

PRIVATEERS OF CHARLESTON
IN THE WAR OF 1812

By

HAROLD A. MOUZON



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I. THE FIRST LITTLE SCHOONERS

The United States declared war on England on June 18, 1812, but the news did not reach Charleston until June 24.¹ An act authorizing the commissioning of privateers was passed by Congress on June 26. On July 8 a correspondent who signed himself "I. S." was writing in Charleston's evening newspaper, *The Times*:

"Whether it be from want of capital, or suitable vessels, I know not, but certain it is, that Charleston is the least prominent of any of the Cities on the Continent, in equipping Privateers, or small private Vessels of War, calculated at all times to annoy the commerce of the enemy."

I. S. was perhaps a little too impatient. The day before his letter appeared the *Times* had announced that two pilot-boat schooners were fitting out in Charleston as privateers, *Mary Ann* and *Nonpareil*; and on the very day of his complaint Jeremiah Murden applied to Simeon Theus, Collector of the Port, for a commission for *Nonpareil* "as a cruiser—she measures nineteen 47/95 Tons, calculated to carry one Six pounder & Thirty men with muskets & side arms, to be commanded by Henry B. Martin."²

Nonpareil was the first privateer out of Charleston, sailing on July 10,³ and on July 14 she sent in the first prize taken by a Charleston privateer, the schooner *Lelia Ann*.⁴ Apparently she was found not to be subject to condemnation as a prize; for, though she was soon afterward sold, it was not by the marshal under a decree of court, but by King and Jones, auctioneers, at Blake's Wharf. The advertisement of sale described her as of sixty-six tons burthen⁵; but presumably it was the same vessel for which her owner John Pratt applied for a license on September 9, describing her as "the Pilot Boat Schooner

Lelie Ann, John Smith commander burthen sixty Tons, mounting one long six pounder, and manned with Thirty five men officers included, she is loaded with ordnance & arms for the U. States, & bound to New Orleans."⁶ A little later on *Lelia Ann* was bought for the United States Navy, renamed *Ferret*, and subsequently lost on the North Breakers of Stono Inlet.⁷

Nonpareil seems not to have taken another prize. She sailed to the Bahamas and on July 29 was taken by the British brig of war *Decouverte*, which Captain Martin unfortunately mistook for a merchantman and attempted to board from his tiny cruiser. News of the outbreak of war had not yet reached Nassau and Lieutenant Williams, commanding *Decouverte*, first heard of it from the too-rash *Nonpareil*.⁸ On August 14 Captain Martin wrote his wife from Nassau:

"From him (Williams) I received every politeness, and have ever since had all the lenity that a prisoner of war could expect, being in so small a vessel, as there is no parole unless the vessel is much larger than ours. I am in hopes there will be an exchange soon, and I shall stand a chance to be one of the first, as I have petitioned the President by this conveyance."⁹

Martin's hopes for an early exchange were not disappointed and on November 2 he and eighteen of his crew reached Charleston in the cartel schooner *Nassau*.¹⁰

The second privateer out of Charleston was *Mary Ann*. She sailed on July 18, 1812,¹¹ commanded by John P. Chazal, who was to prove quite the most successful of Charleston's privateersmen. She was a fifty-ton schooner mounting one four-pound gun and carried a crew of fifty.¹² In just a month she was back in Charleston, having taken four prizes. She had burned one, released one with prisoners, and brought in two brigs, *Honduras Packet* with two guns and a cargo of codfish, hams, rum and dry goods, and *Amelia*, of ten guns and laden with wine, Castile soap, oil, and cork. *Mary Ann* had narrowly escaped sharing *Nonpareil's* fate when she was "on the point of boarding a British Government hermaphrodite brig, but discovered who she was,

in season, and avoided the contest by superior sailing."¹³ The violently Republican and ultra-warlike *Investigator*, a newspaper which had commenced publication only a few days before, waxed positively lyrical over *Mary Ann's* exploits.

"These three days past we have enjoyed a sight, which ought to enrapture the bosom of every American. We have beheld a sight which has not gratified the patriotic feelings of the citizens of Charleston for the last thirty years. We have seen the American flag waying above St. George's Cross. Soon will the Leviathan of the deep learn what may be expected from a free and insulted nation. Should the fleets of Britain bridge the main, yet she shall not be able to protect her commerce from the constant and galling annoyance of individual adventure. The two Brigs which were brought in by the *Mary Ann* privateer, were armed; yet how easily did they yield to the well directed musketry of a handful of gallant Republicans. * * * You who have not seen the American Flag above that of our enemy, take a walk to Prioleau's wharf and enjoy the reality. Native Americans, you must be gratified. Adopted citizens, you must rejoice. Patriots of '76, your evening of life must be brightened."¹⁴

Fired no doubt by these eloquent words, *Mary Ann* sailed on her second cruise on August 29.¹⁵ After taking and destroying several small vessels off Jamaica, she fell in with and captured the ship *Phoenix*, of twelve guns and carrying a hundred pipes of Fayal wine, "after a running fight of seven hours and close engagement of three." Prize-master McIver and a prize crew sailed *Phoenix* for Charleston, where they arrived after a smart brush with a British vessel of twenty-eight guns with whom they exchanged "broadside for broadside and after three hours close quarters, enemy hauled his wind, and stood toward his convoy." With three shots in her hull and her mizzenmast almost carried away, *Phoenix* was chased over Charleston bar by a British man-of-war brig only to be fired on by Fort Moultrie, the shot upsetting a gun, tearing up planks, and shattering a boat.¹⁶

When *Mary Ann* herself returned, she was sold at auction by her

owners on October 30;¹⁷ and when she sailed again on November 25 it was with John Joussett as captain and Henry B. Martin, the former commander of *Nonpareil*, as lieutenant. They did not do as well with *Mary Ann* as had Chazal, though she now carried a nine-pound caronade instead of the four-pounder.¹⁸ She came back on February 8, 1813, having taken no prizes, sailed again and on May 2 was herself taken and carried into Jamaica by a brig and a sloop, after an action lasting an hour and a half, in which she had three men killed and five or six wounded.¹⁹

Poor Sailor, which appears to have been the third privateer to sail from Charleston, had a brief career. She was a forty-five ton schooner with one six-pound gun and sixty men.²⁰ She started out on August 1, struck on the bar and damaged her rudder, and then struck again on a shoal near Cape Fear, so that they must take her into Wilmington and heave her down for repairs.²¹ Then she sailed again and on August 31 she sent in to Wilmington what may have been her only prize, the brig *William*, with a cargo of Jamaica rum.²² A few weeks later there was a rather odd little incident. All the Charleston newspapers carried items similar to this in the *Investigator* for September 22:

"The Privateer Schooner *Poor Sailor*, Captain M'Lacklin, who sailed from this port on the 1st of August last, arrived off Sullivan's Island last evening. Captain M'Lachlin came up to Mr. Towers' Hotel, at that place, about 1 o'clock this morning, and reported, that he had taken Five Prizes, including a Sloop which sailed from this port for New York yesterday morning, with \$30,000 in specie on board, which he had ordered for Savannah. Captain M'Lachlin after procuring some water, went on board with intention (as he said) of convoying the said sloop to the port of Savannah. Captain M'Lachlin further reported, that he saw off the bar last evening, a British Brig of War of 14 guns."

Next day the *Investigator*, like the other papers, had to take it all back.

"The account of capt. M'Lachlin, of the *Poor Sailor*, having

come up to Sullivan's Island about the middle of the night for water, as published in the '*Investigator*' of yesterday, seems not only to be destitute of foundation in truth, but a gross imposition either on us or our informant. Time will, no doubt, develop this mysterious business. In the mean time, we hope the British 14 gun brig, said to be off our bar, has not been supplied with water in the name of capt. M'Lachlin.

Poor Sailor never came home to "develop this mysterious business." A letter from Kingston, Jamaica, dated October 4, brought the news that she had been taken by H.M.S. *Garland* and sent in to that place.²³

The history of *Rapid*, a privateer schooner which fitted out in Charleston and sailed on August 18, 1812,²⁴ is somewhat obscure. According to her commission she was a forty-three ton schooner, with one six-pounder and fifty men, commanded by Charles Francis Broguet.²⁵ She fought a British privateer in the Bahamas, boarded, took and burned her. On September 8, according to a letter from *Rapid's* captain to his owner, he manned his boat with five men and went ashore for water. Returning to the boat they found a party of armed men in possession. The account continues:

"They then made off some distance, and the Captain made a proposal to exchange the English Captain and the same number of English seamen (from the burned privateer), for himself and men, which was agreed to; but when they came forward, they were made prisoners of, and the agreement not adhered to."²⁶

Thereafter *Rapid* took the schooner *Comet*, of two guns, laden with sugar, beeswax, tobacco and dry goods, and sent her in to Savannah. She also captured the schooner *Mary*, "but ransomed her on account of not being able to spare men enough to bring her home."²⁷ On February 16, 1813, there arrived in Charleston on the cartel sloop *Ann*, from Nassau, James I. Miller, prize-master, and five seamen of *Rapid*, possibly the captured members of the watering party.²⁸

Captain George Coggeshall, who had himself commanded priva-

teers in the War of 1812, tells of the end of *Rapid's* career in his *History of the American Privateers and Letters-of-Marque* (page 159).

