Donald Deskins, Sherman C. Puckett, and Hanes Walton, *Presidential Elections, 1789-2008: County, State, and National Mapping of Election Data* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 57–64; Michael Dubin, *United States Presidential Elections, 1788-1860: The Official Results by County and State* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2002). In 1812, the presidential electors representing North Carolina were chosen by the legislature. Other state whose legislature chose electors were Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, New Jersey, South Carolina, New York, Vermont, and Louisiana. Four states held popular elections by district (Maryland, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Tennessee) and the remaining five states held popular elections state-wide (New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Rhode Island, and Ohio).

resolution for selecting electors the following day. Immediately, Duncan Cameron, one of the two representatives from Orange County and a Federalist, presented a competing resolution to repeal the law passed in the 1811 session, which provided for the legislature to select electors, and instead to divide the state into the number of districts coincidental with the number of assigned electors, allowing for a popular vote by district.¹⁰⁹ House members deferred consideration of the resolutions until the following Monday. However, opponents of the electoral-selection method refused to wait. On Thursday, November 19, 1812, Cameron again introduced a resolution to repeal the existing law governing the mode of presidential electors. Members of the House voted against the resolution, narrowly defeating it by a vote of 65 to 64.

Not content to wait any longer, Wilson reintroduced his resolution, which called for a vote the next day, Friday. Cannily, Cameron moved to amend the resolution by striking out all the language proposed by Wilson except for “resolved” and reinserting the language of his just-failed resolution to repeal the existing law and institute a popular vote by district. The Speaker, William Miller of Warren County, ruled the proposed amendment out of order. The members of the House concurred, upholding Miller’s ruling 75 to 54. Opponents to the method of selecting electors made one last attempt to change the process. Federalist Representative John Steele of Salisbury proposed to amend the resolution by striking the entire verbiage except “resolved” and instead inserting lines condemning the decision of the previous General Assembly to empower the legislature to appoint presidential electors as “unconstitutional” and an “infringement upon the Elective Franchise of the free people of the State of North Carolina.” Steele’s proposal was handily voted down, 83 opposed to 46 in favor.

¹⁰⁹ *Journal of the House*, 1812, 3-4.

After the legalistic skirmish, Republicans finally made progress in securing North Carolina's fifteen electoral votes for President Madison. The House moved to vote on Wilson's intact resolution and voted to elect, by joint ballot with the senate, the required electors. In a near reversal of the voting on Steele's amendment, the Wilson resolution passed with the vote of 84 in favor and 44 against. Not surprisingly, joining the ranks of those who voted against the resolution—and those who voted in favor of both Cameron's and Steele's amendments—were the Federalists and anti-electoral Republicans who had rallied against the amendment during the summer campaigns.¹¹⁰ The Senate concurred it was time to select the state's electors and Saturday was appointed as the day of action.¹¹¹

On Saturday, November 21, 1812, state representatives David Stone of Bertie County and James Seawell of Moore County joined state senators Atkinson and Slade to conduct the balloting for electors. Not surprisingly, the Republican-led House entrusted fellow Republicans to oversee the balloting. In fact, David Stone was selected as a U.S. Senator later in the session. The joint committee soon concluded its duty and duly reported the results. The fifteen men selected as electors included: William H. Murfree, Kedar Ballard, James Brite, Thomas D. King, James W. Clark, Hutchens G. Burton, Thomas Davis, Kemp Plummer, James Mebane, James Rainey, Francis Locke, Montfort Stokes, Jonathan Hampton, Joseph Winston, and Henry Massey.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ On the Wilson vote, Boyd, Barringer, Bynum, William Bryan, Brown, Cox, Campbell, D. Cameron, J.A. Cameron, A. Darden, Huckabee, Howard, Humphrey, Holliday, Holt, Howell, W. Johnson, A. Jones, W. Jones, W.W. Jones, S. King, Latham, J. Lindsay, Legrand, Leak, Lamb, McAlpin, Martin, Newsome, Pinkham, Porter, Pearson, Roberts, Randle, J. Steward, J. Seawell, Sullivan, Slocumb, Steele, Stanly, Sheppard, Smith, A. Steward, and Tillman all voted Nay. The same men, along with additional members, opposed the two failed amendments.

¹¹¹ *Journal of the House*, 1812, 8-10.

¹¹² Certificate of Electors, November 21, 1812, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

As expected, the men selected were prominent members of the community and most importantly, party faithful. The General Assembly appointed three sitting state representatives and six state senators among the fifteen.¹¹³ James Mebane had served as the senator from Orange County and had only just been defeated by Archibald D. Murphey, who opposed Mebane primarily because Mebane had introduced and endorsed the changes to the method of selecting presidential electors. The House then resolved to have the electors meet on the first Wednesday in December to cast their votes for president and vice-president. As expected, President Madison received all fifteen of North Carolina's electoral votes.

This carefully constructed (though contested) show of electoral unanimity in 1812 remained an important element of the state's continued demonstration of support for the war, even in the wake of the Ocracoke invasion. In the opening paragraphs of Governor Hawkins's 1813 address, he again stressed the need to bury party feelings and present a unanimous front to Great Britain in order to bring the war to a speedy and just conclusion. He also invoked the need to preserve the national reputation and to get Great Britain to respect "our rights as a sovereign and independent nation," as reasons to continue the war until Great Britain honored American independence. Hawkins's message echoed the larger Republican Party's justification for the war and found some acceptance in the state even in the wake of national military defeats and state's own encounter with enemy. Action taken to censure Senator David Stone, a former party favorite, further demonstrates the perceived importance of showing unanimous support for the war.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ These included: Stokes (Rowan), Clark (Edgecombe), Ballard (Gates), Brite (Lenoir), Winston (Stokes), Hampton (Rutherford), Murfree (Hertford), King (Sampson), Massey (Mecklenburg).

¹¹⁴ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 14, 22, 42.

As the General Assembly dealt with the aftermath of the summer crisis, they also bickered over whether to censure United States Senator David Stone. Stone was controversial because he was a Republican and in previous politics had voted/showed support for the war. Yet since his appointment to the Senate to replace the deceased Senator General Blount, he had voted against key provisions, thus incurring the wrath of a good many North Carolina politicians. In the House of Commons, Republican William Drew of Halifax County introduced a resolution to censure Stone for voting against several war measures including:

the law imposing a direct tax on the people of the United States, in order to support the war; against the act laying an embargo, to restrain and prohibit the elicit intercourse and correspondence kept up in time of war by the British tories of our country, with the cruel and savage enemy hovering on our sea coast, and feeding them from our harbors and shores; against the appointment by the President of the honorable Albert Gallatin, as ambassador to the Court of Russia.¹¹⁵

Drew averred that Stone had acted “contrary to the good wishes and expectations of the good people of this state.”¹¹⁶ Certainly, Stone had incited strong feelings in Camden, Hertford, and Bertie counties where citizen meetings convened to accuse Stone of treason.¹¹⁷

Not all members of the General Assembly supported the resolution to censure Stone. Opponents moved to indefinitely postpone the resolution. Supporters of the censure insisted that failure to censure Stone indirectly sanctioned “a position manifestly hostile to the present administration of the federal government.”¹¹⁸ When the resolution returned to debate in the House, it was amended several times. A version of the resolution passed on December 21 by

¹¹⁵ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 14.

¹¹⁶ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 14.

¹¹⁷ *Raleigh Register* cited on multiple dates in Sarah M. Lemmon, “Dissent in North Carolina During the War of 1812,” *North Carolina Historical Review* Vol. 49, no. 2 (April 1972), 111 (note 54).

¹¹⁸ *Journal of House of Commons*, 1813, 22.

a vote of 76 to 39.¹¹⁹ In the House, Federalist Jesse A. Pearson of Rowan County led the pro-Stone movement and was one of about eighteen devout Federalists within a group of forty-two legislators who presented a petition in the waning days of the session questioning the right of the General Assembly to censure.¹²⁰ In the State Senate, Archibald D. Murphey of Orange County marshaled a group of fourteen men in support of Stone. Of those fourteen, at least four were determined Federalists.¹²¹

North Carolina's leaders did attempt to balance support for the war with higher ideal of how the new political system worked. Commenting on the major events of the just-closed session of the General Assembly, Murphey informed his constituents that the debates over the memorial to the President and Stone's censure were not party issues—and by implication rejected any implication that he opposed the war. In his 1813 circular letter to the “freemen of Orange County,” he assured his constituents that no “spirit of hostility” toward the administration motivated the memorial. He insisted that “no party considerations or party feelings” influenced the committee charged with making the report. His vote in support of the memorial was not intended to “stir up discontent towards the federal government,” rather to ensure that government properly attend to the state's defense.¹²²

Murphey also addressed the censure of Senator Stone. He may have felt especially sensitive to the subject since he voted against the measure. Murphey explained that he

¹¹⁹ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 44.

¹²⁰ Lemmon, “Dissenters,” 111; *Journal of the House*, 1813, 52; James H. Broussard, “The North Carolina Federalists, 1800-1816,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* Vol. 55, no. 1 (January 1978), 40. Broussard lists Federalists identifiable from sources other than legislative vote in the appendix to his article.

¹²¹ Lemmon, “Dissenters,” 111; *Journal of the House*, 1813, 52; Broussard, “The North Carolina Federalists, 1800-1816,” 40. Broussard lists Murphey as a Republican.

¹²² Archibald D. Murphey, “To the freemen of Orange County,” December 25, 1813 (Raleigh: T. Henderson, 1813). Accessed online, America's Historical Imprints Database, Series II. The memorial in question was discussed earlier.

opposed the resolutions not because he agreed with Stone's voting record; rather, he believed the people should have censured Stone, not the Legislature. Murphey's framing of his opposition to the resolutions as a procedural objection instead of an argument based on Stone's opinion towards the war underscores the importance of continuing efforts to reinforce war support and contribute to the united—and unanimously supported—effort against Great Britain.

Despite the factionalism of party politics that could undermine local mobilization for the overall war effort, the pro-war Republicans had managed to paper over their differences to present a united front. Stone's censure serves as one more example of the state's commitment to the war effort, in spite of determined opposition. Expecting their senator to reflect the state's support for the war, support evidenced by the state's unanimous endorsement of Madison's re-election, the General Assembly censured Stone for his anti-war votes to symbolically purge the state of any anti-war leanings. Nevertheless, the fundamental problem of mobilization within a representative democracy remained, and, the anti-war faction continued to push for a voice in the state by protesting the change in electoral methods during the 1812 presidential election and by opposing Stone's censure. Even in the wake of the federal government's marked disinterest in North Carolina's moment of encounter with the British, Republicans remained committed to representative government and the federal system. The summer crisis inspired a surge of activity—troops mobilized and local communities carried out new defensive preparations. Furthermore, in the wake of the Ocracoke invasion, the state ostensibly supported widened military action, specifically more assistance in coastal defense. The next chapter examines how the General Assembly

reorganized state resources to meet the call for improved coastal defense and how the Creek War generated additional support for the war effort.

Chapter 4: Learning to Support the War—Adjustments in the Aftermath of Ocracoke

The federal government's lack of support for increased security before, during, and after the Ocracoke invasion signaled to North Carolinians the extent of the difference between federal and state wartime priorities. Aware of the limits on likely federal assistance or even interest, the state took measures to look after its own interests while still pressing the federal government to honor its obligations—at least as the state of North Carolina perceived those obligations. Nevertheless, despite doubts about the federal commitment to North Carolina, the state government and its citizens continued to contribute troops, taxes, and even rhetorical support. Although opposition to the war persisted, and frustration with the federal government was widespread, the state's continuing contributions to the war demonstrated its commitment to the nation and to a republican government. This commitment stood in contrast to other states such as Massachusetts where political rhetoric included threats of secession and in which some governors even barred federal access to those states' resources.

As North Carolina grappled with the aftermath of Ocracoke, a pattern of behavior emerged in the state's interactions with the federal government. North Carolinians continued to push a coastal security agenda with the President and the War Department through their governor and national representatives. Although there was some acknowledgement, especially by Major General Thomas Pinckney, the federal commander of the Sixth Military District, of the vulnerability of the North Carolina coast, and the importance of the issue to the state, there was no corresponding financial or military support from the federal government. This lack of federal interest compelled the state's legislature to make military

provisions independent of federal funding. Governor Hawkins's continued interaction with federal officers on issues pertaining to coastal security and federal objectives, however, show his attempts to reconcile independent and autonomous state resources and objectives to the larger war aims without sacrificing the interests of his state. His balancing act demonstrates the complicated nature of constitutional guidance about federal and state military roles and responsibilities.

The nation's "dual" military system distributed authority over the employment of troops and by extension, cast uncertainty over the federal government's financial obligation to the states whose militia it employed. Disputes between the North Carolina government and the federal government arose over the responsibility for supplying, provisioning, and paying the various military organizations in service—regular federal troops, federalized militias, and state militias. In North Carolina, the governor's calling of militia units into service during the invasion at Ocracoke further clouded the issue. The governor believed he had federal approval to call out troops in the event of an invasion, but without written orders for the specific mobilization, there was debate about whether the federal government should pay for troops and supplies used during the emergency. In the wake of Ocracoke, North Carolina sought federal reimbursement, believing that the implied approval to mobilize constituted a federal obligation in the same manner as the U.S. Army formally calling into service units from the detached militia. This conflict left unresolved individual claims for reimbursement from the state. In turn, North Carolina looked to the federal government to pay those individuals and honor state expenditures as well. As a result, funding the war became an important issue in the 1813 state legislature's session and compelled the governor and the

militia to adopt mobilization procedures that more closely conformed to U.S. Army standards.

Even as the state continued to press its claims against the federal government to secure its coast and subsidize its military spending, the federal government called on the state to provide troops to fight against the Creek Indians on the southwestern frontier. In January 1814, Major General Pinckney ordered a regiment of North Carolina militia from the detachment formed in 1812 to march to Fort Hawkins in Georgia to relieve the Georgia militia. As Governor Hawkins coordinated the rendezvous and deployment, he did so with the experience of the previous summer behind him. He was well aware that the nation considered North Carolina's concerns ancillary but still expected North Carolina men to participate in larger national objectives. This mobilization demonstrated the governor's efforts to coordinate more carefully the state's forces to ensure North Carolina met its troop obligations and that its soldiers would receive pay and supplies their service entitled. Hawkins also attempted to hold the federal government to its financial obligations as the mobilization occurred rather than after the fact. Because frontier security was, however, an issue of some importance to the state, the mobilization of troops to fight against Creek Indians proved to be a more organic convergence of state and national interests. North Carolina mobilized its detached militia and in the process adopted practices that allowed them more successfully to assert financial claims to the federal government. These improvements, as well as news from the troops in the frontier, helped buttress the state's cultural connections to the nation and the war effort.

In the aftermath of Ocracoke, North Carolina took measures to assist the national war effort and to ensure it supported its own interests. State legislators reviewed funding and

service requirements. Individuals volunteered themselves for military service and turned out for mobilizations. State newspapers published laudatory accounts from North Carolinians serving against the Creeks. Actions such as these demonstrated a commitment to the war and reinforced ties to the nation. Despite a serious level of disillusionment with the federal system, the cultural connections that undergirded the state's initial support for the war remained intact and kept North Carolina out of the anti-war fold. This chapter will examine how in the aftermath of the Ocracoke invasion through the spring of 1814 North Carolina explored ways to secure its own interests while continuing to support the wider national cause.

North Carolina's Security Concerns

Governor William Hawkins toured the North Carolina coast following the Ocracoke invasion and there gained first-hand knowledge of the state's coastal vulnerabilities. Upon his return to Raleigh in August 1813, he wrote the Secretary of War to provide detailed information about the most vulnerable points along the North Carolina coast and to recommend the defensive preparations he felt the United States should undertake. Hawkins cited Ocracoke, Old Topsail, New, and Cape Fear Inlets as the most important points to be defended. To guard Ocracoke, he recommended a fort on Beacon Island, manned by at least 300 men, fortified by palisades, and aided by a few gun-boats. Such a configuration would secure the northern portion of the state and not only "quiet the fears of the people settled on the main land near the sounds, but do away with the necessity, whenever the British Fleet might again appear off Ocracoke of calling out troops to protect Newbern, Washington, Plymouth, Edenton, and Elizabeth City." Failing to secure the inlet would leave the richest

part of the state vulnerable to enemy raids. Hawkins did his best to persuade Armstrong that the cost of fortifying the area would be negligible when compared to its utility.¹

North Carolina's commercial centers required protection as well. Hawkins also provided detailed plans for securing Beaufort and Wilmington, accessed through Old Topsail and New Inlets, respectively, and for defending the Cape Fear inlet. Fort Hampton, in the vicinity of Beaufort, required repairs and expansion. He also recommended placing a supporting battery at Shackleford Banks. To guard Wilmington, Hawkins recommended erecting a fort at Federal Point, garrisoned by at least 100 men. Hawkins also recommended improvements to Fort Johnston, designed to guard both the New Inlet and the Cape Fear Inlet, and raising the number of men at the fort to at least 150. In addition to the improvements and addition of fortifications, Hawkins requested that the United States provide no fewer than four gunboats to guard the Cape Fear River and the necessary cannon to complete the fortifications he recommended. He acknowledged that his proposal required more support than the federal government had previously provided, but he denied its extravagance. Furthermore, he insisted that if the war continued, his suggestion was the most economical and expedient proposal. Hawkins stressed the certainty that many North Carolinians felt that future enemy incursions would be frequent and more serious than what they had already endured.²

The federal government and the U.S. Army knew that the British posed a threat to the North Carolina coast. Coastal security, however, remained a low priority for the federal government, which was willing to provide manpower, arms, and means for fortification only

¹ William Hawkins to Secretary of War John Armstrong, August 20, 1813, Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor's Letters and Papers, Box 25 (Corresponds to Governor's Letter Book #19), North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Hawkins Letter Book 19].

² William Hawkins to Secretary of War John Armstrong, August 20, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

after it addressed areas central to the national war effort, which in the fall of 1813 showed some promise. In September 1813, the U.S. Navy led by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry had wrested control of Lake Erie from the British. In October, William Henry Harrison capitalized on Perry's success with a victory at the Battle of the Thames. However, along the St. Lawrence River, with Montreal as the objective, American forces met defeat at Châteauguay and Chrysler's Farm. Continued fighting along the Niagara frontier also required resources. As commander of federal forces in the Sixth Military District, Major General Pinckney was responsible for North Carolina. As such, he was more sensitive to the threats it faced, although given the extent of activity in the north, he was not able to command resources to defend the coast to the extent most in the state would have preferred.

Three months after Hawkins's request to the Secretary of War, General Pinckney wrote Hawkins with his own assessment of the British threat and the likely repercussions of their campaigning. According to Pinckney, accounts from Halifax indicated that the British were preparing for an early expedition against some portion of the south. The extent of the British actions required the United States to take necessary steps to repel an invasion. Furthermore, Pinckney accurately predicted that the blockade was only one of the British objectives; its second objective was to raid and terrorize the coast. He cited the events of Frenchtown, Havre de Grace, and Hampton as examples. Nonetheless, Pinckney believed that the likely outcome of such atrocities was more likely to create a "greater union among our Citizens" rather than achieve any useful military outcome.³ Historian Nicole Eustace

³ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, November 11, 1813. Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor's Letters and Papers, Box 26 (Corresponds to Governor's Letter Book #20), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Hawkins Letter Book 20].

builds her analysis of the relationship between personal crisis and political commitment to the war on exactly this type of contemporary reaction to British behavior.⁴

The themes of duty and loyalty peppered Pinckney's appeal to Hawkins for assistance in guarding the coast. He assessed that Wilmington, along with Charleston and Savannah, were likely primary targets for future British action and that President Madison relied on the patriotism of North Carolina to help repel any invasions. The president, Pinckney relayed, expected Hawkins to make "a vigorous application" of the resources he commanded as governor. Pinckney added his own praise of North Carolina's quick response to the July invasion of Ocracoke, which in his mind had left "nothing to be desired." Pinckney's praise and patriotic appeal may have masked pragmatic assessments. Ultimately, he believed that the North Carolina coast offered natural protection, especially when coupled with the determined character of the state's inhabitants—another compliment to Hawkins's constituents.⁵ Pinckney benefited from state-level support for the war. If the state felt valued and Hawkins felt informed of British movements, the state was more likely to accurately designate troops for coastal defense and reduce demands on the federal government.

And indeed, although coastal defense remained a low federal priority, the government did offer some resources for its defense. After months of petitioning the federal government, the plans included in Pinckney's November letter must have provided some relief to the beleaguered governor. If nothing else, Hawkins now had information to provide to the many petitioners who had written him directly. More materially, Pinckney ordered a small battery

⁴ Nicole Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 25. Stephen Watts, *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790-1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987). Watts also examines the emotional expressions of war appeals, specifically the contrast made between British savagery and depravity and the young "hercules" of the United States in *The Republic Reborn* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1987).

⁵ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, November 11, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

erected and a permanent force stationed for the further protection of Wilmington. He noted that a battery placed at the northwest point of the intersection of New Inlet and the Cape Fear River would prevent British vessels from moving up the river and deter raiding parties from reaching Wilmington. Pinckney also authorized Governor Hawkins to use troops stationed at Deep Water Point to man the proposed point near Wilmington, or call out additional troops as the governor saw fit. These preparations addressed the fears reflected in several letters, discussed below, from residents of that area. This type of action was what the residents of the coast had long expected from the government.⁶

Pinckney's lengthy letter seemed to offer additional assurance that the federal government—or at least Pinckney, as the commander of the Sixth Military District—took the situation in North Carolina seriously. Although he cancelled his planned trip to the coast, he hoped to get to North Carolina to meet with the governor in November or December 1813. He also planned to discuss the defense of the North Carolina frontier. Pinckney notified the governor that he had sent an Assistant Quartermaster to North Carolina to provide for the militia “as far as our regulations and Means will admit.” He also informed the governor that slow recruiting had prevented him from sending any troops from the Forty-third Regiment of Infantry to replace those of the Tenth Regiment that were called away to Canada. He said he knew of the suffering of the militia in service, implying that the shortfall in regular troops exposed the militia to their ills. However, Pinckney was hopeful that with good recruiting and no more requirements to send troops north, he would have enough regulars to relieve the militia currently serving in garrisons.⁷ In sum, the letter indicated that he was attuned to the

⁶ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, November 11, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁷ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, November 11, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

issues that Hawkins and North Carolinians felt were important to the state. However, his inaction revealed the limits of what Pinckney was able to deliver to the state. It was left to the governor to generate increased manpower because demand for troops in the north trumped coastal defense of North Carolina. Although Pinckney's details for fortifications were promising, he provided no specifics about funding the endeavors.

The near-constant presence of British ships along the coast had driven North Carolina's pleas for fortifications and defensive preparations. Over the course of the war, the British maintained a blockade of the American coast and although the extent of the blockade varied over time, by the fall of 1813, it extended the full length of the Atlantic seaboard.⁸ The changes were not lost on local residents; news of the invigorated blockade appeared in Raleigh in mid-October. The *Register* reprinted British Admiral John Warren's proclamation that, beginning September 1, the outlets of the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds connected with the ports of Norfolk, Ocracoke, and Beaufort in North Carolina, the Cape Fear River the port at Georgetown in South Carolina, and parts of Georgia would be in "a state of strict and rigorous blockade."⁹ The governor already had received eyewitness reports of activities tied to the British blockade from residents on the coast. A letter from his frequent correspondent Nathan Tisdale of Newbern confirmed what he heard from Thomas Singleton, the port collector at Portsmouth. The British landed an officer from the schooner *Pears*, who arrived ashore carrying white flag and announced the ports at Portsmouth and Beaufort, and all

⁸ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 151–153.

⁹ *Raleigh Register*, October 15, 1813.

others southward, in a state of blockade. The officer's pronouncement left residents certain that additional British forces would soon arrive.¹⁰

Increased British activity contributed to the sense that federal government assistance was insufficient to provide for North Carolina's security. The British capture of a pilot boat in late September exacerbated local perceptions of vulnerability. In an affidavit to Hawkins, Singleton described the "inhuman and diabolical conduct of our worse than savage enemy." Local men George Jackson and Simon Howard discovered a small sailboat off the bar and observed the deck was clear of guns, so they and three others approached the schooner, assuming it was in need of a pilot. As soon as they boarded, armed men appeared on deck and threatened to cast them in irons and carry them off to Halifax. Instead, the captain carried the men to a point within 200 yards of the breakers and gave them a choice to swim to shore or "die by the sword." Four men swam to shore, although they feared being "swallowed by a Shark or lost to the breakers." The British detained the fifth man, Francis O'Neal, to force him to help pilot a brig into Currituck to attack Ocracoke and Portsmouth.¹¹

A letter signed by William Howard and other men from Ocracoke confirmed Singleton's account. The Ocracokers reported the same kidnapping and added that the released men returned with a message from the ship. The British intended to make the harbor their port and threatened to "burn and destroy everything before them" if "molested." This direct threat validated the locals' belief their port was blockaded—they reported seeing a brig and two schooners off the coast every day. The men from Ocracoke requested forces from the governor to repel the enemy. They also expressed frustration with their "deplorable

¹⁰ Nathan Tisdale to William Hawkins, September 16, 1813; copy of Samuel Wilkins to Thomas Singleton, September 15, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

¹¹ Thomas Singleton to William Hawkins, September 25, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

situation” of their lives and property being exposed to the enemy, “without the least assistance from our Government.”¹² The tenor of the letter indicated their frustration was with the federal government as the state had previously taken steps to defend the area. This sense of abandonment by the federal government threatened to undermine state-wide support for the war and burdened state leaders inclined to support the war with finding a way to ensure North Carolina supplemented any resources provided by the federal government.