"The Privateer *Rapid*, of Charleston, was chased off the Mississippi, by the British sloop-of-war *Herald*, was unfortunately upset. Her crew, however, were soon picked up, and saved by the boats of the enemy. They were kindly treated as prisoners of war."

To which Captain Coggeshall adds, "I hope no civilized nation would have acted otherwise under similar circumstances." The good captain was happily unacquainted with the standards now prevailing in civilized warfare. He gives no source for his story, which is not found in the Charleston papers, and no date for the loss of *Rapid*, but places it in the 1813 section of his book.

On December 9, 1813, Collector Theus issued a commission to the schooner *Rapid*, but this seems to have been a different and larger vessel, of sixty-seven tons and a crew of sixty. She was commanded by Joseph Bruchett.²⁹ On January 12, 1814 she sent into Savannah in charge of Prize-master Saunders the British brig *Victoria*, 171 tons, taken off Jamaica with 250 puncheons of rum and a quantity of sugar and coffee.³⁰ *Rapid* seems thereafter to have made Savannah her home port and Saunders soon succeeded Bruchett as her captain.³¹ Charleston newspaper items of March 4 and 5 mention *Rapid* as commanded by Captain Sicard, of whom we shall hear later in this narrative, but this may have been a mistake.³² Of the ultimate fate of this second *Rapid* we have no knowledge. She was still in the news as late as July 25, 1814, having captured a Spanish brig while in company with the privateer *Midas*, and she may have survived the war.³³

II. SAUCY JACK

The little privateers of which we have been speaking fitted out and sailed without benefit of fanfare and apparently with little or no public notice. It was different with *Saucy Jack*. Perhaps it was because she was the first Charleston-built privateer, but she was much in the news from the beginning. There may have been something

prophetic in it, for she turned out to be by long odds the most successful of the Charleston privateers.

On July 4, 1812, there was a meeting of those wishing to subscribe "for the immediate equipment of a Privateer, now in a state of forwardness by Pritchard & Shrewsbury."³⁴ These builders in their shipyard on Cooper River had either anticipated the outbreak of the war or had originally planned *Saucy Jack* as a merchantman. Said the *Times* of July 7:

"A Meeting of those Gentlemen, who have already subscribed for the equipment of a Vessel of War, to be commanded by one of our Citizens, who was a prisoner on board of a British floating dungeon for three years—and of those who are inclined to assist in harassing the commerce of our enemy is requested at 5 o'clock *To-Morrow Afternoon*, at Meeds' Hotel, for the purpose of appointing a Committee of Organization.

"An opportunity is now afforded the Citizens of Charleston, to embark in an enterprize against our enemy; it is patriotic in itself, honorable to those who may engage in it, and holds out a tempting prospect of pecuniary involvement." And so on in the same vein.

The prospective commander was Thomas Hall Jervey, who was the first mate on the schooner *Galliot* when she was capsized in a sudden squall on September 7, 1798. After terrible hardships Jervey and the other survivors were picked up by the brig *Apollo*, only to be taken off her by the British ship *Edgar* and pressed into service upon the pretense that they were Englishmen, they having lost their certificates of American citizenship in the wreck of their vessel.³⁵

Captain Jervey did not have to wait long for his privateer. Charleston read in the *Times* of August 6:

"The beautiful schooner *Saucy Jack*, of 170 tons, pierced for 16 guns, (intended as a privateer) and to be commanded by Captain Thomas H. Jervey, was launched this morning from Pritchard & Knox's wharf, amidst the acclamation of a number of citizens. The American Ensign, and the private

signal of the owner, on which were inscribed the words 'Never Despair', waved over her decks as she entered her destined element. She is 90 feet on deck, 24 feet beam, and 70 feet keel. We understand that she has already shipped nearly her compliment of men, which is intended to be 150. We have seen a number of fine looking fellows, decorated with ribbons round their hats, impressed with the motto—'Success to the *Saucy Jack*.'

Not everyone in Charleston, however, wished success to *Saucy Jack*. On the night of the day following her launching seven of her guns were spiked as they lay on the wharf waiting to be put on board.³⁶ For several days there was an advertisement in the papers signed by John Everingham, her principal owner, and Thomas H. Jervey offering three hundred dollars reward for "such information as may lead to the detection and conviction of the atrocious villains" who had damaged the guns. It went on:

"It is confidently hoped that every good citizen and real American will exert himself to find out and drag to light the secret enemies of our country, who thus daringly attempt to set at naught the patriotic efforts of our citizens and clandestinely cooperate with our implacable enemy. Every one we trust will unite in counteracting the traitorous designs of the vipers who lurk in our city, and will put a stop to their sacrilegious efforts to arrest the arm of the country now extended to punish our foes."³⁷

Apparently the vipers were not dragged to light and the reward was not claimed, but the guns were cleared of spikes. The application for her commission, dated July 28, describes her as "calculated to carry Nine Guns twelve pounders."³⁸ *Saucy Jack* sailed on August 30 with this parting salute from the *Investigator*:

"Sailed from this port yesterday morning,

The elegant privateer schr. *Saucy Jack*, of 7 guns and 130 men, built by Messrs. Pritchard & Knox, of this place, owned principally by Mr. John Everingham, and commanded by captain Thos. H. Jervey. She is as fine a vessel of her size

and as well manned and found as ever sailed out of any port. She went out under a press of sail, much to the satisfaction of her friends, and disappointment of her enemies. We wish her pleasant gales, rich prizes and many of them."³⁹

Saucy Jack's only rich prize on her first cruise was the brig *William Rathbone*, of thirty men and fourteen guns, taken off Demerara with a cargo of dry goods worth 40,000 pounds. Jervey put Lieutenant Nevin and twenty-seven men aboard and ordered her for Charleston, but prize and crew were retaken by the eighteen-gun *Charybdis*. *Saucy Jack* took several small vessels, but the only one sent back to Charleston was the little sloop *Brothers*.⁴⁰

The privateer herself came home on October 25 and the next morning's *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* said:

"*Caution*—On the arrival of the privateer *Saucy Jack* yesterday morning she fired a salute, when the wadding of one of the guns, weighing near a pound, lodged with considerable force against the Union Bank (on the west side of East Bay Street a few doors north of Broad). It was on fire, and had any person been in its way, he must have suffered serious injury. We mention this to prevent a recurrence of the like."

So far as the record shows this admonition was effective and there was no recurrence. A few days later *Saucy Jack* went out in an unsuccessful attempt to catch a little British privateer making a nuisance of herself off Charleston,⁴¹ and the *Investigator* had a chance to vent its spleen against the Federalists.

"We are credibly informed, that yesterday when the owners of the privateer schooner *Saucy Jack* with a patriotism worthy of the glorious cause they so honorably support, volunteered to risque their elegant, new and valuable vessel, and while she was fitting to go down and rid our coast of a piratical picaroon that was then infesting it, a certain constable, well known as an active tool of the Federalists at the late election, was busily engaged in persuading the seamen, who were on the wharf, ready to jump on board, not to go in her; and that this ignorant Dutchman, not able to use any argument

of his own, had been furnished by the party who employed him with their favorite and much hackneyed one 'that it would be taking the law in their own hands; that it was the business of the Government and not of individuals to oppose the enemy in her attack upon our commerce.' If, Fellow-Citizens, you are thus boldly and daringly opposed in your laudable and necessary attempts to repel an insignificant invader from your coast, what can you expect should the enemy come in such force as to give confidence to these miscreant traitors?"⁴²

Captain Jervey left *Saucy Jack* after her first cruise, to become captain of U. S. Barge No. 10 and a little later Surveyor and Inspector of the Revenue for the port of Charleston.⁴³

An application for a new commission, dated October 31, describes *Saucy Jack* as mounting one large twelve-pounder and six twelve-pound short guns, and names Peter Sicard as captain.⁴⁴ This appears to have been Sicard's first privateer command, but he had sailed in some capacity under Chazal on *Mary Ann* and had been slightly wounded in the taking of *Phoenix*.⁴⁵ He sailed with *Saucy Jack* on December 16, 1812,⁴⁶ and at first was highly successful. She took two small schooners on December 26 and on January 13, in company with the privateer *Two Brothers*, of New Orleans, took the brig *Antrim*, off Point Abaco, with ten guns and a cargo of provisions, wine and dry goods, after exchanging broadsides with her for two hours. The two privateers, still in company, on January 19 took the ship *Mentor* with an assorted cargo. Both prizes reached New Orleans safely and were reported worth about \$150,000. *Saucy Jack* took no more prizes, but went to New Orleans herself in February, where she remained over a month before sailing for Charleston. On the way home she encountered the Spanish ship *LaVicente*, of ten long guns and forty men, who fired on *Saucy Jack* under the impression that she was a French privateer. After a hot engagement the misguided Spaniard struck. *Saucy Jack's* log, as abstracted in the newspapers, proceeds:

"The Capt. fully exonerated Capt. Sicard from any responsibility for returning his fire, and gave him a certificate to that effect. At 10 P. M. the boats passing between, sent the

Doctor on board to dress the wounded, of which there were two, they would not acknowledge any killed, but from the blood on board, supposed there must have been several."⁴⁷

Saucy Jack reached Charleston on April 12, 1813. Captain Sicard left her after this cruise and we shall hear of him next on a much smaller privateer.

III. MORE LITTLE SCHOONERS

Before going further with *Saucy Jack* we must turn back for a look at certain other privateers which, during her first two cruises, have started from Charleston on more or less successful careers.

Hazard was a little schooner of fifty-five tons, one gun and forty-five men. She fitted out at Lathrop's Wharf and put to sea on September 21, 1812, under the command of John Dennis.⁴⁸ On November 19 she came back, having taken nothing.⁴⁹ Perhaps for this reason, she changed commanders and armament. Under her new commission, issued December 5, she mounted three carriage guns and was commanded by Placide Le Chartier, captain, and John DeGlanni, first lieutenant.⁵⁰ Captain LeChartier hardly lived up to his first name. On March 6 he was writing from St. Mary's, Georgia, to a friend in Charleston:

"I have just arrived here with my prize, the ship *Albion*, which I captured on the 1st Feb. in lon. 64, lat. 16 N. On the 23rd Feb. being on Savannah bar, having lost sight of her in a fog, she was retaken by a privateer from New Providence, mounting 8 pieces of cannon, after which we fell in with her again, the privateer in company, which we engaged, and after an action of seven hours and a half the privateer struck, and we retook the ship. If we had had half an hour more of daylight I should have brought in the privateer, but fearing to lose my prize, I was forced to abandon her. My lieutenant and carpenter were wounded dangerously, and five seamen slightly. It is surprising I had so few wounded, my vessel being extremely crippled by the grape shot of the enemy. My force consisted of 28 fighting men; the enemy

had 20 guns (on board the prize and privateer) continually playing on me, and 60 men. —I should rather have sunk than struck. I hope the *Caledonian* will remember a long time the small *Hazard*.”⁵¹

Hazard got back to Charleston on April 22. Although *Albion* brought \$91,000 at auction,⁵² Joshua Brown, who owned *Hazard*, evidently did not consider her profitable. She was advertised for sale on May 4 “without reserve, at the head of Prioleau’s Wharf, as she now lies,” together with “all her Munitions of War, consisting of 1 double fortified 6 pounder, with Carriage, Circle and Apparatus complete; 2 ditto 6 pound Carronades; a quantity of 6 pound shot; Muskets, Pistols, Cutlasses, Boarding Pikes,” etc.⁵³

After her sale *Hazard* received a new commission on June 12, with Peter Lamason as captain and James Mally as first lieutenant.⁵⁴ Then she drops from the news except for one final notice to show that she had met a fate scarcely deserved after her gallant fight with *Caledonian*. When she was captured by the British and sent into Barbados in the summer of 1814, she was a Cartagena privateer, between which and a pirate the line of demarcation was ordinarily very faint.⁵⁵

Other little privateers which sailed in the fall of 1812 were the schooners *Lady Madison* and *Eagle*. The former arrived in Charleston from Norfolk on September 9, “intended for a privateer,” and a few days later was advertised for sale as “The elegant new pilot-boat Schooner *Lady Madison*, Burthen 56 tons, well found and fitted for a Privateer, has a long eight pounder mounted on a pivot.”⁵⁶ She was not commissioned in Charleston, but in Savannah; but she was regularly mentioned in the Charleston papers as “of this port” or “of Charleston” and, commanded by Captain Garriscan, she cruised in company with *Eagle*, of Charleston.⁵⁷ The latter sailed in October, 1812, under Captain Connolly, but there is no record of her commissioning at Charleston prior to that time.⁵⁸ Perhaps she also went to Savannah for her commission. Her career is made somewhat difficult to follow because of the danger of confusion with the exploits of another privateer *Eagle*, out of New York.

The Charleston *Eagle* cruised in company with *Lady Madison*, parted with her on January 4, 1813, and returned to Charleston on January 22. Besides four or five small prizes, they had taken the British ship *Perthshire*, of fourteen guns, after an action in which her captain was killed, only to have her retaken with a prize crew aboard and sent into Kingston, Jamaica. Later in the cruise there was a grim entry in *Eagle*’s log:

“Received information at Aux Cayes, that capt. Fellows of the sloop of war *Fawn*, who retook our prize, the *Perthshire*, had reported there, that two of our men were hung in Jamaica, after they arrived.”⁵⁹

We hear no more of *Lady Madison* after this cruise, but on June 28, 1813, *Eagle* was issued a commission by the Collector at Charleston. She was described as a fifty-four ton schooner, with a crew of twenty-four, mounting one six-pounder, Captain Peter Lafete.⁶⁰ Beyond two reports of her being spoken at sea shortly thereafter,⁶¹ there is no further news of her. Probably she and *Lady Madison*, like most of their fellows, were eventually captured by the enemy.

It will be remembered that Captain John P. Chazal had left *Mary Ann* after two cruises. He went to a larger privateer schooner, *Defiance*, of seventy-five tons, two carriage guns and eighty men. Her first lieutenant was Lewis Jantzen.⁶² She sailed from Charleston on December 15, 1812, but had to put in to Wilmington in distress and did not get away until the day after Christmas.⁶³ She never got back.

Charleston got news of her on April 8, 1813, from a privateer rejoicing in the remarkable name of *Divided-we-Fall*, which had been cruising with her partner *United-we-Stand*. She had parted company with *Defiance* on March 1 and reported that she had taken one prize, a brig from Nova Scotia with fish, which was retaken the same day in sight of *Defiance*. She had also had a useless bloody battle with a Spanish ship of sixteen guns under the impression that she was British. They fought all night at long range, and then the account says:

“At daylight the *Defiance* hoisted her colors and ranged up with the Spaniard, who still kept up his fire, and when they

were in the act of boarding, the 2d Lieut. fell, having the upper part of his head carried away by the discharge of a carronade."

The unfortunate second lieutenant was named McIver, probably the same whom Chazal had put on *Phoenix* as prize-master when she was taken by *Mary Ann*. Two other men were killed on *Defiance* and three wounded.⁶⁴

On March 15 *Defiance* fought another bitter battle, her last. She was captured by the *Nimrod* gun-brig and taken to Port Royal, Jamaica. A passenger on a cartel brig from that place brought this account to Georgetown on April 28:

"Capt. Chazel was slightly wounded in the heel, four or five men were killed, and eight or ten wounded. The *Defiance*, by superior sailing, would have escaped, but her main boom having been shot away, and her foremast injured, they were compelled to surrender, after sustaining a running fight of several hours. On account of the skill displayed by Capt. Chazel, in manoeuvring the *Defiance*, and of his bravery in sustaining the *Nimrod's* superior fire, great attention was paid him in Port Royal. * * * Mr. Freneau, pilot, of Charleston, was accidentally wounded in the right leg the evening preceding the engagement, by the sudden discharge of a pistol which was in the Binnacle. He was in Port Royal Hospital, in a fair way of recovery. It had been recommended to take the *Defiance* into the British service, as her fleetness would tend in a great measure to give information of American privateers hovering about Jamaica and the Islands adjacent."⁶⁵

On April 27 Chazal, Lieutenant Jantzen and Dr. McBride, surgeon of *Defiance*, reached New York after their release. They reported that *Nimrod* had fired thirty broadsides and several volleys of musketry, that *Defiance* had been totally dismasted, and that she had had three killed and twelve wounded. Chazal got back to Charleston in time for a more important command, the lucky privateer *Saucy Jack*.⁶⁶

His predecessor on the *Jack* was Captain Sicard, who, it may be recalled, left her after her second cruise. From her he went to a much smaller schooner, *Lovely Cordelia*, of sixty-seven tons and one six-pound gun. She seems to have made only one cruise, but it was quite lively and quite successful.

Her commission dated June 26, 1813, called for sixty men, but she seems to have carried only forty-five.⁶⁷ She sailed from Charleston on June 27, 1813, and did not get back until October 27. She had spent most of the time off the coast of Jamaica and had taken fifteen vessels. Most of them were small sloops and schooners and all but one seem to have been burned or ransomed by their owners. The armed brig *Arab*, from Gonaives to London with a cargo of coffee, was taken after an action of fifteen minutes and ordered for the United States with a prize crew aboard. *Lovely Cordelia* was several times chased by British war vessels, from which she escaped by her superior speed, and once she was in action with Jamaican shore forces, of a sort. This is the story in her log:

"August 7th, being off Negril Point, at day-light in the morning saw several fishing boats near the shore, sent the boat and 4 hands to procure some fish, when finding our boat in chase of them, they went immediately in for the shore, our boat still pursuing them, until they observed a white man on shore, with a sword in his hand, calling to them—they immediately returned on board, and it being calm, out sweeps and pulled in for the shore—when within musket shot, fired a gun with grape, which was returned from the shore by several muskets—the privateer then fired 8 guns and a volley of musketry, which silenced them."