Although men along the coast recognized the weather’s role in determining when the British might strike, incursions continued into the late fall and kept coastal residents on edge. Militia colonel, statesman, and frequent Hawkins correspondent Brickhouse Bell described disturbing events from Indian Town in Currituck County. A privateer appeared and landed eighteen men. Captain Farrow’s militia company caught the raiding party comprised of one lieutenant, six white men and eleven black men—presumed slaves—who had planned to “cut out some vessels.” One of the captives drowned on the way to jail in Elizabeth City, and the captors intended to claim the slaves as prize property. Bell further reflected that seeing the British off their coast made people on Cape Hatteras anxious, and coastal residents presumably viewed the use of black men to conduct raiding with some suspicion. Bell recommended at least twenty-five or thirty men be stationed in the area.¹³

Any optimism North Carolinians might have felt in conjunction with General Pinckney’s proposed November visit was muted when Pinckney cancelled his fall visit. President Madison had directed him to take charge of the expedition against the Creeks.¹⁴

¹² William Howard and others to Hawkins, September 25, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

¹³ Brickhouse Bell to William Hawkins, October 25, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, North Carolina State Archives (NCSA), Raleigh, NC.

¹⁴ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, November 17, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

The *Raleigh Register* reported the cancellation of Pinckney's visit to various military posts and in the same editions, summarized the British force blockading Ocracoke. Captain Pike of the schooner *John Jones* observed the force consisting of the brig *Conflict*, with eighteen guns, the schooner *Pax*, with fourteen guns, and another small schooner. The captain named three vessels, including the *Captain Smith* out of Elizabeth City, a ship earlier captured by the British.¹⁵ This evidence of North Carolina's vulnerability at the very moment Pinckney was redirected to the frontier demonstrated that the War Department viewed security along the state's coast as a secondary priority.

Meeting Militia Expectations

Although the federal government left detached militia garrisoned in forts along the coast into the spring of 1814, it did not provide sufficiently for the men's need, leaving them to occupy the attention of North Carolina's leaders. A lack of regular provisions, inadequate housing, and periodic outbreaks of disease complicated the usual dreariness of garrison life. The militiamen looked to state leadership to address their supply problems, despite having been authorized to serve by Pinckney and the federal government. The militia also retained their expectations about the terms of service, in particular their right to choose commanders and the length of their terms of service. These expectations reflected their identity as citizen soldiers and as such, they looked to the governor to relieve the stricter requirements of federal service. The awkward nature of state troops being called into the service of the country and then stationed close to the traditional state military apparatus illuminates many difficulties associated with the duality built into the American military system. That the state responded to these requests demonstrates a sense of obligation to its citizen soldiers.

Furthermore, state leaders understood a connection between caring for troops and successful

¹⁵ *Raleigh Register*, November 26, 1813.

future recruiting. Ensuring the troops were cared for was an investment in the state's ability to mobilize men in the future.

The North Carolina militia's expectations fit within a contractualist culture that had emerged in the American military. Fred Anderson explored contractualism in his examination of the provincial army of the Seven Years' War and described the roots of the early American militia and military system. The provincial army, like the detached militia, was not a permanent body. Officers were commissioned every year and new troops were raised annually, although many officers served multiple terms. As Anderson notes, service was limited by explicit statements built into commissions and enlistments. Men enrolled for a specific action against a specific foe. Militia units drilled and provided some military training to men who eventually composed the provincial army, but the militias themselves were defensive body. To wage war, the provincial army was raised annually and was backbone of military during Seven Years' War.¹⁶

Other experiences from the colonial period and the American Revolution further cemented this culture of contractualism during the War of 1812. In the colonial era it had been common practice for militia men to elect their own officers. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the majority of ranking officers were of at least modest wealth and distinction when compared with their neighbors.¹⁷ The social status of officers in North Carolina's detached militia reflects this tradition. The militia was a parochial institution, designed to

¹⁶ Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 26–27, 50–51.

¹⁷ James Martin and Mark Edward Lender, *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763–1789*, 2nd ed. (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2006), 17.

organize quickly and execute short-term tasks.¹⁸ These qualities existed in North Carolina's militia, especially when units entered federal service during the War of 1812.

As they long had, these customs and expectations of militia service shaped its effectiveness as an instrument of war. State leaders recognized the reality of this cultural baggage and struggled to accommodate them or they risked undermining the morale of those who served. Even the Uniform Militia Act of 1792 recognized these precedents and limited federalized militiamen to terms of three months. Although the amendments passed in the spring of 1812 extended the service term to six months, militiamen expected those terms to be honored. Even under critical circumstances, militiamen could not be expected to remain on duty once the term of service ended. Men also expected to serve under officers they knew. Deviations from these expectations had to be agreed upon in advance or leaders risked the willingness of men to serve.

North Carolina militia remained serving the United States at positions along the coast through the fall of 1813 into the spring of 1814. Illness and dissatisfaction with leadership, however, bred militia disaffection. Brigadier General William Watt Jones, commander of the Third Brigade of the North Carolina Militia, encountered conditions during his October 1813 visit to Deep Water Point that led him to recommend that the governor dismiss the militia. Jones found 220 men sick and 2 dead upon his arrival; others had been buried before his visit. At least one-third of the men lacked blankets and they were sleeping six men to a tent instead of in the still-unfinished log houses. Jones judged the conditions so poor that he started a subscription to help the troops and expressed willingness to pay for supplies out his own pocket. Furthermore, Jones argued that keeping the militia in garrison was unnecessary

¹⁸ Allan Millett, William B. Feis, and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 2012), 55.

because in an emergency he would be able to draw more men from Brunswick County than the fort could accommodate and the county of New Hanover was ready to respond as well.¹⁹

Hawkins rejected Jones' suggestions, citing the federal directive to protect the Cape Fear River with two companies. Instead, Hawkins ordered the commanding officer at Deep Water Point to reduce his force to two full companies, consisting of five officers, eight non-commissioned officers, and one hundred privates each. The reduction would require the commander to dismiss five officers and one hundred privates, essentially an entire company. Hawkins suggested that commanders retain single men for duty to the greatest extent possible. Hawkins also made provisions to care for suffering and ill troops. He relayed to the commander that the United States had not provided funds for needed hospital stores and medicine, so he authorized Doctor Hadley, the surgeon with the detachment, to purchase the needed supplies at the expense of the state.²⁰

In addition, the representative from the Fifth Congressional District, which included the coastal counties of Onslow, New Hanover, and Brunswick, William R. King of Sampson County, weighed in on the conditions of the troops on the coast. King's visit to Fort Johnston left him feeling that the men "suffer a want of the common conveniences required by their situation." A malignant fever in the camp had led to several fatalities. King advised the governor to contact General Pinckney if he lacked the authority to dismiss the men.²¹

The governor's desk groaned under the weight of similar reports decrying the poor conditions at Fort Johnston. The commander of the detachment, Major John Cameron,

¹⁹ Gen William Jones to William Hawkins, October, 13 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA. The counties of New Hanover, Brunswick, Duplin, Jones, and Onslow comprised the companies of the Third Brigade.

²⁰ William Hawkins to unnamed commander at Deep Water Point, undated but filed after September 17, 1813 letter and before October 14, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

²¹ William R. King to William Hawkins, October 28, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 19, NCSA.

suffered two attacks that left him partially paralyzed—at a minimum, he lost his power of speech. Writing on Cameron’s behalf from Fayetteville, his brother Duncan requested John be replaced by another officer and described conditions at the fort, as reported by Captain Evans, a subordinate to John Cameron. Evans counted 143 sick privates, a circumstance made worse by the lack of necessary medicine and supplies. Duncan Cameron promised to provide the governor with a fuller description of the “privations and suffering under which the detachment is living” when he next visited Raleigh.²² From Beaufort, Lieutenant Colonel John Roberts of Carteret County also reported poor camp conditions. A lack of shoes and clothes in addition to “the Badness” of the camp left soldiers sick and suffering. Their sickly condition left them unable to respond to attack. The soldiers’ condition, along with the colonel’s assessment that it was unlikely the British would attack for the remainder of the season, led him to recommend that the governor discharge the troops. Roberts bolstered his recommendation with the news that General Hardy Smith, commander of the Second Brigade of North Carolina Militia, concurred with his recommendation.²³

In addition to poor physical conditions, troops also complained of poor leadership selections. Accustomed to having a say in selecting officers, troops viewed unpopular or unfamiliar officers as evidence of the government’s failure to meet their basic expectations. It was tradition in the American militia for the men of the company to elect captains and other subordinate officers.²⁴ In explaining why he and twenty other officers of Cumberland County were recommending leniency for seven deserters, Colonel Duncan McLean pointed out that

²² Duncan Cameron to William Hawkins, October 6, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

²³ Roberts to Hawkins, October 16, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA. The counties of Hyde, Pitt, Carteret, Craven, and Beaufort comprised the companies of the Second Brigade.

²⁴ Carl Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 40.

the men had volunteered to march under Captain McCraine of the Fourth Regiment to defend Wilmington. They expected to serve “with him under who they volunteered.” Upon learning that the general had reorganized units and placed them under Captain Evans, they deserted. McLean advocated leniency because the desertion was, in the eyes of the officers, the product of a misunderstanding. According to McLean, the appropriate actions for the governor to take would be to accept them back into the service of Captain Blue or to accept their service when the next detachment was ordered out. This letter reveals both that soldiers expected to serve with officers they knew and that the officers, ostensibly more-educated men of standing, expected no immediate end to the war.²⁵

Officers at Fort Johnston reported their own problems. Major John Cameron’s departure from Fort Johnston, described above, exacerbated issues for troops stationed there. Captain Sullivan, one of Cameron’s subalterns, wrote to Hawkins in December to query the Adjutant General’s decision to discharge him as the commanding officer. He was unaware that he held the position and believed Captain Evans to be the commanding officer, although Sullivan had taken over the responsibility of forwarding the muster rolls. He had also incurred a debt estimated between \$350 and \$500 by providing clothes and stores to the troops at his own expense. He was concerned about his discharge for two reasons. First, he wanted to know how he would be reimbursed once he was discharged. Second, he believed the company and half a second company preferred his command to that of Captain Evans.²⁶

Evans's fitness for command was also a subject of debate among the soldiers, and they engaged the governor directly. A soldier and resident of Moore County observed that Moore County militia under Captain Isaac Sullivan had been discharged while two full

²⁵ Mclean, et al, to Hawkins, September 20, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

²⁶ Sullivan to Hawkins, December 12, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

companies commanded by Captain Evans remained in service. The letter writer was reconciled to his discharge believing he was “doing the public very little good,” but expressed concern over Sullivan’s discharge and Evans’s retention. He praised Sullivan, stating that Sullivan tended to the men’s needs and was always with his men. Evans, on the other hand, lodged away from his men and beat them with his sword. Evans’s own brother believed Captain Evans was unfit for command, and the brother planned to resign his own commission because of his brother. The letter writer recommended that authorities discharge Evans instead of anyone else.²⁷

There were other ways in which militia custom clashed with regular army expectations, and those clashes further encouraged desertion. In November, Captain Shaw of the Moore County militia apprehended Joseph Morris, a militia volunteer who had deserted from Fort Johnston. Existing orders directed the captain to take Morris to Deep Water Point near Smithville to turn him over to authorities, but Morris’s health was so bad, ostensibly a result of conditions at Fort Johnston, that he was unable to travel.²⁸ Mr. Bertie of Moore County described the circumstances of Morris’s desertion. Bertie asked for leniency in the situation, blaming the inflexibility of the army, rather than either of the Morris brothers. Joseph Morris was a substitute for his brother Benjamin, who volunteered and served for two months before Joseph took his place. Benjamin required a substitute because he had a small family. After five or six weeks, he returned to Fort Johnston to resume his service, but the officers turned him away because they wanted Joseph to stay and serve out the time. Joseph deserted and “was very sick ever since.” He possessed “patriotic spirit” and was willing to

²⁷ Morison to Hawkins, December 19, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

²⁸ Shaw to Hawkins, November 10, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

return when recovered. Benjamin, too, was willing to return to service.²⁹ For Benjamin, family obligations trumped his willingness and ability to serve, although he did try to acquire a substitute. Although not explicitly stated, Joseph, the substitute, abandoned his position only after the original soldier returned. He had fulfilled his duty as a substitute. It was not the substitute's fault that the army refused to let the men switch out. The circumstances causing Morris's desertion reveal that militia troops had not adjusted to the more rigorous discipline of federal service and expected state authorities to intercede on their behalf when needed.

Activated men and officers also expected flexibility in their term of service in order to attend to personal commitments. While serving in the detached militia at Fort Hampton, Captain Abner Pasteur of the artillery petitioned the governor for a fifteen- to twenty-day leave of absence to attend to personal business. If the governor failed to grant the leave, Pasteur felt he would have to resign. He stated explicitly he did not want to resign because the enemy had threatened to attack the southern states; however, that did not prevent him from placing his personal business above his military command, at least temporarily.³⁰

In addition to personal and business matters, which troops served and for how long was an important consideration for the governor as well as for the men involved. A mobilization of men in the western portion of the state, discussed later in the chapter, coincided with another call for men along the coast. To replace detached militia whose terms were about to expire, Hawkins ordered Lieutenant Colonel John Roberts of Carteret County to mobilize 118 men to serve in and around Beaufort. Although men such as Nathaniel Pinckham of Beaufort, who accepted a captain's commission and expected to serve for up to six months, were willing to serve, Hawkins's decision to include men from Carteret County

²⁹ Bertie to Hawkins, November 19, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

³⁰ Pasteur to Hawkins, December 3, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

generated problems.³¹ From Newbern, John Stanly, a Federalist who served in the Eleventh U.S. Congress (1809-1811) and began serving in the North Carolina House of Commons in 1812, informed the governor that the draft on men from Carteret County had taken “every third man from their homes.” Stanly noted that the people on the eastern shore of the county, near Ocracoke and Portsmouth, were more exposed and vulnerable than the rest of the county. According to Stanly, although they were as “handy, brave, and patriotic” as the rest of the county, and ready to do their duty, it was in the best interest of the county, and the state, for those in the eastern reaches to remain at home in a state of readiness to protect the coast.³²

Hawkins responded to the pressure by ordering Roberts to send home the men from the Oyster Creek and Cedar Inlet area of Carteret County that Stanly had mentioned, where they should “hold themselves in readiness to defend Ocracoke and Portsmouth in case of attack.” Men from less exposed parts of the county were to take their places at Fort Hampton. Hawkins explained that when the order was made to replace the detached militia whose terms were about to expire, he believed it would be temporary; regulars would soon replace them. After issuing the order, the situation became less clear. If it became certain that the militia would continue to garrison the fort, he intended to replace the men from coastal counties with troops from less exposed parts of the state.³³

Disputes over mobilization procedures extended to issues of provisioning and supplying as well. Hawkins expected U.S. Army contractors to supply the troops with rations

³¹ John Roberts to William Hawkins, January 27, 1814; Nathaniel Pinkham to Hawkins, January 27, 1814; Hawkins to Roberts, February 20, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Roberts was the Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the regiment ordered to garrison Fort Hampton.

³² John Stanly to William Hawkins, February 24, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

³³ William Hawkins to John Roberts, February 20, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

and fuel because they were serving the United States; he insisted that the federal government was obligated to support the detached militia. Again, using language that connoted obligation and duty, Hawkins informed Roberts that if the federal government neglected its duty and failed to supply the detached militia, he would use state funds to supply and pay the men.³⁴ Hawkins's letter was thinly veiled criticism of the federal government, which he believed was failing to uphold its obligations. His notice to Roberts reassured the troops that their needs would be met, even at North Carolina's expense. Although Hawkins was willing to cover the expense out of state pride and the perceived need for security, future actions made it clear that the state would seek reimbursement from the federal government when warranted.

The State Legislature at Work

Money and men were the central concerns addressed by the state legislature in its fall 1813 session. The General Assembly assessed the state militia's performance and considered proposals to reorganize its forces. The intent behind the legislature's efforts to finance the war and reorganize its troops was to put the state on a better war footing. Changes allowed North Carolina to meet both federal demands and to ensure it had sufficient resources to secure interests not attended to by the greater war effort. In one sense the federal system here worked to design. The state legislature enacted policies intended to *improve* the state's responsiveness to the federal war effort, while also providing for its own more parochial security needs.

While the governor attended to the details of managing the troops on the eastern seaboard, the General Assembly investigated more generally how well the state's militia had met the challenge of war. On November 24, 1813, Adjutant General Robert Williams

³⁴ William Hawkins to John Roberts, February 20, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

reported to the legislature on the state of the militia. He noted that there were 51,298 officers and soldiers divided into 86 regiments. This number included infantry, cavalry, artillery, light infantry, grenadiers, and riflemen.³⁵ One thrust of his report was to reduce the number of officers in the force. He detailed that per the state law of 1806, and per federal guidelines, the state's militia had too many officers for the number of regiments. Furthermore, the federal government required that a company consist of one hundred privates, five commissioned and eight non-commissioned officers, which differed from state laws where seventy-seven men constituted a company. The War Department defined a regiment as consisting of one thousand men, exclusive of officers, larger than the 777 under North Carolina laws. Williams noted that a surplus of officers increased military spending and put the United States at a disadvantage when ransoming captured officers, but, more importantly, having to discharge officers when they were called into federal service caused some troops to serve under those "with whom they were unacquainted." To remedy this situation, the adjutant general recommended the state reorganize its militia to conform more closely to the federal standards.

The fall of 1813 legislative session saw the General Assembly make a number of organizational changes; some based on Williams' report, others based on recommendations from other quarters. They approved a petition from the Ashe County militia to transform the regiment of infantry to a regiment of riflemen.³⁶ Interestingly, the House also entertained but ultimately rejected a bill from the Senate to include "free Negroes and Mulattoes" in militia musters. The House committee cited provisions in a 1792 Congressional act that prohibited "enrolling persons of this description." Furthermore, the committee stated that even had such

³⁵ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 16. The report stated that he submitted abstracts and an annual return.

³⁶ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 11; passage, 26.

a law not existed, “considerations of sound policy” also warranted upholding the 1812 state law excluding them.³⁷

Turning to other means to relieve the stress on manpower, the North Carolina legislature reexamined other previously excluded individuals. The State Senate introduced a bill to repeal the portion of the militia law that exempted physicians, surgeons, justices of the peace, and university students. The bill was read and referred to committee on December 6, 1813.³⁸ The legislature considered lifting service exemptions from other protected categories as well. Existing state law excused several religious groups from the obligation to muster and bear arms other than in times of invasion or insurrection. Because the nation was at war, Elijah Calloway of Ashe County proposed the legislature appoint a joint committee to consider compelling Quakers, Dunkers, Moravians, and Mennonites to “bear arms or pay a fourfold tax so as to take some part in the present contest.”³⁹ By 1814, exemptions to service under “any requisition of the United States” had been curtailed. The General Assembly exempted only Superior Court judges and ordained ministers from federal service, although the law left in place previous exemptions to “ordinary militia duty.”⁴⁰

A desire to participate more effectively in the war motivated reform. Proposals that did not help the state conform to federal policies were rejected. The legislature rejected a proposal to create a new cavalry unit in Lenoir County, because it would violate the federal guidelines, which stated that cavalry units came from volunteers within the brigade, not to

³⁷ *Journal of the House*, 1813, opposed amendment, 30. The proposed bill would have reversed an 1812 law that exempted free blacks and mulattos from mustering. The General Assembly passed a bill in 1814 to include free blacks and mulattos in militia musters. This would eventually be reversed in 1814.

³⁸ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 25.

³⁹ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 26.

⁴⁰ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1814. Chapter I.

exceed one company per regiment, or more than one-eleventh of the total infantry.

Additionally, the legislature dismissed a petition from the officers of Northampton County as other militia reforms encompassed their concerns.⁴¹ The General Assembly did address routine issues such as dividing county regiments, approving resignations, and voting for new field grade officers and generals.⁴²

The selection of officers continued to reflect the practice of placing men with social prestige and political clout in leadership positions. For example, Joseph Pickett, one of the representatives from Anson County, was nominated to be colonel the Fourteenth Brigade of Cavalry.⁴³ James Iredell, representative from the town of Edenton, was nominated to fill a vacancy on the University of North Carolina's board of trustees and was a candidate for major general of the First Division. Although Iredell was elected to the board, the assembly elected Joseph Bryan, a former five-year representative from Bertie County, to be major general. Further illustrating the link between military position and social standing, Robert Williams, the state adjutant general, had proposed nominees to fill the vacancies on the university board in his capacity as the secretary for the board of trustees. Joseph Graham, a Revolutionary War hero, was elected to fill the position of brigadier general for the Tenth Brigade.⁴⁴

Turning from men to money, the General Assembly also addressed financial issues related to the war. The legislature entertained multiple laws and resolutions during its session from November through December 1813. Aware of the divergence between federal and state

⁴¹ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 30.

⁴² *Journal of the House*, 1813, Edgecombe County, 31; Wayne County, 33; resignation of Major General Wynns, 33.

⁴³ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 38.

⁴⁴ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 39; election of Bryan, 42.

wartime concerns, the General Assembly took steps to take care of itself and its citizens. In some instances, the measures simply covered expenses until the federal government reimbursed the state. The General Assembly also passed other laws in which the state assumed part of the financial burden of war. The majority Republican legislature considered expanding taxes and borrowing money, two actions typically considered antithetical to party doctrine. That the state legislature was willing to assume debt demonstrates that it deemed the security concerns voiced by state residents important enough to address, even if the federal government would not share the financial burden. Additionally, willingness to assume financial obligations temporarily, i.e., assuming individuals' claims on the federal government, suggests that the state continued to believe in the state/federal arrangements—that the federal government would reimburse North Carolina once Army administrators reviewed state claims. Finally, that the state elected to offer supplemental financial support to the national war effort demonstrates a continued commitment to the war effort, despite the realization that the state itself was a low priority in the national war plan.

Oversight for funding the war was the responsibility of the governor, the General Assembly, and the state Adjutant General. The General Assembly attempted to account for the amount spent by individuals in support of the war. Because reimbursement was understood as vital to sustain public support, the government depended on the perception that it could meet its obligations—an issue of legitimacy and efficacy. The General Assembly asked for a report tabulating the amount owed to individuals who furnished baggage wagons, supplies of provisions, hospital stores, ammunition, pay and other items to the militia and who could not expect to receive payment directly from the United States. In the report, it also wanted a description of the payments made by the state for the purpose of the common

defense since the last legislature had dismissed.⁴⁵ Although local communities sought reimbursement, the state also wanted to ensure that it was being treated fairly. Thus the state only wanted to assume responsibilities for valid debts; there was a clear expectation that states should pay for some things and the federal government should pay for other things.

The legislature's desire for a consolidated report undoubtedly stemmed from various towns that directly petitioned the state government for relief. Residents of towns that had assumed financial burdens used their state representatives to press claims for reimbursement. On November 30, 1813, Mr. Slade Pearce of Beaufort County presented the House of Commons with an account of supplies provided to the local militia called out to defend Wilmington in July. Thomas Latham, the Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the Beaufort County regiment, also provided a certificate that accompanied the report. Citizens from Hyde County presented their receipts for expenses made in support of the militia during the summer invasion.⁴⁶ The governor presented a letter from the Newbern Committee of Safety and a petition from the Wilmington Committee of Safety, both of which requested reimbursement for expenses made in defense against the July invasion.

Members of the Newbern Committee of Safety wrote to the governor in November informing him of their contributions the defense of the town during the Ocracoke invasion. Hawkins presented the town's claim to the General Assembly upon its receipt.⁴⁷ The committee explained the nature of the crisis had compelled them to act in the best interest of the nation and for the defense of their families and fortune; with the enemy at their doors, they had "not a moment to consider the pecuniary means." Committee members used their

⁴⁵ General Assembly to William Hawkins, December 21, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴⁶ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 20; Hyde County, 30; Governor's message, 25.

⁴⁷ William Hawkins to General Assembly, December 6, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

own credit and cash to dispatch look-out boats and express riders, to purchase spirits and forage, to quarter the troops, and to purchase muskets, powder, and ball and to mount cannon. All told, they spent more than \$2,000; either paid in cash or pledged personal credit.⁴⁸ The Committee of Safety understood that the General Assembly had designated a sum of money to the governor to be used in case of attack on the coast, although they had since learned that no such fund had been appropriated. Nevertheless, the men from Newbern felt it was unfair for the Committee of Safety to pay for the expense out of their own pockets because the actions benefited the entire community—if not the entire state. In their opinion, either the state government or the federal government should bear the expense, and they provided paperwork to substantiate their claim.⁴⁹

Governor Hawkins and Adjutant General Robert Williams compiled a report of expenses for the General Assembly. They estimated that the state paid 1,043 pounds and 3 shillings since the previous meeting of the General Assembly. In addition, they had received \$6,719.90 “or thereabouts” in new claims, which did not include those made by the towns of Newbern or Wilmington. Not surprisingly, General Williams anticipated additional claims. Notably, the amount reported did not include any of the expenses made in support of the detached militia—an amount General Williams expected to be “much more” than what had been expended in support of local militia. Additionally, he noted that much of the evidence submitted in support of claims probably would not be deemed “sufficient” before an investigatory board, an issue sure to frustrate private citizens.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Shepard, et al, to Hawkins, November 11, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴⁹ Shepard, et al, to Hawkins, November 11, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵⁰ General Williams to William Hawkins, December 22, 1813; enclosure in Hawkins to General Assembly, December 23, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. This debt was paid by warrants on the treasury.