Another interesting log entry recorded that on September 15, off Jamaica, *Lovely Cordelia* "spoke pilot boat schooner -----, under Indigene colors, formerly the privateer schr. *Mary Ann*, of Charleston."⁶⁸

A month after her return to Charleston, on November 30, *Lovely Cordelia* was sold at auction at Fitzsimmons' wharf, "with every thing

appertaining to her as she arrived from sea—For the benefit of all concerned.”⁶⁹

With the sale her privateering career seems to have ended. As we have already seen, her captain, Sicard, may possibly have sailed later in command of *Rapid*.

IV. GENERAL ARMSTRONG

Probably the most unlucky privateer to sail from Charleston was *General Armstrong*. Certainly no other accumulated so many and such serious troubles as did she in the course of her very brief career. She is not to be confused with the other privateer of the same name whose heroic fight against a British squadron at Fayal was an important factor in the American victory at New Orleans.

Our *General Armstrong* was apparently the only active Charleston privateer not schooner rigged, being always spoken of as a ship. She was of 205 tons burden, mounted sixteen six-pounders, and her license called for a crew of one hundred and twenty men. She was owned by John Sinclair of New York and that John Everingham who was also an owner of the lucky *Saucy Jack*.⁷⁰ She put to sea on Christmas Eve of 1812, and the Christmas issue of the *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* gave her a rather ironical send-off:

“After thundering the notes of preparation for several months, the privateer ship *General Armstrong*, captain Sinclair, at length has put to sea. If the length of her cruize equals that of her fitting out, she must be a fortunate sailor if not a swift one. We wish her much success and fewer rebuffs at sea than she has met on shore — May she return with rich prizes and lawful ones, and may her crew be enabled another year to enjoy a *merry Christmas*.”

Instead of doing her hunting in the British West Indies, *General Armstrong* crossed the Atlantic and touched at a French port. She managed to lose her stern-boat while being chased by a British frigate and she took a Spanish vessel which had been captured by the British from the Algerines.⁷¹ What seems to have been her only British prize was the brig *Tartar*, from St. Barts with a hundred and sixty

puncheons of rum. The prize was chased all one day by a British brig of war and then, as a dispatch from Georgetown of April 21, 1813, put it:

“The captain of the *Tartar*, finding no means of escape, made towards our harbor, but having, through the forgetfulness of haste, neglected to take a pilot, he unfortunately run his vessel upon the shoals, when she bilged and went to pieces. Most of her cargo has been taken out and put on board the *Orion*, capt. Weaver. A small part of it drifted ashore and was saved.”⁷²

General Armstrong herself had put into Wilmington, North Carolina, a few days before. She was under the command of her sailing-master, William Livingston, and Captain Sinclair was shut up in his cabin, where he had been confined since March 18. On that day, being then in the neighborhood of the Cape Verde Islands, the majority of the privateer's officers and crew presented to Captain Sinclair a long “memorial” in writing setting out that they had been trying for some time without success to beat to the eastward against contrary winds, it being the captain's apparent intention to cruise on the African coast; that they were desperately short of provisions and the captain had failed to buy more when they were recently in the port of Brava; that many of them were already weakened from hunger and could hope for nothing but starvation or capture and a British prison-ship if they got to the African coast; and that they demanded that the ship be headed either toward home or a French port. After giving the captain time to consider the memorial the crew assembled aft for an answer to their demand. They met a stern refusal. An eye-witness account goes on:

“One and all then sung out ‘put the helm up, put the helm up,’ which was immediately done and the ship's head put to the westward. Captain Sinclair going into his cabin was asked what he was going there for, whether it was for his sword or what? He replied it is for my sword, and I'll run the first man through; accordingly as he entered his

cabin, the doors were secured, and those officers with him kept there until next day."⁷³

Evidently convinced that they had acted rightly, the memorialists promptly reported their arrival in Wilmington to the Collector of Customs there. Captain Sinclair emerged from his cabin demanding the punishment of the bloody-minded mutineers who had so mistreated him and stolen his ship. Upon his complaint Lieutenant Gautier, commanding four United States gunboats then in Wilmington, arrested the mutineers by virtue of a provision in the act for commissioning privateers making offences committed aboard them punishable as if committed aboard naval vessels. Gautier left a few of his prisoners aboard *General Armstrong* and divided the rest among his four gunboats. He then arranged for a guard boat to be rowed around the squadron during the night hours to prevent intercourse between the prisoners and the shore. One result of this precaution was the death of a retired mariner, Captain Oliver, engaged as a caretaker for *General Armstrong*. On his way ashore one night he was hailed by the guard boat, refused to obey an order to come alongside, and in the ensuing altercation was shot and killed by an over-enthusiastic midshipman. The slayer and his superior officer were charged with murder and subsequently tried and acquitted.⁷⁴

While *General Armstrong* was in the hands of the mutineers they had taken a prize, the North Carolina schooner *Matilda*, charged with trading with the enemy. She had been sent into Wilmington and condemnation proceedings brought against her in the United States District Court there. The court held that, although *Matilda* was guilty of trading with the enemy, she was not a lawful prize because *General Armstrong*, not being under the command of the officers named in her commission as a privateer, was no better than a pirate at the time of the capture. The case was appealed to the Circuit Court, presided over by Chief Justice John Marshall. He sustained the lower court and ordered *Matilda* released to her owners, saying:

"The libel is filed in the name of the United States for the use of the owners, captain and crew of the ship. Had it been in the name of the crew only, according to the truth

of the case, the objection then would have been, that you have departed from the commission, which was their authority to seize. And taking the case as it stands, it appears a little awkward for the United States to sanction an act that necessarily springs from another which they have said, by the legislature, shall be punished with death. The crew in a state of mutiny made the capture: mutiny is punished with death."⁷⁵

Fortunately for them, the Secretary of the Navy did not take quite so severe a view of the guilt of those who had rebelled against Captain Sinclair. He sent the Secretary a full statement of the charges against the mutineers, with supporting documents, showing that provisions on *General Armstrong* were plentiful and that the crew had no grounds for complaint, and demanded immediate arrangements for their trial by court martial. To Sinclair's possibly justified indignation, the Secretary washed his and the navy's hands of the whole matter and ordered Gautier to release his prisoners unless the civil authorities wanted to prosecute them. Gautier promptly let them go and some of them got back to Charleston in a whale boat.⁷⁶

Poor Captain Sinclair got no reply to a very lengthy letter to the Secretary of the Navy demanding an explanation and crying out for justice. More than a year later he was still in Wilmington writing to President Madison through Secretary of State Monroe.⁷⁷ He never got justice and apparently not even an answer to his letters. *General Armstrong*, so far as we now can learn, never sailed again as a privateer.

V. DECATUR

Largest of the Charleston privateers, and apparently the only one besides *Saucy Jack* built in Charleston, was *Decatur*, whose launching was thus announced in the *Times* of March 12, 1813:

"A beautiful Schooner, of 240 Tons, will be launched from the Ship-Yard of Messrs. Pritchard & Shrewsbury, *To-Morrow Afternoon*, at 3 o'clock, when the Public may be gratified, not only with the Launch, but with a view of one of the

handsomest and most perfect models of a Vessel that the United States, or any other Country, can boast of."⁷⁸

It was May 27 before she got to sea and July 13 before she took her first prize, the schooner *General Horsford*, of 210 tons, taken off Surinam with a cargo of flour, wine, oil, fish and drygoods. The prize was sent into Savannah and later purchased by the United States government.⁷⁹

On August 5 *Decatur* had her day of glory, when she met the British naval schooner *Dominica*, of twelve twelve-pound carronades, two long sixes, one brass four-pounder, and one thirty-two pound carronade on a pivot, with eighty-three men, commanded by Lieutenant George Wilmot Barrette. *Decatur* had only six twelve-pound carronades and one eighteen-pounder on a pivot, but she had a hundred and three men and was commanded by Monsieur Dominique Diron.

In his excellent privateering novel, *The Lively Lady*, Kenneth Roberts has Captain Boyle of *Comet* say to his hero, Captain Nason, "Speaking of able men, Dominique Diron's out of Charleston in the *Decatur*. He's a Frenchman and a pirate, but he's able!" In reply to an inquiry as to why he called Diron a pirate, Mr. Roberts wrote that he had commanded the French privateer *Superbe* in the West Indies, from whence he, like a number of other French privateersmen, had come up to the United States to take a command, and that French privateers of the period were notoriously careless about commissions and about whom they attacked. Pirate or not, Diron was a very tough man to meet.

To quote from his log, as soon as he determined that *Dominica* was English:

"The Captain then gave orders to prepare every thing for action, to load all the cannon and musketry, to have the grapplings, swords, &c. ready, and having previously got up the necessary ammunition, water, &c. from below, ordered the hatches to be fastened down."

Indifferent to the danger of having his ammunition on deck exploded by a lucky shot from the enemy, Diron was not going to have anyone seek safety below decks during the action. He refused

to answer *Dominica's* broadsides except with shots from his long gun, the while he kept attempting to board and opened with musketry when he got within range. After she had several times avoided him, Diron finally got *Dominica* where he wanted her:

"The Captain of the *Decatur* having ordered the drums to beat the charge, the crew cried out to board. At that moment endeavored again to board her, which the enemy could no longer resist, and which was effected by passing into her stern over our bowsprit, our jibboom running into her mainsail. It was now half-past 3—the fire from the artillery and musketry was terrible, and well supported on both sides. The enemy not being able to disengage himself, dropped alongside; and it was in this position that Captain Diron ordered his whole crew to board, armed with pistols, sabres, &c., which order was executed with the promptness of lightning. Mr. Vincent Safith, 1st prize-master, and quarter-master Thomas Wasborn, were the two first on board the enemy; in doing which the prize-master received three wounds; the crew of the enemy fought with as much courage and bravery as that of the *Decatur* did with valor and intrepidity. Fire-arms now became useless, and the crews were fighting hand to hand with cutlasses, and throwing cold shot; when, the Captain of the enemy and the principal officers being killed, the deck covered with dead and wounded, the English colors were hauled down by the conquerors."

Decatur had nine killed and sixteen wounded, of whom the carpenter later died. *Dominica*, of her eighty-three men, had eighteen killed and forty-seven wounded, five of whom afterward died. The surgeon and a midshipman were the only officers on the Englishman not killed or wounded. Considering the number of men engaged this was certainly one of the bloodiest fights of the whole war.

Decatur brought her hard-won prize into Charleston on August 20. The *Charleston Courier* said:

"Captain Diron is a Frenchman, and most of the officers

and crew of his vessel are his countrymen; they have done themselves immortal honor by the humanity and attention displayed toward their prisoners after victory, which is spoken of in high terms of approbation, by the surviving officers of the enemy's vessel.

"The crew of the *Dominica*, with the exception of 8 or 10 boys, were fine looking young men; but to see them in the mangled state in which they arrived, was enough to freeze the blood of one, not accustomed to such sights, with horror. Among her crew is a small boy, not eleven years old, who was twice wounded, while contending for victory upon her deck."⁸⁰

In company with *Dominica* at the beginning of the action was another English vessel, *Queen Charlotte Packet*. She waited about until the fight was over, taking no part, and then crowded on all sail for England, where she arrived safe and reported that she had left *Dominica* "in chase of an American schooner."⁸¹

Along with *Dominica* Captain Diron brought in another prize, *London Trader*, taken the day after the battle, bound from Surinam to London with sugar, molasses, rum, coffee and cotton. *Decatur* and her prizes reached Charleston just a week before the great storm of August 27, 1813, when a large part of Sullivan's Island was submerged with considerable loss of life. The *Courier* of August 30 had a detailed account of the damage along the waterfront.

"The Prison-ship (a large prize brig) at anchor between the town and Castle Pinckney, having on board about 50 Prisoners, part of the crew of the late British schooner *Dominica*, parted her cables, and was driven by the violence of the gale into the marshes upon James' Island, near Bennett's Mill, where she now lies.

* * * *

"*Prioleau's wharf*, — much injured; the privateer schr. *Decatur*, with her prize, the *Dominica*, drove from Lathrop's wharf, across the dock to Prioleau's wharf, where the *Decatur* brought up with her head and stern on the wharf; both of

these vessels much injured.

"*Lathrop's wharf*, the head nearly carried away; all the bridges gone; the ship *London Trader*, prize to the *Decatur*, laying at this wharf, broke her fasts and run foul of the packet ship *Belle*, stove in the starboard quarter and a part of the stern of the *Belle*; the *London Trader* had her larboard quarter stove in, and is otherwise considerably damaged."

In the same storm *Mary Ann's* prize *Phoenix*, which had been repaired at Pritchard and Knox's wharf, was sunk and thought to be bilged.

With the *Dominica* victory *Decatur's* luck ran out. She got to sea again on November 26 and came back on February 14, 1814, having taken not a single prize.⁸² She sailed again on March 29 in company with the privateer *Roger*.⁸³ She never came back. Pursued by a brig of war, she escaped by throwing two of her guns overboard.⁸⁴ Later in her cruise she was not so lucky and was taken by the frigate *Le Rhin*. A letter from St. Mary's dated August 6 reported Captain Diron's arrival there from Jamaica and gave this account of his capture:

"He was about to take two rich prizes, when a frigate appeared to windward; the breeze was light at the commencement of the chase and squally; the frigate had the breeze in her favor and gained upon him very fast without a possibility of his escaping; in this situation he was chased for eleven hours and a half; he did not surrender before he was very much crippled by the fire of the frigate."⁸⁵

They had repaired *Dominica* and fitted her as a privateer. She did not sail from Charleston until May 21, 1814. Just twelve hours out she was caught and taken by the sloop of war *Dotterell*.⁸⁶

VI. SAUCY JACK AGAIN

When Captain John P. Chazal succeeded Sicard in command of *Saucy Jack*, he finally had a vessel worthy of his talents. He took her out on her third cruise on June 12, 1813, with Dale Carr as his

lieutenant.⁸⁷ Her license issued June 8 gave her armament as one long twelve-pounder and six twelve-pound carronades, the same as before,⁸⁸ but Chazal, at just what time does not appear, gave her another long gun. His log-books frequently mention the firing of "Long Tom" and "Long Jack," and at the taking of *Pelham* "Long Tom" was called an eighteen-pounder. When *Saucy Jack* was struck by lightning during her fifth cruise, she seems to have had at least one twenty-four.

On June 29 *Saucy Jack* was closely chased by the British sloop of war *Persian*, but the pursuer was wrecked and lost on the Silver Keys (or Silver Bank) north of Haiti.⁸⁹ *Saucy Jack* took a number of small vessels and the ship *Eliza*, of ten guns with a cargo of beef and flour. Then on August 7, after a brief action, she captured the ship *Louisa* and the brig *Three Brothers*, each mounting ten guns and bound for London with coffee. She manned them both and convoyed them toward the United States. On August 14 they met a British convoy of twenty-three vessels and two of the escort, a line of battle ship and a brig of war, set out in chase of *Saucy Jack* and her two prizes. Seeing no chance of saving all, Chazal took the crew out of *Louisa* and fired her and she blew up. He "took the brig in tow and out all sweeps, the three boats ahead—the chase now gaining very little." Next day the pursuers gave up after a chase of about thirty-one hours. On the following day *Saucy Jack* and her remaining prize reached St. Mary's, Georgia, the privateer knocking off her rudder and breaking the pintle as she crossed the bar.⁹⁰

Both vessels were still at St. Mary's in September when there was a storm so severe that *Three Brothers* was one of the only two vessels in the harbor not driven ashore. *Saucy Jack* went into the marsh and was got off with some damage.⁹¹ She did not resume her cruise until October 8.

She returned to the West Indies, where she cruised until December. On October 31, off Jamaica, she captured the brig *Sir John Sherbrooke*, of 16 guns, from Nova Scotia with fish and oil. The brig, after striking her colors, fired a six-pounder loaded with grape into *Saucy Jack* and received a broadside in return, which left her with one dead and three wounded, including the captain. One other

brig, *Argus*, was taken and burned, but *Saucy Jack's* other prizes on this cruise were small schooners and sloops, mostly of little value. One was the schooner *Nancy*, which "had nothing on board except a hamper of porter, which we took out and allowed her to proceed." *Saucy Jack* wasted quite a lot of time and energy chasing what turned out to be friendly vessels, mostly American and Spanish, sometimes exchanging shots with them before their identity was established. On December 2 she chased a ship from noon until eleven at night, when the chase fired on her. She opened fire a half hour later and at midnight got close alongside the chase which then ceased firing. She was the Spanish ship *Santa Cecelia*, Captain Auguar, who "excused himself for firing into us by saying he took us for a Carthaginian privateer; he had one man killed and two wounded, and his sails and rigging much cut up."

Saucy Jack did not get home to Charleston until December 17, 1813.⁹² Captain Chazal took her out again on February 25 upon a cruise which yielded her the richest of all her prizes.

On March 3 Chazal took the ship *San Nicholas* and, believing her to be British owned in spite of her Russian colors, he manned her and sent her in for adjudication. On March 6 after a long and wearisome chase in calms and light airs, with all hands at the sweeps, and after a number of shots were fired on both sides, *Saucy Jack* overhauled the American letter of marque schooner *Boxer*, Captain Samuel C. Reed. This was the same Reed who later commanded *General Armstrong*, not the Charleston one, in the battle at Fayal which we mentioned earlier. He is also credited with the invention of lightships and the arrangement of the stars in our flag. He and Captain Chazal were both doughty fighters, but they did not get on well with each other.