Honoring state citizens' war-related expenses was clearly important to the General Assembly. In a resolution passed on December 25, 1813, the legislature reasoned through the process it devised for paying out claims. Because the committee had not been able to investigate claims in a manner that was fair to the state or to the claimants, they devised a plan to have the claims audited. The auditors would determine which claims fell under the state's 1806 militia law. The state would then settle claims for those who had advanced money or purchased articles for the militia called into the service of the state or the service of the United States, but who, by law, could not receive compensation directly from the U.S. government. They would also pass on claims made by officers and soldiers for their services. Those auditors would compile a list of the individuals to be reimbursed. The governor would issue a certificate to each claimant, payable by the treasury. Then, the treasurer would compile the amounts paid out, and pass the total to the governor, who would forward it to the President for reimbursement. The legislature further instructed that the rules and meetings of the auditors be advertised in "all the news-papers printed in Raleigh at least three times."⁵¹

In addition to investigating steps to repay claims made by citizens, the General Assembly expected the federal government to reimburse state expenses as well. The North Carolina Senate Finance Committee recommended that a bill be passed authorizing the Comptroller "to make out an account of the monies heretofore drawn from the Treasurer for the purchase of munitions of war, and supplies for the detached militia lately called into the service of the United States, and deliver it to the Governor to be by him forwarded to the Secretary of War, insisting on a reimbursement of the money by the United States."⁵²

⁵¹ General Assembly Resolution, December 25, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵² *Journal of the House*, 1813, 47.

The General Assembly also expected to use its national representation to pressure the federal government to honor its obligations. Lewis Williams of Surry County introduced a resolution stating the assembly's position on the use of state militia during the July invasion: it was called out to repel an invasion and, therefore, was in the service of the United States. As such, the Assembly resolved to forward a copy of the resolution to the governor. The resolution included instructions for the state's senators and a request to the representatives to persuade the United States government to accept its responsibility to pay for the militia called out in July. With no delay, the governor transmitted the resolution to the national representatives.⁵³

A copy of the resolution enclosed in a letter from Governor Hawkins finally reached Senator David Stone, who was the object of the legislature's censure at the end of their 1813 session, in February 1814. Stone responded to Hawkins and detailed the actions he had taken on behalf of North Carolina. Stone went to see the Secretary of War at the "first available moment." He was assured that the federal government would pay for any portion of the detached militia called into service, and it expected to pay for any militia in the neighborhood of an invasion or threatened invasion called out en masse, i.e., beyond numbers authorized by the federal government. The Secretary of War insisted that the War Department had not received any pay rolls or demand "of any kind" from the North Carolina Militia. To assist the state further, Stone and the War Department needed more information such as a description of the force unpaid, numbers and terms of service, and reasons given for nonpayment. Stone professed his willingness to help because he thought it was unjust that men who had been

⁵³ General Assembly Resolution, December 24, 1813, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

“called from their families to repel the invaders of their Country” had been sent home without “the pittance due for their services.”⁵⁴

From the tenor of Hawkins’ reply to Stone, it is fair to say that Stone’s letter sent Hawkins into a tirade. It certainly reflected the continuing tensions and organizational failures within the federal-state wartime relationship. Hawkins was incredulous that Secretary Armstrong insisted that North Carolina had not made claims upon the War Department because Hawkins knew for certain, via a congressman, that muster rolls from the state had indeed been received. Hawkins laid the entire pay problem at the feet of the federal government and the War Department. First, he described the tendency of the government to ignore its own regulations, which then allowed it to deny claims of pay. Specifically, regulations required militia troops to be mustered and inspected by the Inspector General or a regular officer appointed to act in lieu of the Inspector’s General. The War Department considered inspections by militia officers insufficient and invalid. In the case of most militia called out to defend the coast in July 1813, the government failed to furnish inspecting officers and thereby had failed to comply with the essential part of their own regulations.⁵⁵

Although the General Assembly assiduously sought federal funds, they were not behindhand in making the state’s own resources available to finance the war. The General Assembly’s decision to authorize loans and reexamine its general revenue bill indicated that the state understood it would have to shoulder a greater financial burden. Changes to the general revenue bill show the state was willing to consider levying taxes on those unable to serve in militia service. In an attempt to raise more revenue for the state, Samuel King proposed amending the provision which called for “a four shilling tax on every black poll” to

⁵⁴ David Stone to William Hawkins, February 26, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵⁵ William Hawkins to David Stone, March 11, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

read “three shillings on every free poll and a tax of four shillings on every black poll.” Elijah Callaway proposed to amend the bill to add a two-fold tax on all Quakers, Moravians, Dunkers, and Mennonites between the ages of 21 and 45 except those who enrolled in the militia and performed militia duty in their districts. The final revenue bill indicated a three-shilling tax on black polls, but did not specifically enumerate the tax for free white men. Ostensibly, free men aged 21 to 50 and all slaves aged 12 to 50 were subject to the two shilling, 6 pence poll tax set in 1812. The increased tax burden appears to have fallen only on free black men. Although the final bill did not include the proposal for taxing religious orders that were exempt from militia service, the changes adopted reflected efforts by the legislature to raise more money.⁵⁶

The General Assembly also passed two laws funding public defense. The first authorized the Public Treasurer to borrow \$25,000 for the governor to spend on “the purchase of arms and munitions of war; and in providing other means of public defense other than fortifications.”⁵⁷ The second law allowed the governor, through the Public Treasurer, to borrow up to \$50,000 to provide supplies for militia called into service of the state during the year 1814.⁵⁸ The specificity of the laws would shape the way the governor and the state would honor requests for reimbursements in the future. Specifically, towns like Newbern that spent money on fortifications would be denied reimbursement for that part of the claim because of the language of the first law. Also, individuals who claimed expenses for providing supplies had to specify whether or not the militia was in state or federal service.

⁵⁶ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 49; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1813, 8-9. North Carolina set the poll at two shillings and six pence on every poll in 1812. *Laws of North Carolina*, 1812, 4-6.

⁵⁷ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1813, “Chapter II: An Act to authorise the Public Treasurer to borrow money for the purpose of providing means of public defense”, 5.

⁵⁸ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1813, “Chapter III: An Act to provide means to furnish supplies to the militia which may be called into the service of the State during the year one thousand eight hundred and fourteen,” 5.

Funds spent on behalf of troops in federal service were deferred to the War Department. This was certainly a deliberate move by the state government not only to limit their financial liability, but also based on their understanding the federal government's obligations, especially when the specific language of the laws is considered. The deliberateness of the law and how it was honored also demonstrates the importance that the state placed on the implementation of the cumbersome militia process.

There was some irony in that the legislature's actions diverged from Republican principles—a fact not lost on the state's politicians. The federal government's reluctance to tax its populace and borrow money had hamstrung war efforts from the conflict's inception. Republican Archibald D. Murphey reached out to his constituency to communicate and justify the provisions passed by the General Assembly: the \$25,000 authorization for arms and munitions; the \$50,000 loan for militia supplies in 1814; the \$20,000 appropriation for settling claims not covered by the general government.⁵⁹ He explained to Orange County constituents that wartime necessity justified the large loans and monetary allotments that the Assembly authorized.

Without giving up hope that the federal government would reimburse current expenditures and cover future expenses, the legislature's actions show that in the wake of the Ocracoke crisis, local defense was an important enough issue to citizens that the state was willing to pay for it from its own purse, and to raise taxes to do so. The state's desire to continue to engage the federal government for reimbursements and work within the federal constitution's dual military system instead of rejecting the war effort also shows that the state remained committed to the national war effort. To meet its obligations, the state enacted

⁵⁹ Archibald D. Murphey, "To the freemen of Orange County," December 25, 1813 (Raleigh: T. Henderson, 1813). Accessed online, America's Historical Imprints Database, Series II. The memorial in question was discussed earlier

changes to its militia and adopted new financial measures. North Carolina's first chance to test the new measures came when Pinckney tasked the state to provide troops to fight against the Creek Indians in December 1813. The state's response to that request demonstrated the state's ongoing attempts to support the war within the constraints of the federal system—honoring its obligations but pushing the federal government to do the same.

Mobilizing Against the Creeks

In early 1814, the major efforts of North Carolina troops shifted from the coast to engaging the Creek Indians on the southwest frontier. Rising tensions between white settlers on the Georgia frontier and along the Alabama River, acculturated Creeks, and a nativist Creek faction hostile to the encroachment of white settlement and culture known as Red Sticks, led to an outbreak of violence in the summer of 1813. Cattle raids by whites on Indian settlements, the completion of a federal road between frontier Georgia and the Alabama settlements, and Shawnee leaders Tecumseh's and the Prophet's recruiting visit to the Creeks precipitated the fighting in the Creek War. A desire to protect white interests as well as fear that British and to a lesser extent, Spanish, forces were assisting the Creeks led to intervention by the regular army and militia forces.

In July 1813, militia forces from the Mississippi Territory attacked a contingent of Red Sticks led by Peter McQueen returning from procuring powder and shot from the Spanish in Pensacola. Despite the militia forces gaining the element of surprise, the Red Sticks persevered at the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek, a victory which facilitated recruiting among other previously reticent Creeks. The Red Sticks retaliated on August 30, 1813 at Fort Mims, killing 250 men, women, and children. The engagement, quickly reported as the Fort Mims "Massacre," invited response from the United States Army. Secretary of War John

Armstrong tasked Major General Thomas Pinckney to coordinate militia forces and the regulars of the Sixth and Seventh military districts against the Creeks. Several smaller skirmishes in the winter of 1813 and the early months of 1814 showed that American forces were able to successfully raid against the Creeks, but also demonstrated the difficulties in supply and coordination for sustained and decisive action.

The United States launched two fronts against the Red Sticks. Major General Andrew Jackson of the Tennessee militia led his forces down the Tennessee River and campaigned along the Coosa River. The Georgia militia troops led by Major General John Floyd successfully built fortifications on the Chattahoochee River and advanced to the Tallapoosa River, but had limited success raiding against the Red Sticks. Major General Pinckney, aware that the Georgia militia enlistments ended in February 1814, called on North and South Carolina to mobilize portions of their detached militias to replace the Georgia troops. North Carolina's detached militia arrived at Fort Hawkins, the main staging area on the Georgia frontier, on March 26, 1814, one day before Jackson's decisive victory at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. North Carolina troops participated in small raids, capturing enemy Creeks scattered after the battle, and built fortifications designed to cement American presence in the former Creek territories.⁶⁰

The mobilization to support the Creek War gave North Carolina an opportunity to develop a process to provide the requested resources in a way that was sustainable and equitable within the federal-state arrangement. General Pinckney updated Governor Hawkins about the ongoing hostilities with the Creek Indians in late December 1813. Of immediate

⁶⁰ Frank L. Owsley Jr., *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans, 1812-1815*, 1981. Reprint (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000), 1-85; David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812*, 1st Naval Institute Press pbk. ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 132-136.

concern to Pinckney was that the term of detached militia from Georgia expired in February. He anticipated needing a continued presence in the area. Since the number of regulars on the seaboard was only barely adequate for its defense; there were no extra men available to come west. Pinckney decided that the only force available for defending the “Western Frontier” of his district was a portion of the detached militia from both North and South Carolina. To generate the necessary troops, Pinckney directed Hawkins to order out a battalion of infantry, consisting of eight companies, and one troop of cavalry and one company of artillerists out of the state quota from April 1812 to rendezvous in order to arrive at Fort Hawkins, Georgia no later than February 10, 1814.⁶¹

Post-facto histories of the Creek War ignore the Carolina mobilization because the troops arrived too late to participate in much fighting. Leaders at the time, however, had no such foreknowledge, and the mobilization of the North Carolina Detached Militia gave the governor the first large-scale opportunity to establish a process for the state. Throughout the six-week endeavor of organizing and deploying the requested troops, Governor Hawkins and his Adjutant General Robert Williams employed techniques designed to quickly gather and organize troops according to federal standards and engage federal officers to supply and provision the troops prior to their departure to the front, setting precedents that would be used in future mobilizations. By issuing orders to multiple layers of state militia commanders and engaging directly with U.S. Army suppliers, the mobilization successfully generated sufficient troops, although it simultaneously revealed some shortcomings in the system. The North Carolina Militia arrived at Fort Hawkins six weeks later than General Pinckney had requested. Governor Hawkins was also unable to persuade the U.S. Army to arm his militia before they marched. Instead, the U.S. Army provided arms at Fort Hawkins. In future

⁶¹ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, December 27, 1813 (circular), Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

mobilizations the state would work to correct these shortcomings; however, the Creek mobilization represented a significant step forward in improving federal-state coordination.

To mobilize the requested troops, Governor Hawkins and Adjutant General Williams sent orders to officers at every level of command whose involvement was necessary to complete the mobilization. Williams wrote Colonel Jesse Pearson, the designated commander of the regiment, and his subordinate officers notifying them of the requirements in January 1814. The letter included such details as a list of the counties tasked to provide troops, U.S. Army regulations on troop organizations, specifics on how to organize the artillery and cavalry units, information about supplies and provisions, and directions for muster and inspection by a U.S. officer. The letters to subordinates contained much of the same information. The level of detail provided demonstrates that North Carolina's leaders expected the commanders of the detached regiment to closely follow the process designed to ensure the federal government produced the assets it was obligated to provide. State leaders also hoped to clearly demonstrate that the state met federal requirements.⁶²

In addition to writing to the officers intended to receive the men, Williams also wrote directly to each militia regiment commander in the counties tasked with raising those men. He ordered the commanders to call out all of the detached militia in the regiment. Williams reminded the lieutenant colonels that the "claims of our government upon the energies and patriotism of our citizen soldiers" required a speedy response. The letters dated January 13 informed the commanders that the rendezvous was scheduled for February 1, 1814 at Salisbury. Williams's timeline left a little less than a month for the militia to rendezvous,

⁶² Robert Williams to Jesse Pearson, January 13, 1814; Williams to Richard Atkinson, January 13, 1814; Williams to Samuel Turrentine, January 13, 1814; Williams to David Kerr, January 13, 1814. Adjutant General's Department, General Records 1807-1950, A.G. #6, Militia Returns, Orders to Officers, 1813-1817, NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as A.G. #6]. The nine counties tasked included: Rowan, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Surry, Wilkes, Iredell, Lincoln, Montgomery, and Randolph.

muster, and march to Fort Hawkins, which was some 320 miles from Salisbury. Had the troops been ready to depart Salisbury on February 1, they would have had to maintain a thirty mile per day pace to reach Fort Hawkins by February 10, an unsustainable pace that far exceeded planning expectations. Although the deadline was nearly impossible to meet, North Carolina's military leaders the situation in Georgia important enough to warrant every effort to meet General Pinckney's order that the troops arrive at Fort Hawkins by February 10. By communicating directly with the men who commanded the detached militia awaiting federal service, Adjutant General Williams expected to effect a timely rendezvous.⁶³

General Pinckney also selected North Carolina to provide the brigadier general to command the detachment of the Carolinas. Because the brigadier general would command both the detachment from North Carolina and South Carolina, a certain amount of prestige went to the state from which the officer originated. There was certainly interest in the position, as indicated earlier by Stokes' letter to the governor. As Pinckney noted, the command was "to a certain degree independent and under existing circumstances, important."⁶⁴ A cynical interpretation would be that Pinckney recognized the federal failure to meet the state's security and reimbursement requests, and sought to placate the governor with the honor of command by a state officer.

The appointment of the brigadier general for the detachment demonstrated that several men were willing to assume such a prestigious role. Governor Hawkins first offered the command to General Ephraim Davidson, the commander of the Second Brigade of the North Carolina Detached militia, because the counties tapped for the requisition came from

⁶³ Robert Williams to Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Fisher, January 13, 1814, and seventeen others. A.G. #6, NCSA.

⁶⁴ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, January 28, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

his brigade. Davidson begged off, claiming poor health.⁶⁵ It appears that Davidson's condition was widely known. Hawkins sent out at least one letter to General Joseph Graham, arranging for Graham's appointment if Davison should refuse. Additionally, Major General Montfort Stokes, commander of the Fifth Division of North Carolina Militia, but with no position in the detached militia, volunteered to serve as brigadier general of the detachment, understanding that General Davidson, the likely choice, was in ill health.⁶⁶ His subordinate, Brigadier General Edmund Jones of the Ninth Brigade of North Carolina Militia, who like General Stokes held no position in the detached militia, also volunteered to take charge of command, if both Davidson and Graham passed on the opportunity. He assured Hawkins he could take the field from Wilkes County with even the shortest notice.⁶⁷ Ultimately, Governor Hawkins turned to Revolutionary War veteran General Joseph Graham to command the brigade.

Graham answered Hawkins' preliminary inquiry by accepting the command in lieu of Davison, or the command of any brigade formed from the western counties needed to "subdue the hostile savages or any invading foe." Graham's letter provides insight into the concerns of residents of Lincoln County, a county west of Charlotte and far from the coast. He told Hawkins that he was inclined to turn down the appointment because he had been out of public life for the last twenty years. However, friends had urged him to accept, reminding

⁶⁵ Ephraim Davidson to William Hawkins, February 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Davidson was also the commander of the Seventh Brigade of the North Carolina Militia, comprised by Rowan and Iredell counties. An officer's position in the North Carolina Militia did not necessarily correspond to his position in the detached militia, as combinations of state units comprised the detached militia.

⁶⁶ Montfort Stokes to William Hawkins, January 14, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. The Fifth Division included the Ninth, Tenth, and Fifteenth Brigades, from which the counties selected to fill the requisition came from.

⁶⁷ Edmund Jones to William Hawkins, February 20, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. The counties of Surry, Wilkes, and Ashe comprised the Ninth Brigade.

him that it was “our duty to do all the good we can do while we live.”⁶⁸ The people of the western part of the state identified Indian removal as a positive and supported the nation’s larger effort against the Creeks in the Old Southwest and responded to mobilization when called.

Hawkins paid close attention to the officers in charge of assembling the troops. To assist at the rendezvous point, he ordered Adjutant General Robert Williams to Salisbury. Hawkins was optimistic about the turnout. He expected that the counties called upon to send troops would probably furnish more men than required. He directed Williams to send the extra men home. Hawkins did provide a contingency plan. If the counties came up short, additional troops would be ordered out from the counties closest to Salisbury or from places nearest to Pinckneyville, South Carolina, a stop along the route to Fort Hawkins. Although Hawkins had given his preferred route, he authorized Williams and the Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the detachment to make changes as necessary, provided they coordinated with the U.S. Army staff officers tasked to supply the regiment. From his letter, it is clear that Hawkins expected Williams to be his eyes and ears for the rendezvous process.⁶⁹

Hawkins had reason to be optimistic about the number that would turn out to fight. His officers certainly were willing. On the other hand, news from Jesse Pearson, the colonel of the detachment, estimated that they would be short about one-third of the troops detached in the muster for the first requisition. Pearson did not cite a specific cause for his prediction, but he requested instructions on how to make up the deficiency. Pearson at first wanted to draft from companies where the deficiencies existed, but after consulting an unnamed gentlemen whose opinion he valued, he instead suggested adding counties to the existing

⁶⁸ Joseph Graham to William Hawkins, February 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶⁹ William Hawkins to Robert Williams, January 18, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

requisition and sending express riders to notify the new counties so they could muster without delay.⁷⁰

News from Salisbury indicated the rendezvous was proceeding neither as smoothly nor as quickly as hoped. On February 6, Adjutant General Williams noted that a portion of the troops from Wilkes and Surry Counties had not yet arrived, but were expected the next day. The delay from Wilkes County was caused in part by the misconduct of a subaltern officer, who had since been arrested. It was unclear what delayed the Surry County troops. Conversely, a greater number of cavalry than required had turned out. Williams assessed that overall, sufficient numbers of troops had arrived, so no further orders to call out more would be required. He did, however, anticipate problems departing the rendezvous because the men lacked proper camp equipment such as tents.⁷¹

General Williams revised his estimate of the troop count the following day. He estimated that the rendezvous was short 116 infantrymen. He proposed ordering out militia from Burke County. Williams believed soldiers from Burke, along with the troops expected from Surry County, would complete the regiment. Additionally, Williams reported that the organization of the regiment was still incomplete. The Burke troops would not rendezvous until February 15. The regiment had yet to receive any supplies from Charleston. Lieutenant Colonel Atkinson, however, was diligently working to finish the muster roll, with names and physical descriptions of each man, to be provided to the Adjutant General's office when it was completed.⁷²

⁷⁰ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, January 28, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁷¹ Robert Williams to William Hawkins, February 6, 1814; for a request to use one hundred tents stored in the local area see Jesse Pearson to Hawkins, January 28, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁷² Robert Williams to William Hawkins, February 7, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

This mobilization against the Creeks was the first serious draw on manpower from the western part of the state, and by some standards the draw was considerable, but sustainable, well within Azar Gat's one percent threshold. Pinckney's requisition for eight companies of infantry, one troop of riflemen, and one of artillerists placed a requirement for roughly 1,000 men on the state.⁷³ Hawkins called out the militia of eleven counties whose aggregate population was slightly over 130,000; the number of men committed to the detached militia was 1,938. A 1,000-man requirement was less than one percent (0.76%) of the total population and just over fifty percent (51.6%) of the force identified in the 1812 requisition. A force as large as 1,100, the size estimated by Major William McCauley, mobilized only 0.84% of the population and 57% of the detached militia identified in 1812.⁷⁴ Yet, at least one of those counties' militia, Burke County, provided troops after the initial rendezvous order because of a shortage of infantry. The governor tapped a portion of the population that had some ties to the situation on the frontier and that had been so far relatively free from the burden of federal service. That there were some troop shortages and delays in mobilization demonstrates the importance of improving the mobilization process. A more standardized process ensured the required number of troops turned out and protected those who did serve by setting conditions that made it likely they would serve again.

⁷³ The federal standard for an infantry company was 100 privates, 13 NCOs, officers; in the North Carolina detached militia, the average size of a company of cavalry was 43 men, artillery was 57 men and riflemen was 49 based on the numbers reported in *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812; detached from the Militia of North Carolina in 1812 and 1814* (Raleigh, NC: Raboteau, 1851).

⁷⁴ The 11 counties come from a letter from Colonel Pearson to Gov Hawkins in which he names the following counties as part of the regiment: Wilkes, Surry, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Rutherford, Cabarrus, Iredell, Rowan, Randolph, Lincoln, and Burke. Pearson mentions adding Burke County to the counties tapped for service after it becomes apparent there is a shortage of infantry troops. Leaders tapped militia from Burke and Rutherford Counties after the first nine counties. Population estimate compiled from Census of 1810; estimate of detached militia from *Muster Rolls of Detached Militia*, The requirement for approximately 1,000 men described above and in letter discussed below which describes the force moving in two groups, one of 450 led by Colonel Pearson and the other of 650 led by Gen Graham.

In addition to monitoring the rendezvous process, Hawkins also paid close attention to the provisioning and supply of the North Carolina Detached Militia. Pinckney's mobilization order to Governor Hawkins, although imbued with a sense of urgency, revealed potential problems with federal funding of the mobilization. Pinckney had informed the government of his intention to order out the Carolina militia, but admitted that he had yet to receive any instructions on the matter when he wrote to Governor Hawkins. However, Pinckney assessed that there would be "fatal consequences" if the army relinquished their posts to the Creeks, and so ordered the requisition even in the absence of guidelines from his army superiors. Given the state's recent attempts to get reimbursement from the general government, the uncertainty as to whether or not President Madison would approve the requisition must have been unsettling. Furthermore, Pinckney informed Hawkins that the quartermaster department near Charleston was lacking funds, which required him to ask the governor to furnish equipment and transportation to Fort Hawkins for his troops.⁷⁵ For Governor Hawkins, pressing the federal government to provide supplies and arms to the maximum extent possible became an issue of primary importance—the nation had to fulfill its obligations.