Chazal went on board *Boxer*, had supper and was presented with two venison hams. He in turn sent Reed a supply of newspapers. However, when Chazal became suspicious about some flour in *Boxer's* cargo and sent a boat with Prize-Master Taylor and a party of men to investigate, there was some sort of altercation and Taylor had his weapons taken away and was struck in the face by *Boxer's* first officer, Dayton. When Taylor got back to *Saucy Jack* with his story of mis-

treatment, Chazal ordered Reed to come aboard and, when he refused, *Saucy Jack* beat to quarters and cleared for action. Reed then yielded to the dictates of prudence and went aboard *Saucy Jack*. After some talk of having Dayton flogged, the two captains parted on thoroughly bad terms and Reed went on his way. After she got back from her cruise an abstract of *Saucy Jack's* log appeared in the papers and Reed, not liking Chazal's account of their meeting, gave his own version in a long letter to the *New York Evening Post*, which was reprinted in the *Charleston Courier*. In the course of it, he said:

"Had our complement of men been complete, the presumption is that Capt. Chazal, though a Frenchman, would not have carried his privateering gallantry to such lengths."

To which Captain Chazal replied with a still longer letter in the *City Gazette*, in which he more than held his own. He concluded:

"As to Capt. Reed's stating that I declined fighting him with 107 men when he had only 20, it is too obvious to answer — I did not leave Charleston to fight Americans. His reflections on my country and my privateering, I treat with contempt. The tenor of my conduct during twenty years residence in the United States of America, can best testify whether I am not as much attached as he may be, to its interest, welfare and prosperity."⁹³

On March 25 *Saucy Jack* found herself chased by a brig which she promptly turned upon. A lively engagement of several hours ensued, the two vessels exchanging repeated broadsides, and *Saucy Jack* making effective play with her two long guns, "Long Jack" and "Long Tom." The stranger turned out to be the Spanish letter of marque brig *San Juan*. Chazal took out part of her crew and passengers and put Prize-master Taylor and a crew on board. He kept her in company until April 2, when he was chased by a warship and abandoned the brig after putting her people back on board and taking off his own men. Presumably Chazal justified his seizure of the Spaniard by reason of her firing on him after he had hoisted American colors.

On April 30 *Saucy Jack* sighted a real prize, a large ship, to which she gave chase, but she did not get within gunshot until the following afternoon. When Chazal fired a gun to bring her to, the stranger replied with a broadside. *Saucy Jack's* log goes on:

"The wind dying away, and not being able to near her, fired our long guns from time to time, a brisk fire kept up on her part. At three quarters past 2, almost within musket shot, in her wake, she then playing her stern chasers and musketry. At 35 minutes past 3, a breeze springing up, ran along side, and boarded under her lee quarter; cleared her decks after a short, but stout resistance; hauled down her colors, and took possession of her — she proved to be the British ship *Pelham*, Archibald Boyd, Master, from London to Port-au-Prince, with about 100 tons of merchandise, per invoice £18,000 sterling. In the act of boarding, Stephen Dunham, one of our seamen, was shot died (*sic*); and our First Lieutenant, Dale Carr, mortally wounded while fighting on the enemy's deck — at the same time and place, Lewis Jantzen, our Second Lieutenant (he had been Chazal's first lieutenant on *Defiance*), and John St. Amand, Lieutenant of Marines, was severely wounded, together with 7 of our men — making our loss 2 killed and nine wounded, 8 of which badly. On board the *Pelham* there were 4 killed and 11 wounded; among the latter, the Captain and his Chief Mate (since died). Our damage in sails and rigging, was considerable; our jib-boom and lower studding—sail-boom both carried away in boarding. The Ship also much injured in her sails and rigging, and several shots in her hull. It is ascertained that John St. Amand, Lieutenant of Marines, was the first; and the late Dale Carr, the second person who boarded the enemy."

The catalogue of the cargo is fascinating:

"191 Packages Dry Goods — Consisting of India Checks and Stripes, Gurrachs, Romals, Seersuckers, Habassers, Bed Ticks, Checks, Ginghams, Calicoes, Shawls, Madras and

Malabar Handkerchiefs, Irish Linen, Lawn, Diaper, Shirtings, Creas, Dowlas, Platillas, Brown Linen, Duck, Sheeting, Osnaburg, Bagging, Shoes, Boots, Saddlery, &c. &c.

"300 Packages Sundries — consisting of Hardware, Glassware, Earthenware, Mustard, Pickles, Sauces, Preserves, Porter, Ale, Madeira and Sherry Wine, White Lead, Paints, Gunpowder, Linseed Oil, Glue, Ochre, Twine, Seines, Hats, &c., &c. One Organ and One Piano Forte."⁹⁴

When *Saucy Jack* reached Charleston with her prize on May 20, the next day's *City Gazette* had this to say:

"We hardly remember to have seen a finer ship than the *Pelham*; she is 540 tons, coppered to the bends, mounts ten 12-pound carronades and long 6's, and had a complement of from 35 to 40 men, exclusive of several passengers. She is almost new, (this being her second voyage) and is in every way fitted the most complete of any merchant ship that has entered our port for a long time. Her cabin is hung round with a great variety of large and elegant colored naval prints, in rich gilt frames; amongst which was a representation of the engagement between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*, in two views — during her skirmish with the *Saucy Jack*, an 18 pound shot from 'Long Tom' found its way through the ship's side and demolished one of these views, with several others."

Evidently *Saucy Jack's* record of success made seamen eager to serve on her. In his *History of the American Privateers* (page 237) Coggeshall quotes what appears to be a newspaper dispatch from Charleston dated July 21, 1814:

"The privateer schooner *Saucy Jack* opened a rendezvous yesterday at 11 o'clock, for the enlistment of her crew. Before 5 P. M. one hundred and thirty able-bodied seamen were shipped in six hours, and ready to engage in the glories and dangers of an Atlantic cruise. Probably such a thing is unprecedented even in this country, so remarkable for maritime enterprise and dispatch."

Saucy Jack sailed on July 30 with her new crew.⁹⁵ They did not all come home. On this her fifth and final cruise as a privateer her casualties were considerably higher than ever before.

On August 9 she brought two prizes into Savannah, the ship *Hoppett* and the brig *Eliza*, both from Amelia with cargoes of cotton, under Swedish colors but claimed to be British property.⁹⁶ The privateer seems to have remained at or near Savannah for a while; for on August 20, while lying at Five Fathom Hole, below that city, she was struck by lightning and badly damaged. The newspaper account said:

"Her fore-top-mast and mast are shivered to pieces; and all her fore yards are more or less injured. Her fore-sail is torn into ribbons. The electric fluid descended the mast into the fore-castle and passed out through the stem, which is split to atoms — this occasions her to make much water, and both pumps are kept constantly going to keep her free. The lightning set off a twelve pound carronade, and cocked a twenty-four pounder, which was in a fore and aft position — had it gone off, most of the crew of the *Saucy Jack* would have been killed or wounded, for this gun was loaded with an immense quantity of grape and buck shot, balls and bullets of every description."

The lightning killed two men and badly wounded four, and *Saucy Jack* had to be moved up to Savannah for repairs which were expected to take about two weeks.⁹⁷ The repairs done she went out to her usual hunting grounds off Jamaica, where she played havoc among the coastal shipping. She took the *Kingston Packet*, which had a small brass gun on board, "put J. Fowler and nine men in her, with small arms, and ordered her to cruise in shore." All went well until November 2, when Captain Chazal was over-confident and *Saucy Jack* met her only serious repulse. This is the story in her log-book:

"At 1, A. M. saw two ships standing to the westward; gave chase; and, at 2, being within gun-shot, fired three shots at them from our long guns, on which, one of the ships returned the fire, and both immediately shortened sail; at 6, A. M. being within half-gun-shot of them, found that

VII. THE END OF THE STORY

The apprehension of I. S. had not been justified; Charleston had not proved to be "the least prominent of any of the Cities on the Continent, in equipping Privateers." On the contrary, Charleston for a port of her size had done very well in the matter of privateers, and her privateers had done very well for their owners and crews and for their country. They had done their share in that fearful destruction of Britain's sea trade which was largely responsible for the successful outcome of the war. Their exploits have been but little celebrated compared to those of their sisters to the northward, of Salem, of New York and Baltimore; but the privateers of Charleston are worthy of remembrance—the swift and beautiful *Saucy Jack*, the lean and deadly *Decatur*, the dashing little schooners with their single guns and crowded decks.