Hawkins kept Pinckney informed of North Carolina's mobilization plan but also pressed for federal guarantees and immediate assistance. In mid-January 1814, he informed Pinckney of the plan to rendezvous at Salisbury and shared his concerns about outfitting the troops. Hawkins again indicated his willingness to make funds available to transport the troops, but he also reiterated his concern that the men might be reluctant to march without proper arms. Hawkins' preference was for his men to be supplied at Salisbury, but he allowed that it would be acceptable for the men to be armed at Fort Hawkins. In short, his

⁷⁵ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, December 27, 1813 (circular), Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

letter sought assurance that his troops would be supplied and taken care of. Hawkins bemoaned the short notice, but remained committed to avoiding “fatal consequences” on the frontier and pledged that nothing would prevent the officers from organizing and departing as soon as possible.⁷⁶

Hawkins also began arranging for troop provisions in January. He exchanged a series of letters with the army’s deputy quartermaster general, Samuel Champlain, stationed at Charleston. Hawkins was able to extract assurances that the United States had provided funds to support the mobilization and that supplies “allowed by law” would be forthcoming. Additionally, Champlain had arranged for a U.S. Army contractor to provision the troops along their route to Fort Hawkins. Governor Hawkins approved of the arrangements, but indicated he preferred for the troops to be supplied at Salisbury. Furthermore, he warned Champlain that since General Pinckney had informed the general government of the requisition, it would be doing “injustice” to the officers if the government was inattentive to its duties and failed to provide supplies. Hawkins, in a moment of conciliation, did promise that the state would advance money for transportation and supplies if the federal government had failed to authorize funds.⁷⁷

Hawkins took the additional step of communicating his concerns to the Secretary of War John Armstrong. He outlined the plan to rendezvous at Salisbury and assured the Secretary that “every exertion” was being made to organize the troops as quickly as possible. He also addressed his anxiety over funding, including the arrangement for the state to supply

⁷⁶ William Hawkins to Thomas Pinckney, January 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁷⁷ Samuel Champlain to William Hawkins, January 5, 1814; Champlain to Hawkins, January 12, 1814. Roddy to Hawkins, January 1814; Hawkins to Champlain, January 14, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Hawkins expected the troops would proceed from Salisbury along the following route: Charlotte, Pinckneyville, South Carolina, Washington, Georgia, and Milledgeville, Georgia. Fort Hawkins was located near modern Macon, Georgia, roughly thirty miles west of Milledgeville.

funds in case Champlain was short. Again, Hawkins pledged state money, but noted that the men ordered on duty lacked arms and accouterments. He feared they might feel “great reluctance marching out of the State in that situation.” Although Hawkins had instructed his Adjutant General to coordinate with Charleston to supply the troops before their departure to Georgia, he wrote to focus the attention of the general government on the situation to “prevent delay and embarrassment.”⁷⁸ The delay would obviously be on the part of the troops; the embarrassment would be to both parties.

The multiple exchanges between Governor Hawkins, Colonel Pearson, General Pinckney, and the quarter master in Charleston highlight the difficulty of supply, finances, and determining who was responsible for what. Their communications also reflect the inevitable gaps created by time and distance. In a series of letters to Champlain and Hawkins, Pearson and Williams made it clear that the troops’ lack of equipment and the absence of means to transport supplies would prevent them from beginning the march to Georgia. Pearson’s complaints echoed the concerns aired by Hawkins from the beginning. Pearson’s letters also reintroduced the issue of problems with credit. Earlier, Hawkins had agreed to make arrangements to provide transportation by supplying money drawn on the credit of the United States. Pearson was left to believe in early February that the governor did not have those funds at his disposal. Pearson’s letter to Champlain was to request that Champlain provide the promised equipment or at least provide a check that could be negotiated at a local bank, so he could control the funds necessary to make the appropriate arrangements.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ William Hawkins to Secretary of War, January 14, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁷⁹ Robert Williams to William Hawkins, February 6, 1813; copy of Jesse Pearson to Samuel Champlain, February 4, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

Hawkins faulted the Army and its structure, going so far as to describe the Deputy Quartermaster General's failure to discharge his duty as "criminal," and hoping he would be punished. Clearly, he argued, North Carolina was not in the wrong because the officers and men had arrived at the rendezvous point on time. Hawkins stated emphatically—underlining his point in his letter—that the failure of the federal government to "comply with their obligations" had slowed the state's effort to perform their duty.⁸⁰

Despite Hawkins's faulting the U.S. Army, a shortage of troops also contributed to delays in departing the rendezvous at Salisbury; eventually needed troops were ordered to join the march en route. Organizing the units continued while on the march to Fort Hawkins. From Charlotte, Colonel Pearson informed Hawkins that although he had muster rolls for eight companies of infantry, the artillerists were not yet mustered because the men from Rutherford County had yet to arrive. He estimated they were short forty-five men. He also expected the company of riflemen to rendezvous in Charlotte on March 8, two days after the date of his letter. Although the force was not yet fully constituted, Colonel Pearson reported the troops were in fine spirits and good health, and praised his subordinate officers, Lieutenant Colonel Atkinson and Major Turrentine.⁸¹

Pearson's next update brought a mixture of good and bad news. The detachment had encamped near Petersburg, and the men from Rutherford had arrived—thirty-six infantry and twenty-eight riflemen. Three additional riflemen from Burke County arrived as well. Although the regiment was closer to being complete, he still lacked riflemen. Even more troublesome was that the riflemen of Lincoln County had refused to march and that less than

⁸⁰ William Hawkins to Jesse Pearson, February 10, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Emphasis in the original document.

⁸¹ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, March 8, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

half of the original quota of infantry required from the counties of Wilkes, Surry, Mecklenburg, Burke, Montgomery, and Rutherford, had actually rendezvoused. Pearson had reports that some of the commanding officers of the counties approved of individuals refusing to rendezvous. Although Pearson noted the behavior, he did not give any specifics as to why men felt justified in failing to report for duty, or why officers endorsed the behavior. He could report that troops from Cabarrus, Iredell, Rowan, and Randolph Counties had responded promptly.⁸²

Other issues added trouble to the march. Pearson reported desertions, and generated a list of the men who had deserted, should the governor decide it should be published in the state newspapers. The camp also had experienced an outbreak of measles; men had been sick since the first week in Salisbury. Bad weather had slowed down their progress, and they had stopped for rest and washing. Pearson also noted they were getting short on supplies; he had not seen Captain Cox or any additional money since the \$2,000 provided in Salisbury. In spite of the difficulties, and that the riflemen were still not joined up, Pearson estimated they would reach Fort Hawkins by March 26.⁸³ Challenges along the march demonstrate there was still room for improving North Carolina's mobilization process. Nevertheless, the regiment arrived at Fort Hawkins complete.

Pearson's estimate was a good one. His column of troops reached Fort Hawkins on March 26. He expected the troops to be mustered and inspected on forms provided by the Inspector General there. As a result, the rolls previously sent to the Adjutant General would vary from those at Fort Hawkins; the army would use the muster rolls from Fort Hawkins to

⁸² Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, March 18, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁸³ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, March 18, 1814; Pearson to Hawkins, March 23, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

pay the men. Pearson believed the form was good and the process in place would ensure that all the men would be paid.⁸⁴ This had to be welcome news to Governor Hawkins, for whom ensuring the men were paid was an issue of great importance because the men's families needed the money and he feared if men were not promptly paid, they would refuse to serve in the future.

Identifying with the Cause

Efforts to improve mobilization bolstered existing support for the war. Men from across North Carolina volunteered for military service in the months following the Ocracoke invasion. The mostly positive response in the western part of the state to the Creek War mobilization also demonstrated the state's support for the war and commitment to the federal system. Letters home from soldiers in the detached militia and positive coverage of North Carolinians fighting against the Creek helped reinforced ties to the nation and the war effort. As the state strove to meet its obligations and work with the federal government to ensure it was treated fairly, North Carolinians remained invested in the war and the nation.

North Carolinians volunteered for service as individuals and as whole military units. Earlier, in August 1813, Major General George Graham of the Fourth Division, along with a company composed of 150 to 200 men from Mecklenburg County, had volunteered specifically to suppress the Creek Indians.⁸⁵ Hawkins relayed Graham's offer to Secretary of War John Armstrong, although the offer was declined. The War Department had determined that detachments from Georgia and Tennessee were sufficient to augment the regular

⁸⁴ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, April 1, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁸⁵ Robert Williams, Militia Roster, March 26, 1813, Governor's Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA. As organized on January 1, 1813, The Fourth Division included the Seventh Brigade (Rowan, and Iredell Counties) and the Eighth Brigade (Rockingham, Stokes, and Guilford Counties) and the Eleventh Brigade (Mecklenburg, Montgomery, and Cabarrus Counties).

troops.⁸⁶ As discussed above, North Carolina troops were not mobilized to fight the Creeks until the following January.

Captain William McCauley and men from Orange and Granville Counties offered service on the seaboard, a more common occurrence than volunteers for service in the west. The men proposed to organize under McCauley as a volunteer company composed of sixty-two men, four sergeants, one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, and one ensign. Although not the standard company configuration prescribed by the federal government, their offer was realistic and sincere. McCauley and his men volunteered to serve either in North Carolina or Virginia and they were explicit about their patriotic motives and sense of obligation to the achievements of their revolutionary forefathers. They professed a love for a “free and Independent Government” and were determined to “support the liberty” achieved by their fore-fathers.⁸⁷

Veterans of the American Revolution also volunteered their services. From Caswell County a petition arrived in August 1813 signed by one hundred men over age forty-five and therefore exempt from militia services. They declared that “patriotic motives from a love to an Independent and Republican Government” prompted them to form a military unit called the “Caswell Grays.” They were prepared to act much like a home guard—to serve at any location in the county or in adjoining counties to repel “any invasion or insurrection which may occur during the contest with Great Britain.”⁸⁸ As historians such as David Waldstreicher, Simon Newman, and Stephen Watts have observed, the invocation of the

⁸⁶ Graham to Hawkins, August 21, 1813; Parker to Hawkins, November 5, 1813; Miscellaneous Typescripts, Hawkins to Graham, October 16, 1813; Hawkins to Armstrong, October 21, 1813; Parker to Hawkins, undated, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁸⁷ Petition from Orange and Granville County, October 13, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

⁸⁸ Caswell County petitioners, August 21, 1813, Governor’s Papers, William Hawkins, NCSA.

“Spirit of ’76” and identification with the Revolutionary generation were effective means to energize the common folk and impart a sense of national purpose. Harry Laver found this sort of activity in *Citizens More than Soldiers*, a study of the Kentucky militia.⁸⁹

In addition to patriotic and nationalist sentiments expressed by volunteers, letters home from mobilized militia helped generate a connection to the wider war effort. News of North Carolina troops’ exploits against the Creeks reached Orange County courtesy of Major William McCauley, who served under Brigadier General Joseph Graham.⁹⁰ McCauley wrote to his family as he made his way to Fort Hawkins. He believed he was fighting for a “righteous cause” and that although he would rather be at home, he felt a sense of obligation to fight for his country. He shared the news that the Creek Indians were flocking to Pensacola to get help from the Spanish, news he found believable since he heard the same stories from several sources. Additionally, he believed that the American would prevail and that unless the Indians retreated westward, they would “be surely cut off from the face of this Globe.”⁹¹

Letters home also shared praise for the troops, fostering feelings of pride in their families and kin who then would have shared the letters with friends and neighbors.⁹² North Carolina militia units passed through Washington, Georgia, along the route to Fort Hawkins.

⁸⁹ David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Simon Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Watts, *The Republic Reborn*; Harry Laver, *Citizens More than Soldiers: The Kentucky Militia and Society in the Early Republic* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

⁹⁰ William McCauley, March 8, 1814. Andrew McCauley Papers, Southern Historical Collection (SHC), University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC. McCauley received his commission from Graham on March 8, 1814 to assume duties as the brigade major for “the detached military from the Carolinas against the hostile Creek Indians.

⁹¹ William McCauley to his brother, March 18, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁹² For an example of the expectation for sharing letters during the American Revolution, see Konstantin Dierks, *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 220.

Nearly 450 men commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Atkinson and 650 men under Colonel Pearson passed through the town over the course of two days. They were followed by one hundred men of the Rifle Corps commanded by Major Kerr from Salisbury. The local paper, the *Washington Monitor*, praised the conduct and appearance of the officers and the sobriety and discipline of the troops. Additionally, inhabitants from surrounding communities applauded the conduct of the forces.⁹³ That North Carolina's finest encountered praise and appreciation along the way no doubt went far to bolster their pride and to reinforce a sense of national mission.

McCauley's letters also provide positive images of the troops in the field. He contrasted Colonel Pearson's regiment with the South Carolina regiment to demonstrate its superiority. McCauley opined that Pearson's regiment observed proper subordination and obedience while Colonel Nash failed to discipline his South Carolina regiment. As a result, soldiers refused to obey orders.⁹⁴ McCauley clearly valued order and discipline as marks of pride and professionalism and relayed his impressions to his family. He obviously expected his assessment to generate pride in among his fellow North Carolinians, which in turn would generate an investment in the war effort.

McCauley's letters constructed a narrative of North Carolinians participating in a national effort. He made it to Fort Decatur, 100 miles from Pensacola and 170 miles west of Fort Hawkins, by April 15. McCauley and his men were busy building forts; there was so much work to be done that he expected that North Carolina militia would remain in service through the summer. In addition to building forts, the troops were also building boats to replace those needed by a detachment of troops from North and South Carolina accompanied

⁹³ William McCauley to his brother, March 25, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁹⁴ William McCauley, June 10, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

by friendly Indians who had taken the existing boats on an expedition down the river.

McCauley expected that he and his men would join up with General Jackson's forces later in the day. He estimated the war was nearly over, that one more battle would end Creek resistance.⁹⁵ No doubt, he wrote, meeting up with Jackson's force would increase the chances that North Carolina militiamen would battle against the Creek.

By May, McCauley's company had participated in small skirmishes against hostile Creek Indians. His letter from Fort Jackson, a camp thirty-five miles from Fort Decatur, indicated that they had killed a "great many" Indians and captured a "considerable number."⁹⁶ Additionally, McCauley described an expedition led by Colonel Pearson down the Alabama River, into the heart of what was considered hostile territory that had resulted in the capture of 200 prisoners. Among those captured were two important "half-breeds," Peter McQueen and Francis.⁹⁷ McCauley noted that the American forces were now responsible for nearly 1,500 Indian prisoners. He stated that feeding the Indians cost roughly 5,000 rations daily and ruefully observed that it appeared the unit existed to feed the Creek, not fight them.⁹⁸ McCauley's letters contained the type of news that allowed folks at home to take pride in their soldiers, but also evidenced frustration with the realities of what they were being asked to do.

Similar sentiments and experiences are found in Thomas Crawford's letters home. Crawford was a lieutenant from Iredell County who was later promoted to captain. General

⁹⁵ William McCauley to his brother, April 15, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁹⁶ William McCauley, May 8, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁹⁷ Peter McQueen was a Creek Prophet and a chief of the hostile Creek fighting known as Red Sticks. He was one of the leaders of the attack on Fort Mims in 1813, known as the Fort Mims Massacre. Francis may refer to Josiah Francis, also a spiritual leader of the Upper Creeks. Both of these men were important Red Stick Creek leaders.

⁹⁸ William McCauley, June 10, 1814, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

Jackson appointed him to command Fort Hull during a portion of the war. Crawford's service began sometime in February 1814. In a letter home to his mother in February from the cantonment in Salisbury, he reported good health and the possibility of promotion to captain.⁹⁹ Crawford's letters from the march to Georgia are full of news. In each letter he commented on his health—he was healthy for the duration of the event. His mother must have felt relief after receiving his letter from York, South Carolina—he had been rumored dead, but was in “fine health.” Others in the detachment were sickly, and seven had died since the rendezvous at Salisbury, but none of the dead were from his company.¹⁰⁰ In addition to health updates, Crawford's letters contained bits of news for friends and neighbors. He shared with his mother and unexpected encounter at a camp near Sugar Creek Meeting House with “Cousin William”—the family was doing well.¹⁰¹ Neighbors and acquaintances passed along complaints of sore feet because of the hard marching.¹⁰² He passed on a request for his mother to let Betsey know that William Brown was well, although he did have names of men sick with measles to share.¹⁰³ As Crawford passed on bits of information, he assessed that experience in war would serve as a school for the “young and inexperienced” to learn things of “lasting duration.”¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Thomas Crawford to his mother, February 24, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, Southern Historical Collection (SHC), University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 8, 1814; March 24, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 8, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

¹⁰² Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC, Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 24, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

¹⁰³ Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 24, 1814; April 14, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 24, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

Beyond this sort of personal information, Crawford also regaled his family with war-related events. He believed that the North Carolina troops would be essential to defeating the Creek. As the North Carolinians neared Milledgeville, they encountered Georgia troops serving under General Floyd. The Georgia militia reported that the Creeks were fighting desperately, but that General Jackson had 5,000 men at Coosa, ready to strike against them. Crawford believed the North Carolina troops would rendezvous with the South Carolina detachment at Fort Hull and then join the troops from Tennessee to “deliver the fatal blows” to the Creek.¹⁰⁵ Although Crawford anticipated making a critical contribution to the war effort, Jackson’s decisive victory against the Creek took place three days later, without the assistance of the Carolina regiments. Nevertheless, the North Carolina militia continued forward to help garrison posts in the interior of Creek lands.

Meanwhile, high-ranking officers kept the governor apprised of the troops’ actions. Raleigh newspapers often reprinted portions of these letters, which ensured a wider dissemination of war news than personal letters.¹⁰⁶ Colonel Pearson provided Governor Hawkins with copies of his letters to General Graham. By Pearson’s estimate, the expedition yielded 283 surrenders and 622 prisoners, including the surrender of an important prophet, Nau-tut-gee, which contributed significantly to the end of hostilities. Pearson pointed out that his men had behaved with the utmost morality. He accepted the help only of Indians who pledged to be governed by his orders not to plunder or kill those taken in battle and to refrain from abusing women and children. The men bravely faced unknown dangers. He highlighted

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Crawford to his mother, March 24, 1814, Thomas Crawford Papers, 1814-1815, SHC.

¹⁰⁶ Jesse Pearson, March 18, 1814, published in *The Star*, April 1, 1814; Colonel Benjamin Hawkins to William Hawkins, April 26, 1814, published in *The Star*, May 20, 1814; Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, May 16, 1814, published in the *Raleigh Register* June 10, 1814.

their professionalism by describing the tactics the companies used to march across very rough terrain. Furthermore, the men stood firm against the Indian threat even though they learned that the Spanish supplied the Indians from Pensacola. Although some wanted to return from their exposed position, the men pledged not to desert him, but rather to “perish by my side” to defend the gains they had made into the territory. Pearson was only forced to break up the encampment and return with the expedition when he learned that no more supplies would be forthcoming.¹⁰⁷

Pearson’s letter to Hawkins also served as a notice to the governor about the anticipated return home of the North Carolina Militia. He expected the Third Regiment of Infantry, U.S. Army, to relieve the North Carolina troops at Fort Jackson. As a result, Pearson’s company, minus two companies, planned to depart for Fort Decatur. The two remaining companies, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Atkinson, would depart once the Army regiment arrived. Pearson informed Hawkins that the remainder of the North Carolina troops would depart Fort Decatur for North Carolina on June 25, 1814, and expected to arrive home by the end of July or early August. The regimental paymaster was to depart to Salisbury in advance to make arrangements to pay the troops. Pearson used the details of his successful expedition to underscore to Hawkins how important prompt payment was for the Seventh Detached Regiment of the North Carolina Militia. Not only had the men contributed vital services to the war effort, but they had done so at a great distance—over 500 miles from their homes. Their military pay would be the only resource they had to care

¹⁰⁷ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, June 15, 1814; Pearson to Joseph Graham, June 1, 1814; Pearson to Graham, June 13, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

for their families, thus prompt payment for dangerous service a great distance from home was essential.¹⁰⁸

The Threat Remains

Despite this national success against the Creeks, by June 1814, President Madison and other national leaders feared that the end of the war in Europe would allow Great Britain to shift additional land and naval forces to the war against the United States. Where and when Britain would employ those forces was unknown. To meet a war of “increased activity and extent,” the president ordered a second requisition of militia on July 4, 1814. The same day, Secretary of War John Armstrong notified Governor Hawkins of North Carolina’s quota. As in June 1812, North Carolina was expected to detach 7,000 troops for the requisition.¹⁰⁹

Following the process tested in the mobilization for the Creek War, Adjutant General Williams again issued detailed orders to militia officers at multiple levels of command to ensure North Carolina raised its quota.¹¹⁰ The continued use of this process shows the state’s desire to organize its forces quickly and effeciently. Printed reports under the heading “Patriotism” in the *Raleigh Register* from Caswell and Rockingham Counties suggest that the requisition met with some measure of success. In Rockingham County, all the men who arrived for the August muster volunteered their services. In Caswell, nearly one hundred more men than required volunteered to serve.¹¹¹ That the counties were able to generate

¹⁰⁸ Jesse Pearson to William Hawkins, June 15, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

¹⁰⁹ Armstrong to Hawkins, July 4, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA. The force composition was 700 artillery and 6,300 infantry.

¹¹⁰ General Orders, Williams to Bryan and others, July 20, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA.

¹¹¹ *Raleigh Register*, September 2, 1814.

widespread and voluntary support boded well for what would be the closing months of the war.

Chapter 5: 1814-1815: The Second Call for Troops and Fighting in the Southwest

In April 1814, Britain and the coalition defeated Napoleon. With the prospect of peace looming in Europe, Britain pivoted its attention and resources to North America. During 1814, neither the United States nor Britain made strategic gains on the Great Lakes—Lake Erie remained in American hands, Lake Ontario was up for grabs, and the American naval presence on Lake Huron retreated. On the Niagara frontier, Americans scored a victory along the Chippewa River and fought the British to a stalemate at Lundy's Lane in July. British attempts to seize Fort Erie from August to September forced the American commander to evacuate and thus ended further attempts to invade Canada. Despite the surge of troops, the British attempt to invade New York in September failed when American naval forces won the Battle of Plattsburgh Bay on Lake Champlain. Fighting in the northern theater left the frontier devastated, but two other engagements, despite their strategic insignificance, would become synonymous with the War of 1812.

The first of those events was the burning of the nation's capital. In August 1814, the English sacked and burned Washington, D.C. Disagreement between the President and the Secretary of War over the strategic importance of Washington led to an ill-planned defense policy. Militia forces assigned to guard the capital did little to stop the British march from Bladensburg, Maryland to Washington. The rout of the militia and its subsequent retreat was derisively called the "Bladensburg Races." The sack of Washington was inarguably the low point of the war. Immediately afterwards, however, the staunch defense of Baltimore

prevented the British from achieving total victory in the Chesapeake Bay and provided the inspiration for Francis Scott Key's composition of the "Star Spangled Banner."¹

The burning of Washington, D.C. was widely reported, including in North Carolina. In spite of its offices being burned, the *National Intelligencer* covered the event. North Carolina papers reprinted accounts from the *National Intelligencer* and other sources. The *Raleigh Register* carried the story on September 2, 1814 under the heading "Distressing News." Its account laid out the facts for the people of North Carolina—the defending Americans had been outnumbered by more than two to one and the enemy had surrounded the Capitol, blown it up, and burned all the public buildings. The paper's reporting acknowledged the British had, for the most part, respected private property—the offices of the *National Intelligencer* the notable exception. That event was laid squarely at the feet of the hated Admiral Cockburn. The paper also provided eye-witness testimony from a man who described women and children "flying from the city in all directions" and claimed the destruction was visible a good thirty to forty miles distance from the city itself. The *Raleigh Star* reprinted an account of Washington's burning from the *Richmond Compiler* under the headline "Washington City Taken!!" In addition to describing events, the *Star* lamented the city's seeming lack of preparation, even as it had reported on defensive preparations in an earlier edition. The paper's hyperbole—"Fatal, fatal apathy! Monstrous, suicidal neglect! Why would not the American government cover their capital with sufficient defense?"—not only served to engage the reader, but also laid the groundwork for a renewed groundswell of patriotic fervor and commitment the war.²

¹ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 221-254.

² *Raleigh Star*, August 26, 1814; *Raleigh Star*, September 2, 1814; *Raleigh Register*, September 2, 1814.

The North Carolina newspapers' coverage of the burning of Washington, D.C. reinforced notions of British behavior and helped close the gap between opponents and supporters of the war. Americans feared British raiding parties and the images of women and children fleeing the city added to the American perception of the British as a "perfidious and insolent foe."³ Admiral Cockburn was often blamed as the instigator of such outrageous actions—the *Raleigh Register* called him the "incendiary hero of Hampton." The newspaper perpetuated the image of Cockburn as a barbarian when they described his actions during the invasion: "Cockburn was quite a mountebank in the city, exhibiting in the streets a gross levity of manner, displaying sundry articles of trifling value which he had stolen from the President's house, and repeating many coarse jests and vulgar slang of the *Federal Republican* respecting the chief magistrate and others, in a strain of eloquence which could only have been acquired by a constant perusal of that disgrace to the country."⁴ That the British continued to behave in an almost criminal manner reinforced the idea, explored by Nicole Eustace in *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, that they were an enemy to be resisted and defeated, else the depredations would not stop.⁵

The consequences of a lack of unity in standing against Britain also emerged in coverage of the event. The *Raleigh* papers reported that the town of Alexandria had capitulated to the British, and the *Register* reprinted a letter that suggested the men of the town failed to meet the enemy with sufficient alacrity. Such behavior would cause the nation to be disgraced in the eyes of Europe. The proper response to the British invasion was for the

³ *Journal of the House of Commons*, 1814, 4.

⁴ *Raleigh Register*, September 9, 1814.

⁵ Nicole Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

nation to “rise in all the majesty of its might” to challenge the British and “wipe off this foul stain on our national character.”⁶ The *Star* similarly chastised those who resorted to “the language of despondency.” It was each citizen’s duty “never to despair of the Republic.”⁷ These calls for unity and renewed effort were paired with actual requests for troops. The *Register* printed the governor of Virginia’s proclamation calling for volunteers from all parts of the state to rally to the flag. Ostensibly, he would accept volunteers from anywhere. A similar notice for volunteers to rendezvous in Richmond proposed to form a legion of volunteers sworn to fight until “an honorable peace” with Great Britain be reached. The notice encouraged patriotic printers throughout the United States to reprint the advertisement.⁸ The newspapers also proudly printed the Virginia governor’s acceptance of service from Colonel Beverly Daniel, the North Carolina governor’s aide. The Virginians gratefully accepted volunteers from their “sister state.”⁹ The newspaper coverage served to engender a sense that North Carolina could do—and should do—more.