Long since they sailed into the past, left the warm seas and the green shores of little islands and now live only in the dusty files of old newspapers. The pages are brittle and smell of age; but sometimes one can see through the faded, yellowed print the gleam of sunlight on blue water and a white sail blowing and can hear, faint and far, the bark of guns opening across the Caribbean.

one mounted 16 and the other 18 guns, but did not appear to be well manned; at 7, hoisted our colors and began the engagement with the nearest ship; at 10 minutes past 7, boarded her on the larboard beam and then found her to be full of soldiers. The *Saucy Jack* on perceiving this, immediately sheered off, when the two ships continued to chase her until a quarter before 8 o'clock, pouring in, at the same time, a constant fire of grape and musketry; it was 8 o'clock before the *Jack* got out of reach of the enemy's guns. In this engagement the *Saucy Jack* had 8 men killed and 15 wounded, received 2 balls in her hull, and her spars and rigging were very much cut up."

The Englishman boarded by *Saucy Jack* was the *Volcano* bomb ship and her companion was the transport ship *Golden Fleece*. They were bringing 250 troops from Chesapeake Bay to Port Royal. *Volcano* lost Lieutenant W. P. Futzen, "a very enterprising officer of marine artillery," and two seamen killed and two wounded. One of *Saucy Jack's* wounded was Jantzen, now First Lieutenant, who had been badly hurt in the taking of *Pelham*.

On November 6 *Saucy Jack* met and took the ship *Amelia* after a brisk engagement of nearly an hour at close quarters, in which the victor had one man killed and one wounded and the prize four killed and five wounded. She carried twenty-four men and twelve guns, and had a cargo of drygoods. It was well that Chazal took the most valuable part of the cargo on board the *Jack*, because a few days later *Amelia* had to be abandoned and burned upon the approach of a British brig of war.

On November 28 *Saucy Jack* arrived at Savannah with a prize, the schooner *Jane*, with rum, sugar and shrub, and her cargo of drygoods out of *Amelia*, said to be worth between seventy and eighty thousand dollars.⁹⁸

On the last day of the year 1814 Captain Chazal brought *Saucy Jack* safely home to Charleston.⁹⁹ He did not know it, but the Treaty of Ghent had been signed on December 24 and the war was over.

I. APPENDIX: PRIVATEERS COMMISSIONED AT CHARLESTON

In Coggeshall's history of American privateers in the War of 1812, published in 1856,¹⁰⁰ he lists the following vessels as belonging to Charleston: *Decatur*, *Eagle*, *Lady Madison*, *Lovely Cordelia*, *Mary Ann*, *Nonpareil*, *Poor Sailor*, *Rapid*, *Saucy Jack*, all privateers, and *Eliza*, letter of marque. Maclay's history, which appeared in 1899,¹⁰¹ credited Charleston with the following: *Decatur*, *Advocate*, *Blockade*, *Firefly*, *Minerva*, *Revenge*, *Eagle*, *Hazard*, *Lady Madison*, *Lovely Cornelia* (for *Cordelia*), *Mary Ann*, *Poor Sailor*, *Rapid* and *Saucy Jack*. Maclay attributed *Nonpareil* to Savannah.

The accompanying list of privateers commissioned in Charleston has been compiled from records in the National Archives and from a search of contemporary newspaper files in Charleston. It is not warranted complete.

Information as to the first nine names in the list comes from letters addressed to Simeon Theus, Collector at Charleston, applying for commissions for the various vessels; and the dates given are those of the applications, which may not correspond exactly with the dates of the actual commissions. The next ten names come from Theus' report of March 6, 1813. Data on *Decatur* are from newspapers. The next following four names are covered by a "Return of Commissions issued to private armed Vessels from the Month of June 1813 to this date (November 1), by Simeon Theus, Collector." The next six names are included in a similar report for the period November 1, 1813, to February 5, 1814. Our only information for *Dominica* as a privateer comes from newspapers. The omission of *Decatur* from Theus' reports is perhaps explained by the following letter from Joshua Brown to James Monroe, Secretary of State, dated May 15, 1813. It would seem to refer to *Decatur* and suggests the possibility that her commission may have come directly from Washington.

"Having written to Mr. Cheves a few days ago, on the subject of Commissions for Cruizing Vessels, but fearing he may not be at the seat of Government, I have taken the liberty to apply direct to the department of State, over which you preside, to remedy the difficulty of which I complain.

"I have fitted out a Cruizing Vessel, at an expence of Forty-five Thousand Dollars, and Shipped a Crew of One hundred and thirty-five Men, now on Board, and in every respect ready for Sea. But on application to the Collector for a Commission, he informs me he has none, nor has he had any since the first of January last. My Crew are on board, my Vessel at an expence of Two hundred Dollars per day at least, waiting for nothing but a *Commission* to go out. Circumstanced as I am, I hope you will excuse me for this direct application and cause a Commission for said Vessel, to be forwarded to the Collector of this District with all possible Dispatch."¹⁰²

It would seem that at least thirty-one commissions were issued at Charleston to twenty-six different vessels. It will be noted that the second *Rapid* commission was issued to a larger vessel than the first. All of the vessels commissioned at Charleston were not properly speaking Charleston vessels and apparently all did not make this their home port. *Erie* and *Garrone* were New York owned, *Amiable* and *Matilda* were owned in Philadelphia, and *Tom* in Baltimore. Both Coggeshall and Maclay attribute *Matilda* to Philadelphia and *Tom* to Baltimore. Coggeshall credits *G. Washington* to Norfolk and Maclay gives *Elizabeth*, evidently the same as Coggeshall's *Eliza*, to Savannah.

Theus in his report of February 5, 1814, has the word "surrendered" after the names of *Minerva*, *G. Washington* and *Advocate*, which may refer either to the vessels or their commissions. After *Black Snake* there is the word "captured."

Of the vessels commissioned at Charleston no mention of the following has been found in the local newspapers of the time, at least none identifying them with Charleston: *Elizabeth*, *Charlotte*, *Erie*, *Amiable*, *Garrone*, *Tom*, *Minerva*, *G. Washington*, *Black Snake*, *Advocate* and *Liberty*. Brief accounts in the *Times* of July 21, 1813, and the *City Gazette* of July 23 of the taking of *Matilda* by the British privateer *Lion* refer to her as "from this port." While not mentioned in the news as a privateer, *Lelie* (probably *Lelia*) *Ann* was in all likelihood the schooner taken by *Nonpareil* and later purchased by the United States and renamed *Ferret*.

Lady Madison, which sailed in company with the *Charleston Eagle* and was referred to in local papers as "of this port," was actually commissioned at Savannah.

PRIVATEERS COMMISSIONED AT CHARLESTON

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	DATE OF COMMISS'N	TONNAGE	ARMAMENT	CREW	CAPTAIN	FIRST LIEUTENANT
Nonpareil	Schooner	July 8, 1812	19 47/95	One 6 pounder	30	Harry B. Martin	
Mary Ann	Schooner	July 13, 1812	49 67/95	One 4 pounder	50	J. P. Chazal	
Poor Sailor	Schooner	July 16, 1812	44 53/95	One 6 pounder	60	Philip McLachlin	
Elizabeth	Schooner	July 27, 1812	87 3/95	One 6 pounder, Two 4 pounders, and two swivels	12	R. W. Cleary	(Letter of marque)
Saucy Jack	Schooner	July 28, 1812	163	Nine 12 pounders	150	Thomas Hall Jervey	
Rapid	Schooner	Aug. 15, 1812	43 4/95	One 6 pounder	50	Charles Francis Broguet	
Hazard	Schooner	Sept. 5, 1812	54 77/95	One 6 pounder	45	John Dennis	
Lelie Ann	Schooner	Sept. 9, 1812	60	One long 6 pounder	35	John Smith	
Saucy Jack	Schooner	Oct. 31, 1812	164	One long 12- pounder, six 12-lb. carronades	120	Peter Sicard	William Brown
Mary Ann	Schooner	Nov. 18, 1812	49 67/95	One 9 pound carronade	45	John Joussett	Henry B. Martin
Gen. Armstrong	Ship	Nov. 23, 1812	205	Sixteen 6 pounders	120	John Sinclair	David Pearce
Hazard	Schooner	Dec. 5, 1812	54 77/95	3 carriage guns	45	Placide Le Chartier	John DeGlanni
Defiance	Schooner	Dec. 5, 1812	75	2 carriage guns	80	J. P. Chazal	Lewis Jantzen
Charlotte	Schooner	Dec. 5, 1812	100	Two 4 pounders	9	Jonathan Bowers	Harry Rogers
Erie	Ship	Jan. 15, 1813	507 63/95	Four 9 pounders	27	Henry Robinson	George Mooney

Amiable	Ship	Jan. 15, 1813	278	6 carriage guns	25	George Taylor	James Ewing
Matilda	Schooner	Jan. 15, 1813	180 63/95	11 carriage guns,	90	Henry H. Rantin	John Robinson
Garrone	Schooner	Jan. 15, 1813	294 92/95	2 12-lb. carronades	18	James Forsyth	James Head
Tom	Schooner	Mar. 6, 1813	286 35/95	5 12-lb. carronades 1 9 pounder	40	Thomas Wilson	Charles Otis
Decatur	Schooner	-----	240	One 18 pounder, 6 12 lb. carronades	103	Dominique Diron	
Saucy Jack	Schooner	June 8, 1813	164	1 long 12 pounder, 6 12 lb. carronades	120	John Peter Chazal	Dale Carr
Hazard	Schooner	June 12, 1813	54 77/95	One 6 pounder	45	Peter Lamason	James Mally
Lovely Cordelia	Schooner	June 16, 1813	67	One 6 pounder	60	Peter Sicard	Joseph Bruchet
Eagle	Schooner	June 28, 1813	54	One 6 pounder	24	Peter Lafete	Gustavus Petrier
Minerva	Schooner	Nov. 6, 1813	72	One 3 pounder	8	John Peters	William Phillips
G. Washington	Sloop	Nov. 13, 1813	73.85	1 carriage gun	8	Joseph Fellows	Eli Knight
Black Suche	Sloop	Nov. 13, 1813	23	Two swivels	5	John Graves	Joseph Parot
Rapid	Schooner	Dec. 9, 1813	67	1 long 6 pounder	60	Joseph Bruchett	Ludvig Lambert
Advocate	Schooner	Jan. 4, 1814	53	One 9 pounder	50	Ambrose Dough	Benjamin Jackson
Liberty	Schooner	Jan. 21, 1814	55	1 long 6 pounder	50	Alexander Bolcher	I. Laseri
Dominica	Schooner	-----	1814			Bonfeu (or Bufeau)	

NOTES

1. *City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (hereafter cited as *Gazette*), June 25, 1812.
2. National Archives, Records of the Department of the Navy: Records Acquired from Sources Outside the Navy Department: Records of the Department of State: Letters from Collectors of Customs Relating to Commissions of Privateers, 1812-15: "Privateers/War of 1812/ No. 1 to 251/ Vol. I." (RG 45), (hereafter cited as *Privateers, War of 1812*).
3. *Times*, July 10, 1812.
4. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1812; *Gazette*, July 16, 1812.
5. *Times*, July 21, 1812.
6. *Privateers, War of 1812, Vol. I.*
7. *Times*, December 8, 1812; *Charleston Courier* (hereafter cited as *Courier*), February 5, 1814.
8. *Times*, August 3, 1812; *Gazette*, September 1, 1812.
9. *The Investigator*, September 3, 1812.
10. *Times*, November 2, 1812.
11. *Ibid.*, July 20, 1812; *Gazette*, July 21, 1812.
12. *Privateers, War of 1812, Vol. I.*
13. *Gazette*, August 19, 1812; *Times*, same date.
14. *Investigator*, August 22, 1812.
15. *Times*, August 31, 1812.
16. *Ibid.*, October 14, 1812; *Gazette*, October 15, 1812.
17. *Investigator*, October 29, 1812.
18. *Times*, November 27, 1812.
Privateers, War of 1812, No. 253 to 493, Vol. II.
19. *Times*, February 8, 1813; *Courier*, June 7, 1813.
20. *Privateers, War of 1812, Vol. II.*
21. *Gazette*, August 4, 1812; *Times*, August 3 and 10, 1812.
22. *Times*, September 7 and 10, 1812.
23. *Times*, November 25, 1812; *Investigator*, November 26, 1812.
24. *Times*, August 21, 1812.
25. *Privateers, War of 1812, Vol. I.*
26. *Times*, October 1, 1812.
27. *Ibid.*, November 12, 1812.
28. *Ibid.*, February 16, 1813.
29. *Privateers, War of 1812.*
30. *Courier*, January 15, 1814; *Gazette*, January 17, 1814.
31. *Courier*, April 14 and June 21, 1814; *Gazette*, March 14, April 14, April 27, and April 28, 1814.
32. *Courier*, March 4, 1812; *Gazette*, March 5, 1812.
33. *Courier and Gazette*, July 25, 1814.
34. *Times*, July 4, 1812.
35. *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, January 24, 1799.
36. *Gazette*, August 10, 1812.
37. *Ibid.*, August 10 and 11, 1812; *Times*, August 10, 11, 12 and 13, 1812.
38. *Privateers, War of 1812, Vol. I.*
39. *Investigator*, August 31, 1812.
40. *Times*, October 26, October 31 and December 3, 1812; *Gazette*, October 26 and December 3, 1812; *Investigator*, October 26 and December 2, 1812.
41. *Gazette*, October 31, 1812; *Times*, November 2, 1812.
42. *Investigator*, October 31, 1812.

43. *Gazette*, July 2, 1813; *Courier*, October 29, 1813; *S. C. Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, Vol. VII (1906), pp. 34-36.
44. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.
45. *Gazette*, October 15, 1812.
46. *Times*, December 17, 1812.
47. *Ibid.*, February 27 and April 12, 1813; *Courier*, February 27 and April 12, 1813.
48. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I; *Gazette*, September 15 and 23, 1812; *Times*, September 22, 1812.
49. *Times*, November 19, 1812; *Gazette*, November 20, 1812.
50. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. II.
51. *Gazette and Times*, March 15, 1813.
52. *Courier and Gazette*, April 22, 1813.
53. *Gazette*, May 4, 1813.
54. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.
55. *Courier*, August 18, 1814.
56. *Times and Investigator*, September 9, 1812; *Gazette*, September 11, 12 and 13, 1812.
57. *Gazette*, December 19, 1812, January 9 and April 29, 1813; *Times*, November 6, 1812, January 22, 1813.
58. *Times*, October 24, 1812.
59. *Ibid.*, January 22, 1813.
60. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.
61. *Courier*, August 4 and October 29, 1813.
62. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. II.
63. *Times*, December 17, 1812, January 6, 1813.
64. *Ibid.*, April 8, 1813; *Courier*, April 8, 1813.
65. *Times*, April 29, 1813; *Courier*, April 30, 1813.
66. *Times*, May 8, 1813.
67. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.
68. *Times*, October 28, 1813; *Courier and Gazette*, October 29, 1813.
69. *Gazette*, November 27, 1813.
70. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. II.
71. *Times*, March 19 and 29, 1813.
72. *Gazette*, April 23, 1813.
73. *Ibid.*, May 14, 1813 (from Wilmington, N. C., *Gazette*).
74. *Times*, April 29, 1813; *Gazette*, April 30, May 10 and November 15, 1813.
75. *Times*, May 26, 1813; *United States v. The Matilda*, Fed. Cas. No. 15, 741.
76. National Archives, Records of the Department of the Navy: Office of the Secretary of the Navy: Miscellaneous Letters Received, 1801-1884: Miscellaneous Letters, 1813, Vol. 3 (RG 45).
Times and Gazette, May 28, 1813; *Courier*, May 29, 1813.
77. National Archives, Records of the Department of the Navy: Records Acquired from the Department of State: Letters from Collectors of Customs Relating to Commissions of Privateers, 1812-15: *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. 5 (RG 45).
National Archives, General Records of the Department of State: Miscellaneous Letters, October-December, 1814 (RG 59).
78. In view of the fact that she was Charleston built and probably Charleston owned (see Appendix) there would seem to be no basis for the statement in Theodore Roosevelt's *Naval War of 1812* that *Decatur* "though nominally an American, was really a French vessel," though it is true that her captain and much of her crew were French.

79. *Gazette*, May 29, August 4 and November 30, 1813; *Courier*, May 28 and August 4, 1813.
80. *Courier*, August 21, 1813.
81. *Times*, November 22, 1813.
82. *Ibid.*, November 26, 1813; *Courier and Gazette*, February 14, 1814.
83. *Gazette*, March 29, 1814; *Courier*, March 30, 1814.
84. *Courier*, May 20, 1814.
85. *Courier and Gazette*, July 27 and August 12, 1814.
86. *Courier*, May 23 and June 18, 1814; *Gazette*, May 23 and June 20, 1812.
87. *Courier and Times*, June 12, 1813.
88. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.
89. *Courier and Gazette*, August 30, 1813.
90. *Gazette*, August 28, 1813.
91. *Courier*, September 27 and October 1, 1813.
92. *Ibid.*, December 18, 1813; *Times*, December 17, 1813; *Gazette*, December 18, 1813.
93. *Courier*, May 21 and June 18, 1814; *Gazette*, June 24, 1814.
94. *Courier*, May 21, 1814.
95. *Courier and Gazette*, August 1, 1814.
96. *Courier and Gazette*, August 12, 1814.
97. *Gazette*, August 23, 1814.
98. *Courier*, December 2, 1814.
99. *Ibid.*, January 2, 1815; *Gazette*, January 3, 1815.
100. George Coggeshall, *History of the American Privateers and Letters-of-Marque, During Our War with England in the Years 1812, '13 and '14* (New York, 1856).
101. Edgar Stanton Maclay, *A History of American Privateers* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1899).
102. *Privateers, War of 1812*, Vol. I.