In the wake of Washington, North Carolinians also learned they had reason to continue to be on guard on their coast. Both the *Raleigh Register* and the *Star* published correspondence between Admiral Cochrane and Secretary Monroe announcing Cochrane’s general orders to raid the coast and his refusal to rescind the orders until so ordered to by his government, an indication that British naval forces would continue to raid the American coast indefinitely.¹⁰ Reports that 300 British troops had landed in Onslow County confirmed

⁶ *Raleigh Register*, September 2, 1814.

⁷ *Raleigh Star*, September 2, 1814.

⁸ *Raleigh Register*, September 2, 1814.

⁹ *Raleigh Register*, September 9, 1814.

¹⁰ *Raleigh Register*, September 30, 1814; *Raleigh Star*, September 16, 1814.

British intentions to continue raiding. The troops had arrived in a frigate and two sloops of war, landed, and took thirty head of cattle and shot a citizen before returning to their ships.¹¹

The sense of vulnerability generated by such raids, the humiliation of the capital's burning, and the growing sense that the war would continue seemed to melt away previously existing opposition to the war and caused the *Raleigh Star* to declare: "It is highly gratifying to the best feelings of Americans to observe that notwithstanding the difference of opinion which prevails as to the policy of engaging in this war, and the mode of carrying it on, yet all are united, hand and heart in contributing their utmost to repel our invaders. In this respect Stonnington [sic] and Norfolk are animated with one spirit—a spirit that does honor to American patriotism."¹²

A keen example of the surge of patriotism generated in the state is William Polk's letter volunteering his service to war effort. As described in the introduction, Polk was the prominent Federalist who had turned down a federal appointment at the beginning of the war in order to attend to his business interests. In October 1814, he wrote to Governor Hawkins acknowledging his earlier declination, but now observed the changed situation—that the country had been humiliated. He declared his willingness to "unite with the government" to compel the enemy to "respect our rights and bring the war to an honorable termination." Polk was careful to state that he did not necessarily approve of the cause of war or its progress, but nevertheless felt compelled to serve given the current situation.¹³

¹¹ *Raleigh Register*, September 9, 1814; *Raleigh Star*, September 9, 1814.

¹² *Raleigh Star*, September 9, 1814. Stonington was a town on the Connecticut coast that the British had attempted to subdue in August 1814.

¹³ William Polk to William Hawkins, October 17, 1814. Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor's Letters and Papers, Box 26 (Corresponds to Governor's Letter Book #20), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Hawkins Letter Book 20].

In addition to fueling wider support for the national war effort, the burning of Washington and the seeming lack of progress in peace negotiations at Ghent (begun in August) left the state committed to securing its coast. Mobilizations of North Carolina's militia and activation of its detached militia during the latter months of 1814 demonstrated the state's commitment to the national war effort and a shift to an increasingly organized response to the federal government's demands. Historian Wayne E. Lee suggests the American militia at this time as representing a demographic resilience. They showed up when called, which prevented the British from having any real chance for widespread conquest of the United States. The improved mobilization of North Carolina's militia would have enhanced that resilience.¹⁴ Evidence of improvements include orders issued to multiple levels of command, directions for reporting personnel rolls, and coordination with U.S. Army contractors in advance of troop rendezvous.

Several factors motivated the state to improve its organization and documentation of mobilizations. First, the state felt entitled to reimbursement for its compliance with federalizing its troops. In addition to wanting to make sure it was not unduly burdened, the state also needed the federal government to honor the obligations it assumed for military spending per the Constitution and subsequent legislation. Second, the state continued to supply troops for both federal requisitions and to defend its coast—an area of low priority to the national war effort, but of high importance to state residents, especially those on the coast. A more organized approach to meeting federal obligations ensured that the state retained adequate resources to meet the expectations of its citizens. North Carolinians continued to expect coastal fortifications and defensive preparation even in the absence of

¹⁴ Wayne E. Lee, "Plattsburgh 1814: Warring for Bargaining Chips," in *Between War and Peace: How America Ends Its Wars*, ed. Matthew Moten (New York: Free Press, 2011), 55.

federal assistance. There also emerged a trend, seen in 1813 and again in 1814, of detached militia units in federal service looking to the state government to provide items, clothing in particular, not provided by the U.S. Army. The state was often more reliable and faster in responding to troops' requests. Finally, past experience led the state to improve its record keeping and enforce standards during mobilization. The continuing trouble the state experienced trying to get reimbursed for expenses during the July 1813 mobilization shaped its behavior in 1814. Although the 1813 effort was an emergency and the subsequent mobilizations were more "normal," the state had learned that the federal government and the U.S. Army would adhere strictly to its rules and regulations. As a result, the state was careful to reference the orders and authorizations that governed its actions and to cite the laws under which it claimed reimbursement.

The experiences documented in this chapter show the end result of the state's learning process over the course of the war. Although Edward Skeen characterized the militia during the war as practically useless, North Carolina refined its process of mobilizing men to work within the emerging norms of the federal system.¹⁵ Doing so was important to legitimize the federal system. Increased efficiency also ensured the state could meet state-level expectations. Doing both bolstered support for the war and reinforced the state's relationship within the wider confederation of states, i.e., the nation. The state became more active and proactive in managing its detached militia and military resources in the final months of the war.

North Carolina's Priority—Coastal Defense

As the war progressed, North Carolinians continued to perceive their coast as vulnerable to British attack. Even Major General Thomas Pinckney, commander of the U.S.

¹⁵ Carl Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 76.

Sixth Military District, continued to worry about vulnerability along the coast and coastal fortifications. Corresponding with Governor Hawkins in late August 1814, Pinckney stated that the British had augmented their force designed to plunder and destroy the coast and that he feared the enemy was planning an attack. He detailed his efforts to get fortifications built; fortifications designed to delay enemy incursions and to provide time to mobilize inland militia forces against the enemy. Pinckney enclosed a copy of the letter he had sent to Secretary of War Monroe outlining his proposals for North Carolina's defense. His recommendations aligned with what Hawkins and other state leaders had hoped for: improved defense of Wilmington by reinforcing Fort Johnston, additional cannon at Fort Hampton to protect Beaufort, and the investment of money and federal troops to both build and provide a covering party during construction of a post on Beacon Island, which was ideally situated to protect the ports of Newbern, Edenton, Washington, and Plymouth. Although Pinckney accurately represented the state's hopes for increased defensive preparations, he had to relay the news that the federal funds assigned for fortifications were insufficient to build them—essentially admitting to Hawkins that he had no money to complete the task and thus confirming that fortifications along the southern coast were of such a low priority that the federal government had not budgeted for them.¹⁶

Pinckney's solution to the lack of federal funds was to suggest that the state assume the financial burden of building fortifications. He referenced the cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, whose citizens supplied money to fortify critical areas in and around the cities with the expectation that the federal government would reimburse those expenses after the war. Pinckney acknowledged that the port towns of North Carolina were

¹⁶ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, August 30, 1814; Pinckney to Secretary of War, June 18, 1814, enclosed in Pinckney to Hawkins, August 30, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20 NCSA.

not as wealthy as the cities he mentioned, but he alluded to the state's untapped resources. Specifically, he suggested that "negroes within a reasonable distance" of the port towns provided a "valuable auxiliary" and that slave owners should be reimbursed for permitting their slaves to build fortifications in coastal areas. Although the Constitution prohibited him from guaranteeing the federal government would reimburse those expenses, Pinckney felt certain the government would pay for the expense. Pinckney's inability to offer reimbursement hardly enhanced his suggestion, especially when coupled with the existing fear that allowing slaves to labor in port towns increased the possibility of them coming into contact with British forces, an impetus for slave uprisings or running away. Pinckney's closing lines indicate he understood his suggestion's lack of appeal. With remarks meant to prod the patriotism of the state and perhaps highlight the fact that state had sacrificed less, at least in terms of lives lost, than other states, Pinckney signed off hoping that "the patriotism and confidence in the justice of our country will induce our fellow citizens of North Carolina to make equal exertions of our Brethren of the North."¹⁷

To some extent, Pinckney's vision of locally organized, if not funded, defensive preparations already existed because coastal residents remained committed to concepts of coastal fortification. The Newbern Committee of Safety reported an increased participation of the town to its own security—loud calls for defensive measures had "roused the people." The committee provided the governor with a set of resolutions adopted by the town and an assessment of the town's current defensive situation. They possessed only one piece of heavy ordnance and believed that twelve would allow the town to assume a "strong posture of defense." A battalion "under strict drill with a competent officer" stationed near Newbern

¹⁷ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins, August 30, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

would “diffuse discipline and a degree of Military knowledge” and enhance military preparation in the area. The committee noted a shortage of weapons—they had only three hundred stands of arms available at Newbern. Although not explicitly stated, their catalogue of arms was actually a request for more arms with which to supply militia called out in event of invasion.¹⁸ However, the committee was also authorized to raise money from citizens of the town. They were charged with determining the “smallest sum which each citizen ought to contribute” and apply the money raised to the defense of the town.¹⁹ In addition to their appeal for state assistance, the citizens of Newbern were prepared to fund their own defense.

Securing authorization and funding from the federal government was important because the General Assembly did not have enough money to pay for troops stationed at Newbern and all the other exposed points along the coast who would want the same protective measures taken on their behalf. Hawkins sympathized with the urgency of the petition from Newbern and replied to the committee quickly. Within a few days he pledged “to afford every aid at his disposal he can justify.” He decided to move cannon from the town of Edenton to Newbern. Hawkins also promised to request that the President authorize and pay for a detachment of militia at Newbern. His tour of the coast following the Ocracoke invasion had revealed that the forces near Newbern were not enough to fortify and garrison the town, one of the state’s largest. Hawkins hoped his newest appeal to the federal government would be more successful than past efforts. He expressed frustration with the federal government’s inaction knowing “the importance of the inland navigation through our sounds, and of our ports and harbours for the admission of prizes, that fruitful source of revenue to the United States, it appears strange and unaccountable to me that the many and

¹⁸ E. Pasteur and others to William Hawkins, September 3, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

¹⁹ Resolutions adopted by the Citizens of Newbern, September 3, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA..

reiterated representations and applications to the General Government have received no further attention than merely to keep alive expectations that something would be done for our protection and defense.”²⁰

Although he promised assistance, Hawkins looked to the federal government to assume responsibility for the North Carolina coast. Once again, Hawkins addressed his concerns to the Secretary of War. In a September 1814 letter he referenced a presidential proclamation from earlier in the month in which the president acknowledged the British intent to ravage the seacoast. This proclamation justified the state’s concerns yet failed to explain the federal government’s failure to remedy the defenseless situation of North Carolina’s coast. Hawkins enclosed the Newbern resolutions to demonstrate the state population’s commitment to defense and warned the secretary that failure to fortify Beacon Island would leave all the towns on the Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds vulnerable and all the inland waterways between Virginia and the south exposed to British raiding. He pressed for funding for fortifications and more arms to secure North Carolina’s 300-mile coast. Hawkins admonished the secretary to pay attention to the state’s maritime frontier “not as heretofore, but in a manner to produce the desired effect, its better security.”²¹

The urgency expressed in Hawkins’s letter corresponded with the positive steps Hawkins took to enact the defense measures promised to the Newbern committee. He wrote to Colonel Edward Pasteur, a member of the town’s Committee of Safety and formerly commissioned in the U.S. Army, directing him to muster and drill the troops from the regiments likely to compose a detachment. He ordered Pasteur to get supplies and munitions

²⁰ William Hawkins to Newbern Committee of Safety, September 7, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Emphasis in original document.

²¹ William Hawkins to Secretary of War, September 11, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

of war from the deputy quarter master general at the state's expense. Hawkins specified that he get a suitable amount of ammunition for field artillery, muskets with bayonets, and lead for buckshot for common muskets, if needed. He gave Pasteur the authority to issue any orders needed to prepare the defense of Newbern and to issue all orders in the event of the town's invasion.²² That the governor would take steps to so empower his militia commander suggests that even as late as September 1814, the state's feeling of vulnerability had not abated.

The petition from Wilmington indicated that coastal towns in addition to Newbern feared British action. Robert Cochran, representing a subcommittee of the Wilmington Committee of Public Safety, wrote to the governor in September at the recommendation of General William Watt Jones. Cochran attested that the British activity around Washington made the town feel vulnerable. Cochran's letter in part asked for assistance and in part notified the governor of the town's preparations to meet the enemy. The committee expected that informing the governor of their situation would prompt him to assign "some efficient force" to the area. They also hoped that the commanding general would make arrangements for local militia to move to the area and supply the militia with arms and ammunition. In Wilmington, Cochran reported there was ammunition that belonged to the United States and to private individuals, both of which he believed could be used in emergencies. Furthermore, the muskets belonging to the United States appeared to be in good working order and should also be used in an emergency. The committee pledged to coordinate with the officers at Fort Johnston and Federal Point in readying defenses. They did request pre-placing certain articles—camp kettles, sheet iron, and workmen—to better equip and care for the influx of

²² William Hawkins to E. Pasteur, September 7, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

militia; the lack of the aforementioned had created problems the previous summer.²³

Cochran's letter shows that Wilmington expected an attack and was prepared to take action to defend itself, but it also indicated that they expected assistance from the state government and hoped for federal forces or at least federal supplies. These expectations came from past experience and the problems identified in past actions. Their efforts demonstrate an attempt to remedy previous shortfalls before the anticipated future engagement with the British.

Believing Wilmington was vulnerable to attack, Governor Hawkins called out the militia under his authority to garrison the town; he did not wait for federal orders. Hawkins wrote to General William Watt Jones of the Third Brigade of North Carolina Militia and Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Moore, commandant of the Brunswick regiment, and instructed them to order out the detachment from Brunswick, New Hanover, Bladen, Columbus, Robeson, Duplin, Sampson, and Cumberland Counties to form a 500-man force to rendezvous by October 10, 1814 in Wilmington to protect that town. Hawkins intended Lieutenant Colonel Moore to form five companies per Army regulations and have them mustered and inspected, even though they had not been called into federal service. He also directed Moore to send extra troops home, beginning with men from Brunswick County, as it was a "frontier" county. Hawkins also wanted to be informed if there was a shortfall of men at the rendezvous.²⁴

Hawkins realized that his decision to mobilize troops at his order absolved the federal government from financial support and placed the burden back on the citizens of the state. Hawkins communicated with Colonel Nicholas Long, commander of the Forty-Third

²³ Robert Cochran to Hawkins, September 6, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

²⁴ William Hawkins to William Watt Jones, September 29, 1814; Hawkins to Maurice Moore, September 20, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

Infantry Regiment and in charge of the regular troops in the state, to inform him that the mobilization was on his authority as governor, unless the requisition was subsequently called into federal service. He did request that Long help arm the troops out of the store designated for militia use at Wilmington.²⁵ Hawkins also appealed to the Committee of Public Safety at Wilmington for their support. He assured them that he had passed on their concerns to the President in hopes to secure federal support for the town's defense. Unwilling to wait for federal action, however, Hawkins called out troops and looked to the committee to supply rations if the U.S. contractor refused. He appealed to their sense of solidarity as he explained, "The pressure of business in my Office for a few days past has been so great as to require my best exertions to get through it."²⁶ He hoped they would appreciate his efforts and cooperate with the mobilization efforts if needed. Hawkins did take the additional step of writing to the U.S. contractor and informing them the state would pay for rations at the U.S. rates if the federal government would not.²⁷

Hawkins's effort to arm his troops at Wilmington uncovered some of the challenges of the dual military system and the administrative procedures adopted by the Army. Hawkins's request to Long generated a series of letters that describe mishaps in accounting for the arms. Captain Wilson, the U.S. Army officer in charge at Fort Johnston, wrote to Hawkins about the 1,200 arms at the fort. Although the quantity of arms present had surprised him, he had not realized they belonged to the state. He blamed his lack of knowledge on the improper transfer of the arms from the previous commanders to himself.

²⁵ William Hawkins to Nicholas Long, September 29, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

²⁶ William Hawkins to President of the Committee of Public Safety at Wilmington, September 29, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

²⁷ William Hawkins to U.S. Contractor at Wilmington, September 29, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

To confuse matters further, the former commander, Captain Copeland, had armed his regular company with the state weapons.²⁸ Colonel Long weighed in on the matter. He, too, had been unaware the arms were for militia use. He had used them to arm the sea fencibles and his own regiment and as a result, many were in need of repair. Since there was confusion as to what belonged to whom, he would take steps to sort out the matter.²⁹ Given that arming the militia had been an issue of constant struggle since before the war began, the news of missing, misused, and damaged arms was surely a source of irritation and anger to the governor. In spite of his best efforts to account for and distribute his limited supply of arms effectively, a confused chain of custody had contributed to the shortage of arms for his militia troops.

Federal Priorities: The Defense of Norfolk

Hawkins's effort to secure North Carolina's coast using mainly local and state resources corresponded with a simultaneous federal mobilization of troops for the defense of Norfolk, Virginia. In September 1814, Hawkins received a letter from Secretary of War James Monroe directing he order out 1,500 men from the July 1814 requisition to Norfolk, "with all possible expedition." The men would report to General Moses Porter, U.S. Army Commanding, at Norfolk. Hawkins assumed oversight of the mobilization, which included specific instructions, orders repeated at various levels of command, and further coordinated with his aide Beverly Daniel and various militia commanders. This increased care and detailed instructions show an emphasis on following the process that had evolved in the first years of the war. Adhering to the process preserved a record of North Carolina's involvement to the standard expected by the federal government to ensure reimbursement. Conforming to

²⁸ Captain Wilson to William Hawkins, September 25, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

²⁹ Nicholas Long to William Hawkins, October 5, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

the standards also allowed the state to demonstrate its continued commitment to the national cause, provide real support for the nation's military efforts, and most importantly, justify its claims on the federal government. Adopting the increasingly formalized process was part and parcel of establishing the legitimacy of the federal-state relationship.

Although the federal government responded parsimoniously, if at all, to North Carolina's defensive requests, it did perceive vulnerabilities along the Atlantic seaboard and continued to draw on North Carolina's resources in the later stages of the war. General Porter intercepted Secretary War Monroe's orders to Governor Hawkins. By the time Hawkins received the orders, Porter's adjutant general, Colonel James Bankhead, had his added instructions stipulating that the requested troops arrive armed and equipped—with little delay.³⁰ So even as the federal government tapped the state's manpower, the army's field commanders requested materiel—supplies the state itself clamored for—as well.

Specific instructions and orders repeated at several layers of command marked the state's efforts as it coordinated the response for Norfolk. Beverly Daniel, the governor's aide-de-camp, issued general orders to the commanders of regiments of nineteen counties, directing the militia detached from the regiments to rendezvous at Gates Court House by September 30, 1814.³¹ Brigadier General Jeremiah Slade, commander of the detached militia, was ordered to organize the troops into one complete regiment and one battalion. Daniel expected the U.S. Army contractor to issue supplies, but to facilitate the rendezvous, he ordered each man to carry his own knapsack, blanket, and supplies sufficient to reach Norfolk. The situation required “zeal and patriotism” as their sister state was “threatened at

³⁰ James Bankhead to Hawkins, September 9, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

³¹ Those counties included: Granville, Wake, Johnston, Franklin, Warren, Halifax, Northampton, Nash, Edgecombe, Martin, Washington, Tyrrell, Bertie, Hertford, Gates, Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Camden.

every point assailable by the enemy.” Daniel went on to say: “Justice requires that aid should be afforded by her Sister States not so much exposed to danger. It is expected from North Carolina. That it may be efficient, it is necessary that it should be prompt.”³² In spite of frustration with the federal government for failing to provide money and resources for the defense of North Carolina’s coastal towns, the state and its militia remained committed to the national cause.

Governor Hawkins also communicated the expedition’s requirements directly to General Slade. He took time to enumerate the U.S. Army regulations for the correct composition of a company and specify that the detachment would be organized into fifteen complete companies. Per the regulations, ten companies composed a regiment while the remaining five companies comprised a battalion. Hawkins also named the commanding officers: Lieutenant Colonels Duncan McDonald of Chowan, the senior lieutenant colonel, Andrew Joyner of Martin, Maurice Smith of Granville, Majors James W. Clarke of Edgecombe, John C. Green of Warren, and Joseph F. Dickerson of Hertford. These men were all officers assigned to either the first or second regiments of detached militia. He advised Slade to send home excess troops, but to notify him immediately—by express—if the force was short troops. Hawkins had coordinated rations through the U.S. contractors Jarvis and Brown; rations requested for 1,500 men at Gates Court House by September 25. Lastly, Hawkins advised Slade that nothing should delay the troops; specifically, if he could not secure transportation, “pressing must be resorted to” rather than risk delay. Although

³² General Orders for the Norfolk Detachment, September 15, 1814; Circular to the Commandants, September 16, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

Hawkins ordered Slade to organize the troops, he appointed Lieutenant Colonel McDonald to command the detachment since it was too small for a general to command.³³

Governor Hawkins was careful to spread manpower requirements over different counties. He had tasked the first and second regiments to provide the manpower for the Norfolk requisition. He had previously tasked the regiments who comprised the Third Detached Regiment to defend Wilmington. He did a good job ensuring he did not task the same units twice. However, the counties in the Norfolk requisition included coastal areas that had their own security concerns, so the requisition lacked unanimous support. In Bertie County, militia gathered in Windsor to complete the regiment. Commanders first sought volunteers, but fell short of their quota. To make up the difference, officers drafted men, selecting one out of every eight to complete the company.³⁴

Balancing Resources: Managing Manpower for State and Federal Priorities

By September 1814, North Carolina militia was employed under state authority in the defense of Wilmington and also assembling to support the defense of Norfolk under federal direction. Preparation along the coast proceeded in the absence of federal support. Hawkins shared with Colonel Long his request for a detachment to garrison Wilmington and also advised him that the force requested for Newbern was likely too small. He noted that the British had landed 1,500 men in 1813 so he expected any future landing force to be at least that large, if not closer to 2,000 men.³⁵ It appears that Hawkins had confidence in his

³³ William Hawkins to General Slade, 16 September 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. The composition of a company included: 1 captain, 1 first lieutenant, 1 second lieutenant, 1 third lieutenant, 1 ensign, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 2 musicians, and 90 privates.

³⁴ Gerald W. Thomas, *Destitute Patriots: Bertie County in the War of 1812* (Raleigh, NC: Office of Archives and History, North Carolina Dept. of Cultural Resources, 2012), 112.

³⁵ William Hawkins to Nicholas Long, September 21, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20 NCSA.

militia's willingness to turn out to defend their own interests as well as willingness to suggest their service, especially if funded by the federal government.

Colonel Long also finally acted on Governor Hawkins's suggestion to use detached militia to supply manpower to build the desired coastal fortifications. Governor Hawkins believed that part of the delay in the construction was the lack of sufficient workers and repeatedly suggested the federal government call into service companies of the detached militia to assist in the construction, Colonel Long initially made the request to Hawkins while visiting Colonel Armistead in Beaufort, the officer in charge of building on Beacon Island, in September. Long requested that five companies of militia rendezvous at Newbern on October 1, 1814.³⁶ That Long also noted the presence of several hostile ships along the coast reinforced the governor's belief that the state's insistence on improved fortification was justified. Hawkins and his military aide-de-camp Beverly Daniel acted quickly on the long awaited request for troops and issued orders to call out the force desired to assist in the construction of fortifications. They ordered a rendezvous at Newbern inside of two weeks.³⁷ The timing of the requisition meant that North Carolina militia was active in three separate areas.

This mobilization shows that the state had again adopted a pattern of deliberate action to adhere to federal standards for mobilization. Daniel's instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Simon Bruton, the detachment commander, followed the same formula as those issued to General Slade and Colonel McDonald for the Norfolk expedition. Bruton was expected to

³⁶ Nicholas Long to William Hawkins, September 5, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

³⁷ Circular to Colonels Commandants, September 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Books 20, NCSA. Duplicate instructions to the lieutenant colonel commandants of regiments in Pitt, Wayne, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Craven, Beaufort, and Hyde Counties gave less than two weeks for the detached militia to rendezvous. Daniel ordered Lieutenant Colonel Tisdale of Craven County to assist in the mobilization and take command if Simon Bruton of Lenoir, who was expected to command the detachment, was unable to do so. See Beverly Daniel to Nathan Tisdale, September 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

organize the five companies in accordance with Army regulations; he was to discharge extra troops from the rendezvous point and notify the governor immediately if he was short men. Bruton was also told to expect supplies from the U.S. Army Contractors Jarvis and Brown, as the requisition had come from Colonel Long, a regular army officer. To comply with army regulations, he was required to have his troops inspected by a regular officer. The detachment was also to coordinate with two companies of sea fencibles to protect the building efforts. To assist in the protective effort, Daniel ordered a portion of the detachment led by Major Thomas H. Blount to garrison at Ocracoke Inlet instead of Newbern.³⁸

The federal requisitions provided another opportunity for Hawkins to make claims on the federal government. As the Norfolk requisition got underway, Governor Hawkins used his correspondence with Secretary of War Monroe and the representatives for General Porter in Norfolk as an avenue to insist on federal assistance. One important topic of the letters concerned arming the troops. Hawkins reminded the Secretary of War that General Porter expected the troops to arrive armed and equipped. Hawkins used that directive to remind Monroe that the state was “destitute” of arms and informed him they would need to be armed by the federal government upon their arrival at Norfolk. North Carolina’s Adjutant General responded to General Porter with a letter stating the same.³⁹

Hawkins was not shy in making his claims directly to the Secretary of War. In addition to requesting arms for troops headed to Norfolk, he insisted that the militia protecting Wilmington warranted federal support and authorization. He shared with the

³⁸ Beverly Daniel to Bruton, 17 September 1814; Beverly Daniel to Thomas Blount, September 17, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

³⁹ Hawkins to Monroe, 18 September 1814; Williams to Porter, September 19, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

Monroe that at that moment in Wilmington sat over \$1 million in prize ships and immense naval stores. The town was conducting more shipping than at any time in the recent past. Moreover, Hawkins reminded the secretary that the nature of fortifications left the port vulnerable to raiding; a landing party could land as far as seven miles away and still march on the town. Hawkins requested a detachment of militia to garrison the town.⁴⁰ Hawkins took the vulnerability of Wilmington seriously and wanted to provide the area increased protection and believed it of enough importance to warrant federal attention. His actions also reflect the state's expectation for a federal requisition to shift the financial burden of defense from the state to the federal government.

At least for the moment, however, federal funding was not available. To supply the militia authorized by the governor, the state also mobilized its other resources. Major Blount arranged for the preparation and storage of ball cartridges and buck shot for the militia's use.⁴¹ Governor Hawkins arranged for the transfer of powder and lead from the magazine at Fayetteville to Wilmington.⁴² Colonel Pasteur of Newbern issued orders to militia regiments in Onslow, Jones, Lenoir, Greene, Pitt, Beaufort, Craven, and Carteret Counties to muster and drill and be ready for action.⁴³ That the detached militia of Pitt, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Craven, and Beaufort Counties had previously been tasked for the Newbern requisition meant that not only would they actually mobilize and deploy their detached militia, but also exercise the remaining militia, i.e., those men not identified as part of the detached militia. This dual tasking created a manpower demand on nearly all of the men of old enough to

⁴⁰ William Hawkins to James Monroe, September 18, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴¹ Rodman to Thomas Blount, September 14, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴² William Hawkins to Eccles, September 24, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴³ Colonel Pasteur to William Hawkins, September 19, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

serve in the militia. Late September stresses and the likelihood that their detached militia would be again serving in the winter months making supply, clothes, and shelter all the more important—considering the conditions at Deep Water Point during the fall and winter of 1813-1814.

The demand for troops to protect the seaboard directly affected the progress of the rendezvous at Gates Court House, the location of the requisition for Norfolk. On September 26, 1814, within days of both the required rendezvous dates at Gates Court House and Newbern, General Hawkins altered the counties assigned to the defense of Norfolk.⁴⁴ Anticipating a six-month deployment to Norfolk, he ordered the troops from the coastal counties of Camden, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Chowan, Washington, and Tyrrell all sent home, preserving them for use along the North Carolina coast instead. In their place, he ordered out the detachment from the piedmont counties of Chatham, Orange, and Person Counties. Hawkins informed General Slade that the newly tasked troops would arrive on October 5, six days after the original rendezvous date.⁴⁵ The governor's earlier message which had advocated supporting sister states had equated timeliness with effectiveness came up against the reality of North Carolina's limited resources. The state was still willing to support Virginia, but was willing to sacrifice a few days in order to preserve its own defensive capabilities.

Hawkins's plan preserved the integrity of the Norfolk requisition, albeit with a slight delay, but also ensured that men from counties in close proximity to vulnerable points were left in position to defend the North Carolina coast. He listed the counties the fifteen

⁴⁴ The rendezvous date for Gates Court House was September 30, 1814; Newbern was October 1, 1814.

⁴⁵ William Hawkins to Slade, September 26, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

companies would come from: Granville, Wake, Johnston, Franklin, Warren, Halifax, Northampton, Nash, Edgecombe, Martin, Bertie, Hertford, Gates, Chatham, Orange, and Person. He directed Slade to begin filling out his regiment beginning with the troops from Wake County and then draw from each subsequent county as listed. By the time he was organized, the troops from the last three counties should have arrived. At that point, he could round out the companies and use any remaining troops from the three interior counties to replace troops from the lower counties and send them home.⁴⁶ These modifications reflected a desire to honor commitments to the nation but also appreciate the reality that in some ways, the state was left to its own devices to defend itself.

The overlapping timing of the multiple federal mobilizations and Hawkins's state-sponsored call out of troops highlighted the competing claims on the state's resources. The close timing of the requisitions along with the normal challenges of letters crossing in the mail led to a situation where Hawkins and his commanders were unsure about how many men were actually needed for the Norfolk requisition. Secretary of War Monroe responded to Hawkins's letter from September 18 with a letter of his own dated September 29, which appeared to reach Hawkins by October 3, who then used guidance from that letter to issue revised orders to his commanders. Monroe acknowledged that General Porter was not in a position to arm the full North Carolina detachment. He therefore authorized Hawkins to use the battalion of troops previously designated for Norfolk for the defense of Wilmington, leaving one full regiment for Porter. He stipulated that the regiment remain available "should General Porter still find it necessary to call them to that point and be able to furnish

⁴⁶ William Hawkins to Slade, September 26, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

means.”⁴⁷ Hawkins interpreted this letter to delay the regiment from marching to Norfolk until Porter called for them and as the order to call into federal service a battalion to defend Wilmington.

Hawkins also understood the letter as the order to federalize troops for the defense of Wilmington. Since he had already mobilized a battalion from the counties near Wilmington under his authority as governor, he designated these troops as the battalion to report to Colonel Long. He then ordered General Slade at Gates Court House to dismiss all but the desired full regiment from the Norfolk requisition. This redistribution of forces required the state to account for the expenses attendant to the return march of those dismissed from Gates Court House. Hawkins directed Slade to coordinate with the U.S. contractor to provide rations for the dismissed troops’ return march. He also empowered Slade to coordinate with General Porter to determine when the North Carolina regiment was needed in Norfolk.⁴⁸ Monroe’s letter partially satisfied the state’s desire for federal assistance defending its coast. The action was welcome considering significant manpower was being pulled to assist in the defense of Norfolk.

Perhaps stretching the intentions of the Secretary of War's letter, Hawkins essentially declared that the defense of Wilmington was now a federally funded operation. He informed the U.S. contractor at Wilmington that the 500 militia troops there had been called into federal service and were now entitled to be supplied at the expense of the United States.⁴⁹ He also informed the Wilmington Committee of Safety of the troops’ change in status and again

⁴⁷ James Monroe to William Hawkins, September 29, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴⁸ William Hawkins to Slade, October 3, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁴⁹ U.S. Contractor at Wilmington, October 4, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

requested that they make up any shortfall of supplies. His letter implied that the committee could expect to be reimbursed by the U.S. government now that the detachment was in federal service.⁵⁰ The Wilmington Committee of Public Safety proved willing to cooperate with the mobilization, if for no other reason than to ensure the town's security.⁵¹ Hawkins's move to coordinate with the local committee demonstrated the idea of federally funded troops supplemented by local efforts, the position advocated by Major General Pinckney and generally employed in North Carolina.

With circumstances at Wilmington seemingly resolved favorably for the state, Hawkins returned his attention to the Norfolk requisition, where poor weather and a lack of supplies slowed down the deployment. In late September 1814 Major General Calvin Jones, now the Quarter Master General of the Detached Militia of North Carolina, informed Hawkins of poor conditions at Gates Court House. Nearly 1,200 men—the troops from the last three counties called out (Chatham, Orange, and Person) and Bertie County had not yet encamped at the site—suffered cramped conditions and heavy rain. Jones recommended making the muster report to the War Department so the men could get paid and receive winter clothing. He had been able to find waggoners willing to take certificates, a form of promissory notes, in payment for transpiration to Norfolk. In spite of that good news, Jones expressed concern: “I feel much anxiety that the General Government should do justice in this respect to those who with such willing alacrity, have sacrificed the comforts of a home, to embark in its service under many privations, and exposed almost without defense to the rude assaults of the elements, and I am gratified in believing, equally ready to front their

⁵⁰ William Hawkins to Wilmington Committee, October 4, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵¹ Robert Cochran to William Hawkins, October 6, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

breasts to the enemy's steel."⁵² Jones's reflection on his sense of abandonment as the nation called troops into federal service demonstrates the importance of the arrangement between the various levels of government.

Despite the rainy conditions, the North Carolina detachment began its march to Norfolk at the end of September. Letters containing contradictory information sent between Secretary of War Monroe, General Porter at Norfolk, Governor Hawkins in Raleigh, and Generals Slade and Jones at the rendezvous location, crossed in the mail and caused a delay in getting the desired troops to Norfolk. Hawkins's October 3 letter reached General Slade after the first regiment had departed for Norfolk. To comply with Hawkins's understanding of the situation, Slade sent riders to recall the lead four companies, which had been en route for four days. The remainder of the regiment had only been under way for one day. As a result, a portion of the troops were recalled before they actually completed the march to Norfolk, although Slade expected the lead companies were near enough to Norfolk, that he sent a letter to General Calvin Jones, who had by then departed for Norfolk, requesting he arrange return transportation for any portion of the regiment which had already arrived in camp. Slade also planned to dismiss the remainder of troops at Gates Court House with instructions to remain ready to be called out.⁵³

New information from General Porter required Governor Hawkins and General Slade to further revise previously issued orders. As Slade attempted to carry out Hawkins's recall instructions, Hawkins received Porter's October 4 letter, which revealed the extent of the confusion. Porter shared that since the end of September, he had known there were more

⁵² William Hawkins to Calvin Jones, September 26, 1814; Jones to Hawkins, October 1, 1814 (2 letters), Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵³ Slade to Hawkins, October 7, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

arms than anticipated at his disposal and he would be able to arm the entire North Carolina requisition upon their arrival—all 1,500 troops. Any troops that remained unarmed, he planned to dismiss or send to Wilmington, to satisfy the authorization for detached militia at that town. He expected to use the North Carolinians to dismiss Virginians currently serving and was certain he needed the forces. Although some enemy detachments had left the bay area, he believed considerable forces remained within striking distance of Norfolk.⁵⁴

Porter reiterated his original request for 1,500 men, but the federal mobilization remained unfinished until the end of October. Letters from Porter to Slade, Jones to Hawkins, and Porter to Williams continued to cross in the mail. By October 10, General Slade had redirected his troops with some difficulty and notified the governor that portions of the required regiment were quartered at Norfolk with the remainder on its way.⁵⁵ Slade also provided information as to which counties' troops filled out the regiment. Militia from Johnston, Wake, Granville, and part of Franklin County augmented the four companies commanded by Captains Bryan, Bell, Green, and Inge. Captains Laughter, Watkins, and Pettiway commanded the next three companies with troops from Warren, Nash, Edgecombe, and Franklin Counties. The final three companies sent to Norfolk came from Halifax, Northampton, Bertie, Martin, and part of Hertford County with Captains Barns, Walker, and Iredell in command.⁵⁶

Although Slade dismissed the remainder of troops, he took steps to organize the troops from Washington, Tyrrell, Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Camden Counties

⁵⁴ Porter to Hawkins, October 4, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵⁵ Porter to Slade, October 8, 1814; Jones to Hawkins, October 5, 1814; Porter to Williams October 8, 1814; Slade to Hawkins, October 10, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁵⁶ Slade to Hawkins, October 8, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

into three companies and placed Captains Jones, Manning, and Reding in command. Slade then dismissed those companies, but ordered them to remain in a state of readiness. Slade also dismissed additional troops without organizing them at all. Those who were organized into companies were also mustered and inspected. Slade provided the rolls to the governor and the war department and sent the North Carolina Adjutant General muster rolls, a description list, and a roster of officers.⁵⁷ Proper accounting of the troops was an important step to ensuring their pay and that the federal government properly assumed responsibility for supplying the men.

The need to combine companies from multiple counties to meet U.S. Army standards generated some hurt feelings. Combining companies resulted in some men serving under unfamiliar officers and some officers getting left behind. This last minute reorganization not only compromised the speed with which companies could mobilize, it also led to jostling for rank that undermined the chain of command.⁵⁸ For those left behind, wounded pride diminished willingness to serve in the future. Following the rendezvous, from Windsor, in Bertie County, Jonathon Jacocks wrote to Governor Hawkins to complain about the seemingly prejudiced dismissal of officers from the detachment. Jacobs claimed that he had been dismissed by General Slade without “an interview” even though he had assembled and marched many of his detachment to the rendezvous point. Several other men who “held rank with good conduct” and advanced their own money to equip themselves had also volunteered to serve and yet had been turned away. Jacocks let the governor know that he was not the

⁵⁷ Slade to Hawkins, October 8, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA. Colonel Maurice Smith and Major Wiatt remained at Gates Court House to command the Third Battalion and General Slade returned to his home in Martin County.

⁵⁸ Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812*, 40–41.

only person “whose sensibility has been wounded and whose rights have been abused.” He suspected the mistreatment stemmed from General Slade’s political prejudices but sought an explanation from the governor himself in order to preserve his honor and reputation.⁵⁹ This incident shows that in some instance, positions were coveted. The politics involved in assigning command indicated that offending the population could stifle willingness to serve.

General Slade’s efforts positioned the state’s resources for its own use and allowed the governor to know what resources he could easily make available for federal service. In an effort to clarify Porter’s request, Hawkins wrote to Porter on October 12 to verify exactly how many troops he required. He apologized for the ongoing delay, but insisted on the propriety of ensuring the troops would be armed before they were dispatched. He also indicated his willingness to provide any troops needed in addition to the regiment that had by then reached Norfolk.⁶⁰ Although he pledged Porter more support, Hawkins wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Smith and Major T.C. Wiatt, the two officers remaining at Gates Court House with the third battalion, to dismiss the force, as Hawkins had no federal request at that time to order out more troops.⁶¹ Hawkins’s actions show by this time he monitored troop employment carefully to ensure all mobilized troops were accounted for, funded either by the federal or state government. In spite of the confusion over getting the troops to Norfolk, Hawkins could at least take comfort in complimentary information about the troops. Calvin Jones admired their entrance into Norfolk, which he reported was “generally commended by the Citizens and Military” even though the detachment arrived unarmed.⁶²

⁵⁹ Jacocks to Hawkins, October 10, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶⁰ Hawkins to Porter, October 12, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶¹ Hawkins to Smith, October 12, 1814; Hawkins to Wiatt, October 12, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶² Calvin Jones to William Hawkins, October 8, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

State Priorities: Coastal Concerns Revisited

As October wore on, the troops finally deployed for Norfolk. Although some troops were federalized for North Carolina's coast, that action did not indicate a shift in national priorities. General Pinckney shared with Governor Hawkins a directive from the Secretary of War indicating that the state was still a low priority. Pinckney advocated a system of shared responsibility for defense, a reality for the state for some time already. He also catalogued proposals for better securing the state's vulnerable parts—hardly reassuring since North Carolina had been pressing for improved fortification since the beginning of the war and believed some works under construction. The direction to use local militia for local defense until the detached militia could be called out was the solution already practiced by default and did not really add any sort of solution or additional resources to the state since it was the course of action adopted in practice, if not policy. Whether or not the circular would provide any sort of financial top cover remained to be seen.⁶³ October letters continued to indicate the role of the state actively coordinating with regular troops and in most cases, taking charge of its own defenses.

Colonel Long received the North Carolina troops for the defense of Wilmington into federal service. He reported to Hawkins that although he had received the detached militia into the service of the United States and would provide arms, ammunition, and supplies, the issue of arms had yet to be resolved. Long was in the process of repairing what he could and had requested more muskets, rifles, and camp equipment. He feared he would have to discharge the troops from Wilmington if he did not resolve the situation.⁶⁴ Hawkins was glad

⁶³ Thomas Pinckney to William Hawkins (circular), October 11, 1814, and the extract of the Secretary of War's message enclosed, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA..

⁶⁴ Nicholas Long to William Hawkins, October 16, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

for the update but expected that the war would proceed “with vigor” and insisted on protecting the state’s vulnerable points. He did not offer any solution for arming the troops.⁶⁵

Towns continued to prepare themselves against attack and continued to press the state for help carrying the financial burden of war. The town of Newbern reported that they had received twelve cannon from Edenton and had been successful in mounting six of them. Maintenance of fortifications was expensive, however, and they expected to be out of funds soon. Additionally, they had spent \$2,000 on flying artillery and hoped to be reimbursed as partial relief.⁶⁶

From Wilmington, General William Watt Jones of the Third Brigade wrote to the new governor, William Miller, to ask that cannon from Edenton be moved to Wilmington. He cited the measure passed by the General Assembly allowing the governor to move cannon from Edenton to more exposed parts of the state. That very resolution had justified the movement of cannon to Newbern in October. Jones insisted that Wilmington was also in need of improved defenses. The townspeople had allocated \$3,000 to \$4,000 of their own money to erect a battery on a small island below the town. They needed cannon for the battery and six from Edenton would fill the requirement.⁶⁷ The townspeople were willing to contribute to their own defense, but expected state resources to complete their efforts. Although it had been eighteen months since any significant activity along the North Carolina coast, the townspeople’s sense of vulnerability remained heightened.

⁶⁵ William Hawkins to Nicholas Long, October 19, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶⁶ Newbern Committee of Safety, October 24, 1814, Hawkins Letter Book 20, NCSA.

⁶⁷ William Watt Jones to William Miller, December 27, 1814, Miscellaneous Collections, Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor’s Letters and Papers, Box 27 (Corresponds to Governor’s Letter Book #21), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as Miller Letter Book 21]. The North Carolina General Assembly elected William Miller as governor in the 1814 legislative session.

Federal Priorities: Norfolk, again—The Second Requisition, November 1814

In late October, the federal government again tapped North Carolina to supply troops for the defense of Norfolk. The U.S. Adjutant General at Norfolk, Colonel James Bankhead, communicated the orders to North Carolina Adjutant General Robert Williams on October 29, 1814. Williams tasked Colonel Richard Atkinson of Person County, who had been part of the Seventh Regiment led by Colonel Jesse Pearson and General Graham against the Creek Indians, to command. Williams ordered the detached militia of Orange, Chatham, Person, Caswell, Rockingham, Guilford, Randolph, Stokes, Surry, and Wilkes Counties to rendezvous at Hillsborough on November 28 to form the Fifth Regiment of Detached North Carolina Militia. This was a second call out for the troops from Orange, Chatham, and Person, which had mobilized in the first effort at the beginning of the month, but had subsequently been dismissed. He also specified several officers: Samuel Hunter of Guilford, lieutenant colonel; Samuel Torrentine of Orange, first major; and Joseph Winston, Jr., of Stokes County, second major.⁶⁸

The repetition of precise orders for the composition, mustering, and inspection of troops as well as communication with the governor is further evidence of the increasingly standardized state process. As in the first Norfolk requisition, Williams provided Atkinson with specific details and precise orders on how to accomplish the mobilization, similar to his oversight of Slade's mobilization. The effort to conform to Army regulations dictated the state's process. The total force of 1,073 made a complete 10 companies per U.S. Army

⁶⁸ Bankhead to Williams, October 29, 1814; Williams to Atkinson, November 10, 1814. Adjutant General's Department, General Records 1807-1950, A.G. #6, Militia Returns, Orders to Officers, 1813-1817, NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as A.G. #6].

regulations.⁶⁹ Williams provided blank commissions to round out the officer corps. He instructed Atkinson to have the regiment mustered and inspected by a U.S. officer at Hillsborough or inspected by a militia officer under the rank of lieutenant colonel if no U.S. officer was present. Atkinson was to send a copy of the muster rolls to the Adjutant and Inspector General of the United States, one to the War Department, and one the North Carolina Adjutant General.⁷⁰ By following these steps, the state hoped to demonstrate it met its obligations to the federal government and that in turn, the federal government had to honor its pledge to reimburse the states. Williams, who was busy fighting with the War Department and the Adjutant and Inspector General for pay and claims due to the state for service in July 1813, knew well the importance of complying with regulations and paperwork.

Williams also took steps to get the federal government to pay for expenses initially instead of seeking reimbursement later, which mirrored the state's efforts of a few weeks earlier. In his initial order to Atkinson, he indicated that he would coordinate with the U.S. contractors to supply the requisition. Williams wrote to contractors Jarvis and Brown the same day to make the arrangements. In addition, he contacted a second U.S. contractor to arrange services in the event that Jarvis and Brown were unable to meet the request. Williams also informed Atkinson and the various militia commanders that a timely rendezvous was important enough that if they had problems securing transportation, they should resort to pressing, but that the federal government would be bound to pay for transportation regardless

⁶⁹ As in previous letters, Williams took care to give exact details of the force composition. Williams noted that in addition to the specified officers, the regiment should contain: 1 adjutant, 1 quarter master, 1 surgeon, 2 surgeon's mates, 1 sergeant major, 1 quarter master sergeant, 1 drum major, 1 fife major, 10 captains, 20 lieutenants, 20 ensigns, 50 sergeants, 40 corporals, 10 fifers, 10 drummers, and 900 privates.

⁷⁰ Robert Williams to Atkinson, November 10, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA.

of how it was procured. In late October, Williams took the added step of writing to Secretary of War Monroe to alert him to the lack of a Quarter Master Department in the state and for directions on how best to transport the troops.⁷¹ Detailed instructions and repeated orders though layers of command were attempts to ensure quick response and make sure the bulk of financial burden fell on federal government, which is how the state understood the obligations per the Constitution and subsequent Army regulations.

The Soldiers' Experience of State-Federal Management: Winter

Despite the state's efforts to mobilize troops through an improved and more efficient process, it continued to encounter supply problems. State militiamen served in bleak conditions, even the federalized troops. The state continued to assume responsibility for its men, even those federalized, for at least two reasons. First, state leaders understood that men would not serve if their expectations for supplies, pay, and leadership structures were not met. Political leaders also placed a premium on volunteers versus drafted soldiers, as it at least appeared to demonstrate patriotism and fed into the consensus support they so craved. Second, the state was willing to step in and fill the shortfalls of the federal government because its citizens expected it too. More importantly, ensuring the men were taken care of, even if at state expense, was a means to preserve the state-federal arrangement under development during the war. The state was willing to overlook a break-down in the arrangement in order to meet the expectations of its people—meeting the needs of soldiers and families mitigated criticism of the system. The worst-case scenario would be for men to go unsupported, which would call into question the ability of the national government to command its resources.

⁷¹ Williams to Atkinson, November 10, 1814; Williams to Jarvis and Brown, November 10, 1814; Williams to Street, November 10, 1814; Williams to Lt Col Commandant, First Regiment of Orange County, et al, November 10, 1814; Williams to Monroe, November 10, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA.

Men serving along the coast in the fall and winter of 1814 experienced conditions as bleak as those at Deep Water Point near Fort Johnston in 1813. Major General William Croom, Commander of North Carolina's Fifth Division, wrote from Kinston in Lenoir County to report the horrid conditions of the detached militia stationed at Beacon Island in the Ocracoke inlet. He described the situation as "distressing" and "almost intolerable" and noted it was a subject of "universal clamour [sic] and disaster" among people in the state. At least 200 of the 600 men stationed there were sick and had been immersed in mud and water for nearly three months; the water was up to the men's knees. The men exposed to the winter cold and had no fuel to burn, no blankets, and no winter clothes. Croom admitted he had not visited the island, but felt reliably informed there was "room for complaint."⁷²

Croom's complaint and the governor's subsequent actions also reveal much about the link between expectations, service, and a belief that the state should protect its own men even when in the service of the federal government. The men from Lenoir County had volunteered believing they would be stationed at Newbern. Then they were told they would be stationed on the island of Portsmouth to work one day a week in detachments of one hundred "fatigue men each day alternately." Once the work was finished, they had expected dismissal; in Croom's words: to be "relieved from this prison." Croom reported the building was complete, yet there was no plan for relief. He asserted that "By the men's being so much deceived or disappointed the service has been very much injured in this quarter, so that whenever there shall be another call for men we shall resort to drafts, for I believe it will be impossible to get a single volunteer."⁷³ The state and its leaders valued volunteers service and recognized that troops carried expectations for how they would be treated, even in

⁷² William Croom to William Miller, December 26, 1814, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁷³ William Croom to William Miller, December 26, 1814, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

federal service. North Carolinians had mobilized for state and federal service, and over time, the state had continued to call on the population to provide for troops' needs when federal assistance fell short. Although the state pressed the federal government to care for its men, it had adopted the habit of assisting its men, even when federalized, they preserved their safety and willingness to fight in the future.

Hinting at intrastate politics, Croom blamed the situation in part on slave owners who refused to allow their slaves to be hired out to perform the work. He relayed that when Colonel Armisted traveled to Newbern to hire laborers, there were at least 150 "idle Negroes" available for hire. The owners, however, became convinced that the British would "come and take them off and would not let them go," and refused to hire out the men. Croom suggested they only pretended to be worried. Had the slaves been employed, the work on Beacon Island could have been done for half the cost and lives—the lives of free, white men—would have been saved. Instead, poor men did the work for nothing and most with wives and children to support.⁷⁴ Croom clearly believed there was a need for the state to intervene in the situation.

Major Thomas Blount confirmed Croom's information about the troops at Beacon Island, who experienced similarly destitute conditions. The weather and illness significantly reduced the effective strength of the detachment. Of 451 troops, only 180 were present; 214 men were sick and 57 absent without leave. Blount identified lack of clothing, poor housing, and no fuel as contributing causes to the widespread sickness. He judged the soldiers' homespun clothing was suitable for summer and fall, not the current winter conditions. The housing was also inadequate for the winter weather—the houses leaked, the

⁷⁴ William Croom to William Miller, December 26, 1814, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

barracks lacked fireplaces, and wood was not readily available. Blount expected many troops to die unless they were outfitted with warm jackets and trousers immediately. Their service extended though March, and he reminded the newly elected Governor William Miller that March was the “most inclement time of year” in that portion of the state.⁷⁵

Deplorable conditions affected troops all along the coast. From Wilmington, Major E.B. Dudley complained about insufficient clothing. The men believed they were to serve a three-month tour, which expired on January 12, 1815, the day before Dudley wrote the governor. Because they had expected a short term of service, they had not bought enough warm clothing. Furthermore, since the troops had not been paid, they did not have money to purchase appropriate clothing for themselves. To make matters worse, cloth to make clothes was not readily available, although Dudley expected as prize ships sold off their cargo, some might be available in the near future.⁷⁶

Dudley’s letter also reaffirmed the belief in the link between morale and men’s willingness to serve in the militia. Writing to the governor shows where Dudley perceived help would come from. The expiration of the troops’ term of service added to the complaints about clothing. Dudley indicated the troops were anxious to be dismissed. He suggested that the extended service time meant the troops had either been deceived about their term of service or that a mistake had been communicating the expectations. Nevertheless, he observed various indications of a mutiny and general desertion. He had placed two men under guard while they waited for court martial and reported an additional two men had

⁷⁵ Thomas Blount to William Miller, January 24, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁷⁶ E. B. Dudley to William Miller, January 13, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

deserted.⁷⁷ Poor camp conditions and a violation of the militiamen's expectation eroded whatever patriotic sentiment existed among the troops.

Colonel Maurice Moore, the commander of the Third Regiment of Detached Militia, elaborated on conditions at Wilmington. He stated emphatically that every soldier in the battalion needed some article of clothing or another. At a minimum, his men needed: 161 coats, 82 vests, 103 pants, 111 shirts, 35 pair of socks, 7 mats, and 130 blankets. The prices in Wilmington were high, and he believed he could only purchase a few of the requested articles there. He had been able to acquire 200 pair of shoes at 90 cents per pair, and hoped to purchase blankets from a privateer, but suggested the governor look to other markets, such as Fayetteville, for the rest of the items needed. Moore also noted that the men had served more than half their expected length of service and for that reason, if not for the uncommon sickness of the camp, required that action was taken quickly.⁷⁸

Troops serving the federal government in Virginia, not just North Carolina, turned to their home state for support. Officers in Norfolk anticipated their need for supplies as early as October 1814. Fourteen officers signed a circular asking North Carolinians for aid because the federal government had failed to provide necessities. The men lacked comfortable woolen clothing and blankets—they were “entirely destitute” of clothing. The officers requested supporters send donations of clothing, blankets, or money to the field officers, who would distribute the items. The circular made its way into the northeastern part of the state and where citizens pledged roughly \$40 to aid the troops. Subscribers pledged varying

⁷⁷ E.B. Dudley to William Miller, January 13, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁷⁸ Maurice Moore to William Miller, January 22, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA

amounts between 25 cents and 10 dollars.⁷⁹ The *Raleigh Register* circulated a similar plea for assistance. By November, the editors of the paper could report that the inhabitants of Raleigh had subscribed “handsomely” to the relief of the Norfolk detachment, which lacked winter clothing.⁸⁰

The supply problems that plagued the first Norfolk requisition continued into the winter and the regiment mobilized in November, discussed below, suffered the same lack of supplies as the earlier troops. News of the problems encountered by the Hillsborough requisition began as early as December, during the Fifth Regiment’s march to Norfolk. Major William McCauley, who had previously served during the Creek expedition, reported to his family that the regiment’s march from Hillsborough was in terrible weather and that measles struck the troops while encamped near Roanoke. As a consequence, many in the regiment were sick. In his January letter from Fort Barbour near Norfolk, McCauley mentioned that three men had died and another five were dangerously ill.⁸¹

McCauley also observed differences in how people along the march to Norfolk received the North Carolina troops. In North Carolina, inhabitants on and near the road watched them march and agreed they had “never seen a more respectable regiment” than the one McCauley marched with. The people were humane and obliging. His experience in Virginia contrasted starkly with that friendly assessment. During the march, McCauley found Virginians to be proud, contemptible, and haughty. Furthermore, McCauley had anticipated a

⁷⁹ Circular signed by the 14 officers of the regiment at Norfolk, October 20, 1814, Henry G. Williams Papers, Southern Historical Collection (SHC), University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC. H.G. Williams was a resident of the northeastern part of the state. H.G. Williams signed the circular and H.G. Williams also pledged money to the cause. It is unclear if this is a son or relative or the same man; it is probably a relative.

⁸⁰ *Raleigh Register*, November 11, 1814.

⁸¹ William McCauley to John McCauley December 20, 1814; William McCauley to Andrew McCauley, January 2, 1815 (mislabelled 1814), Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

warm welcome in Norfolk—they were coming to relieve Virginians and protect the area—but had experienced disappointment and mortification upon his arrival. Instead of gracious, the reception from what McCauley called the “Inhuman and Base Citizens of this Irreligious and Disaffected Place of thieves and Robbers” was cool. Even worse, the ill treatment by the Virginians caused changes in the behavior and attitude of the North Carolina troops. The North Carolinians had adopted the “same contempt and same manner” as they had experienced upon arrival.⁸²

McCauley’s letters from Norfolk also reported of poor conditions at the camp. In letters from the Creek War, soldiers asked letter recipients to share news with neighbors, so it is reasonable to assume they did so during this campaign as well. In February, McCauley reported the deaths of twenty-six men in his regiment as well as the conditions in the First Regiment where an upwards of one hundred had died in January and thirty-three had died in just four days.⁸³

The commander of the Fifth Regiment, Colonel Richard Atkinson, issued a long list of regimental orders on January 9, 1815, several of which dealt with camp conditions. In an effort to combat sickness that plagued the camp, Atkinson stated that cleanliness of the army quarters and clothing of the soldiers were “objects of the first importance.” He ordered that each hut have a designated non-commissioned officer (NCO) responsible for the cleanliness of the quarters and cloths. He expected company commanders to “properly instruct” the NCOs and ensure inspections took place. Atkinson designated Friday as wash day for NCOs and privates, who were expected to wash their clothes. Orders from the Army Adjutant

⁸² William McCauley to John McCauley, December 20, 1814; William McCauley to Andrew McCauley, January 2, 1815, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁸³ William McCauley to his mother, February 7, 1815, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

General quickly supplemented Atkinson's regimental orders. Adjutant General Bankhead ordered the "utmost exertion by every officer" to police the camps and remove filth. He ordered the streets lined with sand and proper sinks constructed. He ordered the huts inspected, cleaned, and aired, as well as windows installed, as previously ordered.⁸⁴ Although winter conditions seemed to be the major factor behind troop privation, Atkinson's orders indicate that commanders also had to contend with health issues.

Lieutenant Colonel Duncan McDonald, commander of the First Regiment of North Carolina Detached Militia, reported similar conditions from Camp Peach Orchard near Norfolk. He advised Miller that conditions were so deplorable that his captains had purchased items for the troops on their own credit. Anticipating the governor's orders, a \$10,000 allowance for militia relief that the General Assembly would later approve, the colonel had approved the purchase of items such as blankets, which he deemed most important for preserving health. Although the suffering was "incredible," over 160 men had been lost since their arrival, the men had displayed "unparalleled fortitude." McDonald hoped the troops' expected move to Portsmouth would alleviate the conditions.⁸⁵ Colonel Freeman, who had replaced Porter as the commander in Norfolk, confirmed the sickly status of McDonald's regiment and reiterated the plan to move the unit to Portsmouth. At the governor's request, he also provided Miller with a list of articles required by individual captains for their companies.⁸⁶ This list of needed supplies for the detached militia submitted to the state government to make up a shortfall in federal support demonstrates that even

⁸⁴ Fifth Regiment Order Book, Regimental Orders, January 9, 1815; Adjutant General's Office, January 15, 1815, North Carolina Militia, Fifth Regiment Records, 1810-1815, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

⁸⁵ Duncan McDonald to William Miller, January 16, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁸⁶ Colonel Freeman to William Miller, January 20, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

regular officers recognized the individual states as a repository of resources. In fact, the General Assembly passed a resolution on December 27, 1814, authorizing Miller to spend up to \$10,000 to purchase shoes, blankets, and winter clothing for detached militia lacking those items. The legislative body recognized poverty and “other causes” as contributing to the troops’ situation.⁸⁷ As an assembly sympathetic to the war and the Republican Party, it is not too difficult to believe that “unnamed causes” was a euphemistic phrase that alluded to the federal government’s inability to provide for the detached militia in its service.

Miller took steps to make money and supplies available to all of “his” commanders. Of the \$10,000 allocated, he made \$6,000 in funds available to Atkinson for the troops in Norfolk via checks from the state bank in Edenton. He also commissioned Willis Rogers an Assistant Deputy Quarter Master General in the detached militia. Rogers scoured towns on and near the coast to provide supplies quickly and cheaply for the troops. Rogers began in Newbern and made arrangements to secure \$2,000 worth of coats and pants for the men on Beacon Island. He expected to find the necessary cloth at Newbern, and if not there, at Tarborough. With nearly one half the 420 privates and non-commissioned officers sick, few doubted the necessity of his purchase. Rogers did not find the clothes he was looking for in Tarborough, and instead had to ask Governor Miller to secure items in Raleigh or Fayetteville. He planned to go to Norfolk in attempt to purchase items, albeit at a higher cost.⁸⁸

The state’s decision to assist its detached militia did not mean its leaders had abandoned efforts to compel the federal government to honor its obligations. Governor

⁸⁷ Resolutions of the General Assembly, December 1, 1814, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁸⁸ Robert Williams to Atkinson, January 24, 1815; Rogers Commission January 1815; Rogers to Miller, January 26, 1815; Rogers to Miller, January 30, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

Miller's reply to William Croom's concerns about the troops on Beacon Island demonstrated a mix of sympathy and a desire to adhere to federal-state distinctions in supplying troops, as he understood them. Governor Miller's tone was not particularly sympathetic, but he did take steps to assist the men. Miller was sorry to hear about the hardships, but asked, since the men were in federal service, what he was expected to do. He suggested that Croom provide some solution since he knew the officers involved and offered to cooperate if the solution could be enacted "consistent with the best interests" of the United States. Furthermore, he responded that everyone knew that wartime introduced "hardship and misery" and that every citizen, especially those in service, "must expect to endure some privations." More importantly, the Secretary of War deemed the fort on Beacon Island necessary and it was useful for the defense of North Carolina. Miller suggested that the soldiers needed to petition the regular army—Colonel Long—to address their concerns. Miller's actions softened the distinction he sought to assert in his letter. He distributed the \$10,000 authorized by the General Assembly to Colonel Tisdale in Newbern and other militia officers to secure blankets, clothes, and shoes for militia in federal service. Furthermore, he requested information about troop conditions.⁸⁹

Governor Miller also responded to Major Blount's detail-filled letter about Beacon Island. Miller authorized both Colonel Tisdale at Beacon Island and Colonel Moore at Wilmington to purchase clothing, blankets, and shoes from Mr. Willis Rogers. He did remind them that the \$10,000 allocated by the state had to cover the approximately 3,000 North Carolinians in service to the United States. In addition to the 500 men at Wilmington, and

⁸⁹ William Miller to William Croom, January 13, 1815; Miller to Nathan Tisdale, et al, January 10, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA. Miller's instructions went to Colonels Maurice Moore and Simon Bruton (Newbern), NC Brigade of Detached Militia and Colonel Freeman, Fifth Military District, U.S. Army.

600 at Beacon Island, there were nearly 2,000 at Norfolk, where conditions were just as bad.⁹⁰

The state's efforts to relieve the suffering of its detached militia were financially significant, but too little to help all the troops. Colonel Atkinson let Miller know he received the funds and the subsequent direction not to spend more. Additionally, Atkinson spent \$250 of his own money because he deemed conditions so poor to warrant the expenditure. He informed the governor that 20 men had died since their arrival at Norfolk and 282 were reported sick. At least 40 men were hospitalized or in the infirmary. Atkinson blamed measles for most of the deaths. Atkinson also reported that upwards of 200 men had died in the First Regiment, McDonald's regiment, and that they continued to be sickly as well.⁹¹ As late as January 16, 1815, McDonald's supply requests included 305 blankets, 252 pairs of shoes, 155 shirts and stockings, hats, short coats, vests, pants, and watch coats.⁹²

Only discharge relieved the First Regiment's suffering. By February they had been released from duty. One report from Norfolk claimed the people of the city refused to take action to help the sick regiment. The troops were denied hospital care for the sick and dying. Cruelly, Dr. Reid was thrown into the street and lay on the pavement for several hours. The former officer admonished any North Carolinians going to Norfolk to remember this ill treatment. The actions of the citizens of Norfolk contrasted with that of Plymouth, where the

⁹⁰ William Miller to Nathan Tisdale, January 20, 1815; Miller to Maurice Moore, January 20, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁹¹ Colonel Atkinson to William Miller, February 1, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

⁹² List of Articles Wanted in First Regiment of N.C. Detached Militia, January 16, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

citizens kindly received and tended to the soldiers.⁹³ The state had taken steps to augment shortfalls in supplies, but failed to completely remedy the situation.

Release from service did not alleviate all complaints. William McCauley's last letter home came at the end of February. His regiment had been discharged, but he did not expect to return home before the beginning of April. He had taken on the responsibility of getting payment for "the poor soldiers who have served their Tour of duty" and had to leave Norfolk "without a cent to carry them home." In spite of that disagreeable situation, McCauley was proud to note that all members of the regiment had been honorably discharged. All save the nearly eighty in the regiment who had died. McCauley also wrote he expected to make five or six hundred dollars from his service. He judged this to be a sum worth waiting for.⁹⁴

The Last Mobilization

Major General Thomas Pinckney of the Sixth Military District made one last requisition against North Carolina in January 1815. British activity in the Gulf Coast increased in a late 1814. The British had established a presence in Pensacola. An unsuccessful British assault on Mobile in September and the correct suspicion that the British were supplying Native Americans galvanized Major General Andrew Jackson into action. In November, he attacked Pensacola and forced a British to retreat Prospect Bluff, a town in East Florida.⁹⁵ Pinckney cited the increased presence of British ships along the gulf coast as evidence of impending British action, which necessitated the mobilization of the North Carolina militia.⁹⁶ Miller ordered the rendezvous at Wadesborough, Anson County, between

⁹³ *Raleigh Register*, March 17, 1815.

⁹⁴ William McCauley to John McCauley, February 25, 1815, Andrew McCauley Papers, SHC.

⁹⁵ David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *The War of 1812* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 117–118.

⁹⁶ January 29, 1815, A.G. #6, NCSA.

February 24 and March 1, and requested that Pinckney ensure the presence of an Army officer to inspect and muster the troops. This was his effort to mitigate problems with troops getting paid. Miller also requested Pinckney make arrangements to transport the troops, as he did not have sufficient funds at his disposal.⁹⁷ Unlike Hawkins' willingness to provide funds and seek reimbursement, Miller pressed for federal funds from the outset, indicating a lesson learned from earlier requisitions.

The arrangements made for this last rendezvous reflected in part the experiences of the state in the earlier requisitions for the detached militia. This was a planned mobilization, not a contingent event as was Ocracoke, but previous difficulties securing reimbursement for defense expenditures and fees associated with mobilization showed now, as the directions were explicit and political leaders emphasized process and paperwork. All of these efforts represented the culmination of two and a half years of war experiences. Adjutant General Williams coordinated with U.S. Army Contractors Jarvis and Brown to supply the regiment, which would rendezvous at Wadesborough in two separate stages. The detached militias of Anson, Moore, Richmond, and Cabarrus were scheduled to rendezvous on February 24. The following week, on March 1, the militias of Ashe, Wilkes, Buncombe, Haywood, and Rutherford would meet at the same location.

Williams also wrote to the Deputy Quarter Master General at Charleston, Samuel Champlain, the same officer with whom former governor Hawkins had expressed much displeasure during the requisition for the Creek War in January 1814. Williams requested

⁹⁷ William Miller to Pinckney, January 24, 1815; Miller to Pinckney, January 26, 1815, Miller Letter Book 21, NCSA.

Champlain organize transportation and camp equipage for the Wadesborough rendezvous.⁹⁸

The Adjutant General also gave Brigadier General Alexander Gray specific instructions as to where to remit the muster rolls; he was to provide two copies to the War Department and one to Junius Sneed, the paymaster of U.S. troops in the state of North Carolina.⁹⁹ The specificity of instructions related to the desire of the state to have its expenses attended to and its citizens compensated for their service. Williams especially recognized the discontent delayed payment generated; he spoke in terms of lack of support for military service, but that translated into a lack of resources with which to fight the war—de facto lack of support for the war itself.

Ultimately, the detailed instructions for this regiment mattered less than it had for earlier efforts. The state discharged its detached militia forces before the regiment was fully formed. In light of rumors of a peace agreement, Williams ordered Gray to send home the troops already stationed at Wadesborough and to provide the Adjutant General's office receipts for supplies as previously instructed. Williams also sent a special order to commanders whose troops were en route to Wadesborough discharging them as well. Similarly, he expected receipts for supplies and services to be reemitted to the adjutant general's office.¹⁰⁰ Williams anticipated that the discharge of troops would be as orderly as their assembly. His expectation was not entirely unreasonable as an extract of orders issued by the Secretary of War published in the *Raleigh Register* indicated that all militia troops

⁹⁸ Robert Williams to Jarvis and Brown, January 25, 1815; Williams to Champlain, January 25, 1815, A.G. #6, NCSA.

⁹⁹ Williams to Gray, February 1, 1815, A.G. #6, NCSA.

¹⁰⁰ Williams to Gray, February 22, 1815; Williams to the Commanding Officer of the Detached Militia from the County of Ashe, et al, February 22, 1815, A.G. #6, NCSA.

discharged because of the end of the war should be mustered and inspected and could expect payment through the paymasters.¹⁰¹

Shaping State-Federal Relations

Improvements to North Carolina's mobilization process demonstrated the state's willingness to participate in the national war effort. Although attempts to conform to U.S. Army organizational standards were driven in part by a desire to make reimbursement for services easier, it also made the transition from state to federal service easier. State demands for arms and supplies were in part driven by the state's own fiscal constraints, but also forced the federal government to honor obligations, such as the Act of 1808, codified by law. North Carolina's attempts to have its militia federalized for defense of its own coast was more than a financial gambit—it showed the state viewed security of its vital resources as concomitant with the greater war effort. The state's willingness to share the financial and manpower burden of its defenses shows as much. North Carolina's attempts to normalize its interaction with the federal government and the U.S. Army also helped define the proper relationships between state and federal authority over the militia during wartime missing before the War of 1812.¹⁰²

The state's detached militia regiments were not the only militia forces to suffer in federal service. In 1812, New York militia at Buffalo suffered camp deaths due to disease and lack of proper medical care. That same year, over 300 militiamen in the Northwest army suffered from frostbite. Kentucky volunteers suffered from endemic illness in the summer of

¹⁰¹ *Raleigh Register*, March 3, 1815.

¹⁰² Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812*, 1; Lawrence Delbert Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and the Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 113; John Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1983), 50, 60–61.

1813. One unit of Ohio militiamen was discharged in 1813 for consuming too much of the food being collected for the invasion of Canada.¹⁰³ North Carolina was not unique in its attempts to alleviate its militia's suffering or better supply its troops. For example, the governor of Georgia contracted a private gunsmith to supply rifles for his militia in the fall of 1814. The efforts of North Carolina Governors William Hawkins and William Miller to make up federal shortfalls through state and private means demonstrates a commitment not only to the war effort itself, but also to the preservation of the state-federal military arrangement and the nascent national government. The state would, however, press the federal government honor its financial commitments to the state. That effort continued long after the war.

¹⁰³ Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812*, 51–56.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Delegates from the United States and Great Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814. The war officially ended on February 17, 1815 when the two countries exchanged ratifications. In the interim, American ground and naval forces defeated a British invasion attempt in Louisiana at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8. This last victory captured the American imagination and elevated its commander, General Andrew Jackson, to hero status. Although the Treaty of Ghent secured none of the pre-war objectives and was little more than an agreement to return to the *status quo antebellum*, it became popular for the war's supporters to cast it as a second war for independence.¹

North Carolina's involvement in the war ended before the Battle of New Orleans. Governor Miller received word from General Pinckney in a letter dated February 21, 1815 that unofficial news of peace had been received, and the news motivated Pinckney to direct Miller to discharge the troops recently requisitioned for campaigns in the south.² Although Raleigh newspapers carried news of the treaty and its ratification as early as February 24, 1815, they indicated that the news of the peace had reached Raleigh by the previous Saturday, February 18, just one day after the treaty's ratification. The *Register* reported cannons firing, "heart-cheering huzzas," bonfires, and processions. Testimonials praised a great blessing that would benefit "millions yet unborn." News of the peace also enhanced the

¹ J.C.A. Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 301-317.

² Thomas Pinckney to William Miller, February 21, 1815 and Pinckney to Miller, February 22, 1815. Miscellaneous Collections; Miscellaneous Typescripts, Governor's Letter Books and Papers, Box 27 (Corresponds to Governor's Letter Book #21), NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited Miller Letter Book 21].

annual celebrations of George Washington's Birthday, which took place the following Wednesday.³

Various festivities marked the end of the war. The official celebration of peace was held on February 25 at a Raleigh Tavern where a "large and respectable number of citizens" offered toasts to the "return of Peace." In addition to toasting President Madison, the Army and the Militia, and the late George Washington, celebrants made a point to cheer the "Common Interest." The toast invoked themes of unanimity stressed during the war and enjoined citizens to "[lay] aside party spirit and party-prejudices [to] unite in promoting the happiness and prosperity of America." That Colonel William Polk, the Federalist who had turned down a commission at the beginning of the war only to volunteer his services after the burning of Washington, D.C., co-hosted the event with Governor Miller, speaks to the idea that the state factions had come together to support the war and the national agenda in the closing months of war.⁴

North Carolina Presses its Monetary Claims

However well the end of the war was received in the state, its end did not immediately settle claims made by private individuals against the state or claims made by the state against the federal government. Both private individuals and the state had sought financial assistance for their efforts as early as 1813. Additionally, the state began lobbying the federal government for reimbursement of wartime expenses in 1813 as well. Those efforts continued through the 1815 General Assembly session and beyond. The pattern for financial remuneration was consistent throughout the war. Individuals lobbied the state for assistance rendered. The state assessed the claims and honored them as a legitimate expense

³ *Raleigh Register*, February 24, 1815.

⁴ *Raleigh Register*, March 3, 1815.

against the state or consolidated the claim and included it as part of the state's claim against the federal government. State claims on the federal government almost solely involved expenses incurred when activating the militia for national use. During the war the federal government was slow to react to North Carolina's appeals. However, it is notable that the state continued to allocate money and manpower in the belief that the federal government would eventually come through. North Carolina's confidence in the federal government, despite repeated disappointment, shows that the federal government had established some credibility with the states and that state leaders maintained their commitment to the war effort even when financial issues remained uncertain.

That faith was reflected from the earliest stages of the war, even when state leaders had to acknowledge that they might not have handled the legal requirements properly. In his 1813 address to the General Assembly, Governor William Hawkins first recapitulated the efforts by the state militia to defend the coastline during the Ocracoke invasion and then directly acknowledged the state's failure to comply with federal requirements for a regular army officer's inspection of militia forces. Hawkins nevertheless believed that the state was owed money because when militia had been called out to defend the coast in July 1813, the U.S. Army had stationed too few officers along the coast able to inspect the forces. He further believed that the federal government would come through—he told the General Assembly: “[t]he General Government doubtless will pay the militia drafts.” That belief underpinned every subsequent effort by the state to claim reimbursement.⁵

The 1813 General Assembly took steps to advance funds to cover what they deemed federal obligations, pressed for reimbursement from the federal government, and allocated

⁵ *Journal of the House of Commons of the State of North Carolina*, 1813, 6-7.

state funds for the war. Also in 1813, the House received petitions for funds from individual citizens and committees of safety from at least two towns. In response, the General Assembly passed a resolution urging Senators Turner and Stone to pressure the federal government for reimbursement for the militia called out in July 1813.⁶

At the same time North Carolina sought reimbursement from the federal government, its legislature passed measures to provide financial support for the war. As previously described, during the November-December 1813 session, the General Assembly authorized separate funding for public defense and for future militia mobilizations.⁷ Additionally, the legislature allocated funds to reimburse its citizens waiting for claims against the federal government. This three-pronged plan set the template for North Carolina's financial dealings during the course of the war.

The pressure to finance the war continued in the 1814 General Assembly Session. During the 1814 session, the legislature determined how much of the funds authorized in the previous session had been distributed. The auditors appointed to assess state claims presented their findings to the General Assembly. Following legislative guidance, the auditors approved claims in two categories. The first was people who had provided money, ammunition, or other articles including materials and labor used to erect fortifications and who could demonstrate they had furnished those supplies in compliance with official orders. The second category of successful claimants was soldiers who had served during the invasion and immediate aftermath. The auditors' \$20,175.21 total exceeded the allotment made by the General Assembly in the 1813 session, but in reality, the total expended by private citizens on coastal defense was a good deal higher. The three-man team deferred additional claims

⁶ *Journal of the House*, 1813, 26, 21, 48.

⁷ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1813, 5.

that did not meet the parameters set out by the General Assembly; no estimate is given on the amount of claims denied or deferred by the auditors.⁸

Throughout 1814, the governor and his adjutant general also continued to press the federal government to reimburse expenses incurred during federal service. In his 1814 annual address to the General Assembly, Governor Hawkins again expressed optimism that the federal government would pay for expenses incurred in July and August 1813. He presented correspondence between the state Adjutant General Robert Williams and Colonel Tobias Lear, U.S. Army, to demonstrate not only the efforts that the state's leadership had made to recover funds but also to demonstrate that the federal government was still processing state claims. A more skeptical reading of the exchange, however, indicates that the federal government attempted to use regulations and requirements as a barrier to states' recovering funds.⁹

Robert Williams, North Carolina's Adjutant General, wrote to the Adjutant and Inspector General of the United States on August 19, 1814. He forwarded returns of the militia drafts for those men who had served during the British invasion of Ocracoke in July 1813 that had yet to be paid by the United States. To the best of his knowledge, the returns he forwarded had been previously submitted, although according to the Secretary of War, the returns had not been received. Furthermore, Williams informed Colonel Tobias Lear that the state deserved reimbursement because the men had served per arrangements made by the

⁸ *General Assembly Session Records, November-December 1814*, Box 2, Misc Reports Folder, NCSA.

⁹ *Journal of the House*, 1814 5-6; Miller; Miller to the General Assembly, December 20, 1814, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

Secretary of War and General Pinckney prior to the invasion. The men were therefore entitled to payment by the federal government.¹⁰

Although Hawkins presented evidence of a pending reimbursement, his successor, William Miller, confronted bureaucratic stalling. Under Miller's direction, Williams continued to press North Carolina's claim. The back-and-forth between Williams and Lear continued. Colonel Lear had admonished Williams that the vouchers submitted by North Carolina did "not conform in all respects to the rules of the office," but that the Secretary of War had directed the claims be paid. Lear expected to provide payment to those claims that he could.¹¹ Responding, Williams indicated that the arrangement only partially satisfied the state's interest. If the claims submitted by one person, specifically one made by Colonel David Ward, who claimed to have provided supplies to the troops, were deemed valid, he expected that the federal government would honor all the claims. While he, as the state's Adjutant General, was too busy to deal with the disposition of funds, he requested that the War Department direct all funds to the regional U.S. Army paymaster for disbursement. Although his claim to be too busy would generate an opening for the War Department to delay sending funds, his response indicated that he did expect funds to be made available to the state.¹² Williams's efforts to gain federal funding were important because the state had committed its own funds to reimburse expenses, as described above, but did not have unlimited resources for defense. Furthermore, the long term legitimacy of the federal government rested, in part, on its ability to meet its obligations to individual states.

¹⁰ Robert Williams to the Adjutant and Inspector General of the U.S. Army, August 19, 1814, Adjutant General's Department, General Records 1807-1950, A.G. #6, Militia Returns, Orders to Officers, 1813-1817, NCSA, Raleigh, NC. [hereafter cited as A.G. #6].

¹¹ Tobias Lear to Robert Williams, December 12, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA.

¹² Robert Williams to Tobias Lear, December 22, 1814, A.G. #6, NCSA.

By the end of the 1814 session, William Miller fully assumed the mantle of leadership in the state. As it was for his predecessor, military expenditures occupied a place of importance for Governor Miller. He addressed the General Assembly on December 20, 1814 to present outstanding claims from the detached militia ordered out in July and August 1813. It was still unclear whether the federal government would pay the expense, but the War Department did have a copy of the claims—the result of Williams’s correspondence with Lear. Since the War Department had yet to respond, Miller suggested that the state make an interim payment to those who had served. He cited a report of the state adjutant general that indicated growing impatience on the part of the militia to receive pay and argued “The necessity of rendering the service popular must be apparent to everyone. Patriotism alone cannot be relied upon as sufficient incentive to endure the hardships and privations of war—men must be paid or they cannot be expected to fight.” Although he agreed that ultimately it was the responsibility of the federal government to pay the detached militia, he insisted it was the state’s responsibility to pay the claims so men did not “part with them to speculators.”¹³

The federal government’s failure to reimburse North Carolina did not prevent the General Assembly from passing measures during the 1814 session to finance the state’s military apparatus. As in 1813, the legislature again allocated money for military action, authorizing the governor to borrow up to \$50,000 to fund any action that required the militia to be called into service of the state.¹⁴ The General Assembly passed a separate act authorizing the purchase of two thousand stands of arms, twelve artillery pieces, and tents

¹³ William Miller to the General Assembly, December 20, 1814, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

¹⁴ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1814, 4.

and camp equipment for two thousand men. The act clearly specified that the provisions were to be used in defense of the state, and in no case “be taken out of the State.”¹⁵ The state’s commitment to self support was matched by the promise of payment from the federal government. In February 1815, Colonel Lear replied directly to Governor Miller assuring him he would notify the governor directly once the money was ready to be sent, indicating the federal government planned to honor the state’s claim.¹⁶

State allocations and the expectation of federal funding did little to stem the tide of claims. In fact, correspondence between several individuals and Governor Miller indicate the scope of the claims expanded. James Graham of Orange County requested reimbursement for expenses related to the mobilization of the regiment under his command called to rendezvous at Gates Court House in October 1814 for service in Norfolk. The orders had ultimately been countermanded, but he had incurred expenses for supplies and appealed to the governor for help in getting the correct information in front of the board of auditors, convened for reviewing requests.¹⁷ Miller’s response indicated the narrow scope of the money set aside by the state. He informed Graham that the auditors were only authorized to investigate claims relating to the invasion of Ocracoke, and that the state had yet to set aside money for other events.¹⁸

Coastal towns also appealed their cases to the governor. In July 1815, the Town of Newbern’s Committee of Public Safety submitted a receipt for their expenditures. On behalf of the committee, John Guion outlined the purchase of two pieces of mounted artillery as

¹⁵ *Laws of North Carolina*, 1814, 4.

¹⁶ Tobias Lear to William Miller, February 21, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

¹⁷ James Graham to William Miller, August 17, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

¹⁸ William Miller to James Graham, September 6, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

well as flying artillery. Referring to earlier correspondence with the governor, Guion acknowledged the caveats of the General Assembly act that prohibited reimbursement for fortifications, but insisted that the expenses listed by the town qualified for reimbursement. The town's committee had been working to fund their defenses for nearly two years.¹⁹ Miller agreed to present the claims to the board of auditors, but required more action on part of the committee. Adopting a method eerily similar to the federal government's particular nature, he returned the claim for items, minus the flying artillery, for signature by some member of the committee. Miller also cautioned the committee members that the town's claims did not fall in the category "munitions of war," which was what funds had been allocated for. He believed Newbern's claims fell outside the scope of state funding.²⁰ The back-and-forth the state experienced with the federal government thus reverberated to lower levels. The state's behavior mirrored the federal government, perhaps because it did not have the extra reserve from which to pull funding.

Governor Miller pressed the state's claims to the highest level of the federal government. In November 1815 he wrote to President Madison and forwarded him the amount owed to North Carolina, as determined by the auditors who investigated expenses related to the summer 1813 invasion and subsequent defensive measures. Miller expressed the same justification used by the adjutant general to lobby for reimbursement. He stated that the call up of troops in defense of the coast, although not strictly in compliance with federal regulations for inspections, was authorized by arrangements between the state and General

¹⁹ John Guion to William Miller, July 2, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

²⁰ William Miller to John Guion, July 11, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

Pinckney. Prompt action by the federal government was important because the state had taken loans in order to repay the claims, which amounted to \$38,906.50.²¹

Not content to correspond only with President Madison, Miller sent a list of claims to the War Department. On November 10, Miller sent the Secretary of War, now William Crawford, a more detailed letter than the one sent to Madison, itemizing the expenses incurred by the state and again explaining the justification for making claims against the federal government. The total expense incurred by the state, including claims previously made by Governor Hawkins, totaled \$56,513.29. Miller requested a timely response so he could present the disposition of the claims to the General Assembly, scheduled to convene on November 20.²² As in the past, Colonel Tobias Lear provided the federal government's response; Miller's letters to both the President and Secretary Crawford had been forwarded to him. His response was not encouraging—he again requested additional paperwork from the state to justify the claims.²³

North Carolina's insistence that the federal government pay for the war and that the states only bear a fair portion of the expenses matched the efforts of other states to secure federal funding. Georgia took a \$20,000 loan to finance the defense of Georgia. It was 1816 before the U.S. Congress recommended paying the expenses for members of the Mississippi territory. The state governments of Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts all expected reimbursement for expenses related to coastal defense in the fall of 1814, even though the three states had initially denied the federal government access to their militia

²¹ William Miller to James Madison, November 2, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

²² William Miller to William Crawford, November 10, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

²³ Tobias Lear to William Miller, November 20, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

forces. Compared to the northern states, North Carolina's claims were fairly modest. Rhode Island's claim was \$50,000, a similar amount to North Carolina; however Connecticut claimed \$150,000 and Massachusetts \$850,000.²⁴ For North Carolina, the federal reimbursement was important to relieve its financial burden. Moreover, Americans saw the federal government's ability to finance the war as an assertion of sovereignty and legitimacy; that the nation's republican federal government could finance and direct a war to a successful outcome.

Lack of news about the state's financial claims did not discourage the Republican Party. The state continued to cover federal expenses. The legislature authorized the state to pay the officers ordered to convene at Salisbury and who had then been discharged before entering federal service. The General Assembly directed the governor to forward a duplicate of the payroll to the "proper department" of the federal government so that the state might be reimbursed.²⁵ The state remained undeterred by the virtual unresponsiveness of the federal government to that point. The state's faith in the federal-state arrangement and praise for Madison's leadership did little to return money to its coffers. According to historian Edward Skeen, it was 1916 before the federal government finally reimbursed North Carolina for all of its expenditures from the War of 1812.²⁶

North Carolina and the American Way of Mobilization

The American government's federal-state structure and the importance of public opinion in a republic shaped the American government's ability to mobilize—to access its

²⁴ Carl Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 146–146.

²⁵ Resolution of General Assembly Concerning Militia Claims, December 20, 1815, Miller Letter Book, NCSA.

²⁶ Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers*, 145–146.

manpower, money, and public will—for war. Examining North Carolina’s participation in the war illuminates the mechanisms that made mobilization possible. The description of North Carolina’s mobilization process and the logistics involved in mustering men into service help explain the obstacles of the federal-state system and how both the federal government and the state worked to clearly define roles and responsibilities associated with federalizing militia and volunteer troops. The importance of public opinion and its influence on mobilization also became apparent as the nation and state worked toward defining their relationship with regards to making war. North Carolina’s support for the war as evidenced through its support of wartime mobilization suggests that several cultural and social factors shaped public will and in turn, participation. Despite the lack of federal coercive power, an emergent national identity and widespread, bipartisan commitment to national honor strongly encouraged participation in, or at least acquiescence to, the war effort.

As a study of federal-state relations, North Carolina during the War of 1812 reveals a state as an active partner, a partner not ambivalent to the outcome of the war or the way in which it was waged. The common scholarly criticism of the militia as toothless accurately reflects how the states allowed the institution to languish during peacetime. In North Carolina, however, especially once the war started, state leaders made a concerted effort to participate in the national war effort. The state's assorted attempts to improve militia mobilization stemmed from a desire to improve the process. Those improvements, in turn, allowed the federal government to use state forces more effectively. For its part, the state government also pushed the federal government to act more efficiently and consider its responsibilities under the Constitution. In doing so, North Carolina and other similarly situated states—hinterland states committed to republicanism with a sense of national

identity—contributed to the federal government’s increased centralization of power. The evolving relationship between the states and the federal government also helped the federal government establish its legitimacy—to the states, to itself, and to foreign powers. North Carolina's proactive responses to mobilization contributed to clarifying lines of responsibility. The evolving roles and responsibilities also helped set the state for post-war reforms. The reforms were not solely a result of top-down actions. North Carolina’s insistence that the federal government indeed had responsibilities to state militias shaped the context for post-war reform.

Focusing on the mobilization process in North Carolina provides one lens to examine an emerging national identity and provides context for the eventual shift to a more federally controlled military apparatus. In justifying their claims on the federal government, North Carolina leaders consistently used the language of obligation and nationalism, suggesting that that they were looking for more than just financial compensation for the state's participation. The relationship between the states and the federal government was still evolving, and honoring the parameters as understood set precedents for future interaction. The state-federal communication also highlights the issues that concerned the state’s citizens. Local security concerns and localism more generally were powerful, but the nationalism that peppered political rhetoric leading into the war also indicated a parallel sense of national identity. North Carolina militia troops willingly served in places like Norfolk, while other states' militias often resisted or refused to cross state and national boundaries. But, the interests and demands of the state’s citizens remained a central concern for state government, even as it produced troops for service out of the state.

By the end of the war, little question remained about North Carolina's support for the war. Events such as the General Assembly's censure of Senator Stone, discussed in Chapter Three, and the burning of Washington, D.C., as well as the staying power of North Carolina's Republican politicians at the state and national level, overwhelmed Federalists' initial opposition to the war. Although some counties resorted to drafts during militia mobilizations, North Carolina consistently met its manpower obligations, i.e. the detached militia, to the federal government. The General Assembly's willingness to pass resolutions to supplement financial obligations that in truth belonged to the federal government, as well as to pass separate resolutions in 1813 and 1814 obligating the state to bear the expenses of war also indicate a commitment to state and national war aims. The public sentiment of the state, evidenced in its most influential newspapers, political correspondence, and political action all indicate the solidification of a pro-war, pro-Republican rhetoric in the state. Even in situations where the federal government failed to meet the state's expectations, the state couched its disappointment with federal decisions in language that supported national aims and North Carolina's role in helping achieve them.

North Carolina's willingness to be a partner in war did not necessarily mean that its military apparatus was always efficient. Over the course of the war, however, the state made changes to improve its mobilization process and adopted force structure changes to ensure its militia units more closely mirrored the composition of federal troops. Although North Carolina's detached militia commanders had to make some adjustments—dismissing extra officers or combining companies—to its militia when called into service, the efforts to comply with federal regulations demonstrated the state's willingness to submit to federal authority in some aspects of military affairs. The direct communication between the governor

and the state adjutant general with the War Department and Army provide evidence that the state felt empowered to comment on military decisions, particularly when it came to issues of pay, supplies, and defensive preparation; however, the state's participation was clearly secondary to federal direction in the war making effort. That North Carolina insisted the federal government meet its obligations to the detached militia even as it made adjustments to better comply with federal guidance provides evidence of a willing participant—ready to answer the call on the terms set forth by and accepting of the nascent federal-state military relationship.

Although national war aims diverged from North Carolina's more local concerns, the state nevertheless continued to subsidize the federal war effort. The General Assembly provided funds to both Governor Hawkins and Miller to reimburse expenses they believed the obligation of the federal government. In instances like providing supplies and clothing for detached militia in Norfolk and along the coast, it might be difficult to separate support for North Carolina's troops from general support for the war. However, the recognition that the state's willingness to augment the federal government stemmed from a desire to ensure support for future calls on state manpower suggests support for the war indeed existed among state leaders.

Improvements to the process of mobilization and state funding of the militia also allowed the state to balance its own concerns with national war aims. After the invasion of Ocracoke, when it became apparent that there was no federal support for securing North Carolina's coast, residents continued to expect, or even demand, better defenses. The General Assembly and the Governor continued to make provisions for those improvements and when possible, make claims against the federal government to support those efforts financially. The

manpower demand on the state was significant, as demonstrated by a mobilization rate greater than one percent of the population, but state leaders' consistent efforts to meet the security concerns and financial concerns of its citizens, as well as the political leanings of the state, made the manpower requirements bearable.

Bearability and willingness were one thing, speed and efficiency were something else. Slow communication, a lack of equipment, and a lack of funds for transportation impeded the state's efforts to support the war effort. During mobilizations such as the two for Norfolk and the deployment to Georgia to support the Creek War, the commanders of the detached militia delayed movement until the state and the federal government, usually represented by the U.S. Army, resolved issues of supplies, munitions, and pay. In no case did the delayed movement affect the outcome of an important battle; the delays illustrate, however, the limited control the U.S. Army had over federalized militia. Times when the state had to provide equipment and supplies to its federalized militia because the U.S. Army was unable to provide the necessary items reinforced the limits of federal power. North Carolina's insistence that the federal government reimburse the state for expenses that should have belonged to the U.S. Army provided an avenue for the federal government to redeem itself and assert its legitimacy. The militia delays also contributed to the generally accurate belief that a militia was an ineffective organization for national defense. Supply and mobilization issues contributed to the push for reform efforts following the conclusion of the war. These events demonstrate that during the War of 1812, the state remained central to mobilizing American military power. Militia organization and local affiliation provided the manpower backbone; however, North Carolina's efforts to increase efficiency and adhere to

federal standards demonstrates the emerging trends of centralization and increased federal power over military assets that continued in the decades following the war.

The examination of North Carolina's mobilization process and the partnership between the state and federal governments reveals that personal willingness to fight was a key component to American mobilization. North Carolina played an important role in organizing its manpower, but an individual's willingness to participate underscored American military mobilization. During the War of 1812, three pressures encouraged participation: ideological ties to the new political system, the pressure and influence of local elites, and public support for the war as an issue of national honor. Active participation in the war by state leaders and by North Carolina's bureaucratic apparatus shows that the federal government asserted its legitimacy through increased cooperation with the states, which facilitated the mobilization of sufficient manpower to conclude the war. This is not to say that there was a mass public enthusiasm for enlisting to serve under arms; however, sufficient will centered on societal factors, rather than government coercion, underpinned a successful wartime effort.

That public opinion matters to a republican government, especially a republican government at war, is regarded as a truism, but the study of North Carolina during the War of 1812 actually helps explain why. The public's opinion of the war directly affected the public's willingness to support mobilization. The successful mobilization of money and manpower determines the nation's capacity to fight. The United States' young republican government lacked a mechanism to compel its people to serve. Unlike feudal arrangements, there were no traditional arrangements for military service. The United States lacked any other coercive arrangements that could force its citizens into military service. North

Carolina's mobilization rates show that Americans, at least in North Carolina, served and served at rates that exceeded earlier wartime efforts. The examination of public opinion illuminates the reasons the American public supported the war and thus felt compelled to serve.

In the case of the War of 1812 evidence from the state's leading newspapers, personal correspondence, and the ceremonial observations of the Fourth of July and George Washington's birthday revealed that national identity and the closely linked concern over national honor were sufficient to motivate people to support the war effort. Americans were firming up an identity of themselves as unique, rooted in their republican government, their recent separation from Great Britain, and in the need to uphold the accomplishments of the Revolutionary generation. Additionally, preserving the nation's honor, demanded defending the nation against Great Britain's perceived transgressions on American sovereignty. Preserving the republican experiment, which had been trampled in Europe, and demonstrating the viability—even superiority—of the upstart form of government validated the republican experiment and demonstrated to European nations that the United States was not a de facto colony of Great Britain. Defeating Great Britain a second time also fulfilled the national desire to live up to the promise of the founding generation. Supporters of the war viewed the conflict as an opportunity to preserve the liberties won during the Revolutionary War and to demonstrate the same civic virtue through military service as those who had fought a generation earlier.

The influence of national identity and national honor is also apparent when examining the role of political parties in generating support or opposition to the War of 1812. In North Carolina, the Republicans and Federalists had distinct identities and differing positions on the

war; however, neither party was able to extract complete loyalty from its members. The two parties were effective in shaping their particular agendas, but had to communicate a compelling message to its members. Local power was important in cultivating party support and to ensure members acted in accordance with larger, national party goals. In North Carolina, the Federalists retained a sufficient following to critique the war the war in party-sponsored papers, but lacked the influence to prevent the state from allocating funds to the war or to stymie enlistments. The influence of local elites who served in the militia regardless of party affiliation coupled with the legacy of militia service, which included the expectation of serving with friends and neighbors, pre-empted party-based loyalties. That the local elite had the means and opportunity to raise volunteer companies provides one example of how powerful locals excited men to serve.

The state justified the expense of war using the same rhetoric of national identity and honor. North Carolina's successful mobilization justified the nation's lack of a standing army and nation's reliance on militia forces—a factor that set the United States apart from European nations. Furthermore, couching the war in terms of defense and the preservation of rights also set the United States' behavior apart from the naked aggression linked to standing armies. The American identity coexisted with regional and local identities, which generated loyalties that justified the allocation of manpower and money to support both state-level and national wartime goals.

As much as the federal-state relationship and national identity shaped the American way of mobilization, the characteristics of adaptability and pragmatism also played a role. The Constitution codified certain military arrangements, but habits of autonomy and the state's control over the militia guided the nation's access to its wartime resources. The efforts

between North Carolina and the federal government to improve mobilization and deployment suggest that the state accepted the growing power of the federal government, at least in the realm of military activity. Post-war reforms suggest the same—a desire to centralize federal control over military power. Future conflicts, particularly the Mexican War, however, demonstrate that despite all the clear efforts to reform the military, public will remained an enormously important component of mobilization. Because the American way of mobilization remained indelibly tied to public opinion, it retained the qualities of an ad-hoc process driven by volunteers and localism, even as the military tried to institute more formal mechanisms for the logistical aspects of mobilization. The “why” of tapping manpower, money, and will exerted far greater influence over the process of mobilization than the “how” until the twentieth century.

For example, the army raised in 1846 to fight the Mexican War resembled the army in 1812. As the nation approached war, it did so with a still tiny standing army. Congress authorized increasing the number of privates in each regiment only after the declaration of war. In addition to increasing the size of the regular army, Congress also relied on volunteers. The use of volunteers in the War of 1812 and against the Seminoles in 1836 reinforced the belief that unlike militia, volunteers could serve for extended enlistments and serve outside their state boundaries. Once Congress authorized the volunteers, the War Department informed the governors of each state that Congress had levied a quota of volunteers. As they had during the War of 1812, most governors worked within the states’ existing militia framework to raise volunteers. After organizing the volunteer units, a U.S. Army officer

mustered the troops into federal service.²⁷ The localism of mobilization remained into the 1840s despite earlier attempts at army reform.

The importance of public opinion and will did not diminish during the Mexican War, but in North Carolina at least, the demands on the state were significantly smaller. The 1840 Census recorded the national population at 17,069,453 persons and North Carolina's population had grown to 753,419 individuals. The federal government tasked North Carolina to provide one regiment of volunteers commanded by Colonel Robert T. Paine, mustered into service in January and February of 1847 and disbanded in August 1848.²⁸ In addition to Paine's First Regiment of Foot Volunteers, North Carolinians composed companies G and I of the Twelfth U.S. Infantry, commanded by Captains Walter P. Richards and William J. Clarke, respectively.²⁹

According to rolls compiled as the Army mustered the men out of service, more than 1,200 North Carolinians served in the Mexican War, either as volunteers or in the regular army. Approximately 880 served in the First Regiment and another 39 entered into service at Smithville as a detachment of recruits. The remaining men, just over 300, served in the regular army. Captains Richards and Clarke commanded a combined 225 men in two infantry companies of the Twelfth U.S. Infantry. Another 78 served under Captain Green Caldwell in the Third U.S. Dragoons. Nearly 72% of the men from North Carolina served as volunteers

²⁷ Richard B. Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army: The American Military Experience in the Mexican War* (College Station, TX: Texans A&M University Press, 1997), 52, 68-69, 72.

²⁸ William Hugh Robarts, *Mexican War Veterans. A Complete Roster of the Regular and Volunteer Troops in the War between the United States and Mexico, from 1846 to 1848, compiled from official sources* (Washington, D.C.: Brentano's, 1887).

²⁹ North Carolina. Adjutant General's Department, *Roster of North Carolina Troops, in the War with Mexico: Being the Muster-Out Rolls of the First Regiment of North Carolina Foot Volunteers: and Companies "G" and "I" of the Twelfth United States Infantry, prepared by authority of the Legislature of 1887* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1887).

not part of the regular army; however, when compared against the population of the state, the total number of men who served amounted to only 0.16% of the state's population.³⁰

The post-war suggestions for army reform shaped American ideals for the regular army until the reforms were actually realized in the early twentieth century. Mobilization, the successful tapping of money, men, and will, remained ad-hoc in spite of lessons learned during the War of 1812. The American way of mobilization process remained rooted in the militia system and in local influence and allegiances—even recruiting for the regular army depended on officers commissioned to recruit in their home states. Mobilization and military service was linked to habits of compulsory militia service and contractualism. Friends, neighbors and the local elite who occupied positions of military leaders influenced military service. More importantly, a sense of personal investment and public opinion mattered to energize wartime support. So, even as the state and federal government attempted to improve the logistics of mobilization, the impetus to serve remained personal and local. During the War of 1812 national identity, national honor, and a commitment to republicanism and the achievements of the founding generation—all components of a burgeoning nationalism--served as the ideological cement that substituted for coercive government power in the American way of mobilization.

³⁰ North Carolina, *Muster-Out Rolls, 1887*; Census of 1840. Considering men present for duty, discharged, deserted, dead, and refused, but not transfers (in an attempt to not double count names) the rolls show 1,219 men in service. The 1840 Census number enumerates a state population of 753, 419 persons.

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