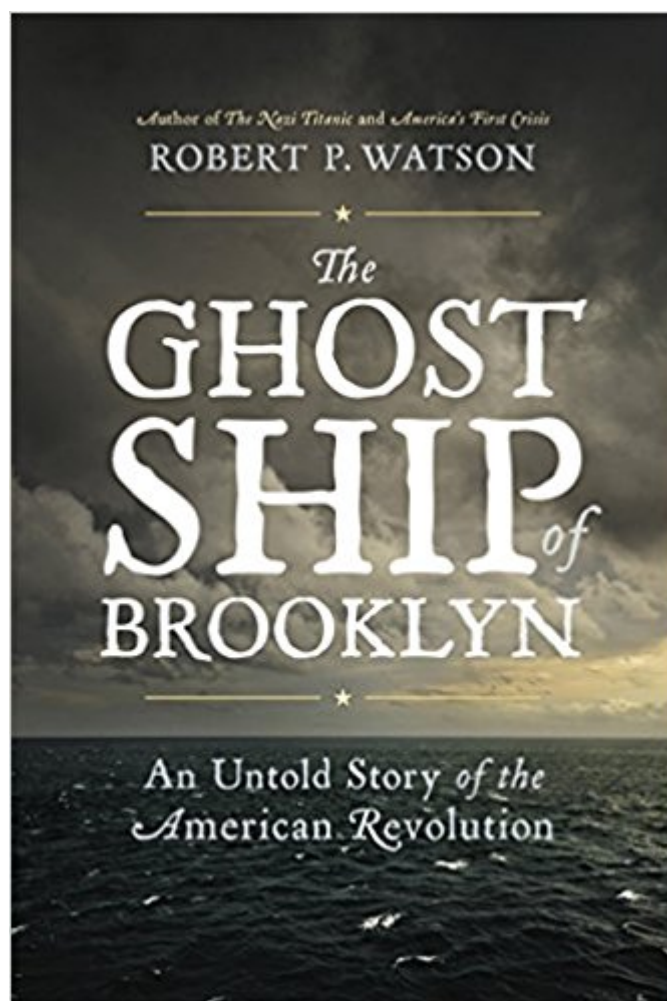


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# The Ghost Ship Of Brooklyn: An Untold Story Of The American Revolution



## Synopsis

The most horrific struggle of the American Revolution occurred just 100 yards off New York, where more men died aboard a rotting prison ship than were lost to combat during the entirety of the war. Moored off the coast of Brooklyn until the end of the war, the derelict ship, the HMS Jersey, was a living hell for thousands of Americans either captured by the British or accused of disloyalty. Crammed below deck--a shocking one thousand at a time--without light or fresh air, the prisoners were scarcely fed food and water. Disease ran rampant and human waste fouled the air as prisoners suffered mightily at the hands of brutal British and Hessian guards. Throughout the colonies, the mere mention of the ship sparked fear and loathing of British troops. It also sparked a backlash of outrage as newspapers everywhere described the horrors onboard the ghostly ship. This shocking event, much like the better-known Boston Massacre before it, ended up rallying public support for the war. Revealing for the first time hundreds of accounts culled from old newspapers, diaries, and military reports, award-winning historian Robert P. Watson follows the lives and ordeals of the ship's few survivors to tell the astonishing story of the cursed ship that killed thousands of Americans and yet helped secure victory in the fight for independence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The Ghost Ship of Brooklyn brings to life the hell on water that thousands of prisoners were forced to endure during the American Revolutionary War. Through these untold stories, Robert Watson recounts the horrors inflicted aboard the HMS Jersey, remembers the courageous spirit of its captives, and ensures the memory of these American Patriots will never be forgotten."--Senator

John McCain (R-AZ), former Navy pilot and Vietnam POW

"In vivid and often elegiac prose, Robert Watson has rediscovered a forgotten story about the grim and usually fatal fate of American prisoners of war during the American Revolution. We carry in our heads prim and proper pictures of that patriotic struggle that will need to be revised on the basis of Watson's thorough documentation of the hellish conditions aboard those floating dungeons, where twice as many American soldiers and sailors died than in all the battles of the war. Watson makes 'lest we forget' ironic, since until now, we have."--Joseph J. Ellis, Pulitzer Prize- and National Book Award-winning author of *Founding Brothers* and *American Sphinx* "A fascinating collection of stories of American Revolutionary War soldiers and sailors captured by the British and imprisoned, many of them in the infamous ship, *Jersey*, the hell that floated off of Brooklyn. These stories may have been once forgotten by history, but with the publication of this very readable book, that will be no longer possible."--Gordon Wood, Pulitzer Prize- and Bancroft Prize-winning author of *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* and *Empire of Liberty* "Watson brings the people of history to life! His well-written, carefully-researched book propels the reader into some of the grim realities of the American Revolution. By skillfully weaving together historical records with dozens of first-hand accounts, Watson introduces the reader to the ghastly consequences of being an American prisoner aboard the British prison ship, *Jersey*. This is how history should be written--bravo!"--Michael C. Quinn, President and CEO, Museum of the American Revolution "A tale worth retelling."â •New York Times "A penetrating look at forgotten horrors of America's Revolutionary War...Watson makes reading history a totally engaging experience. He does so by choosing unusual and challenging topics, setting them into contexts rich in detail, and presenting them in a prose style that is clear, vivid, and uncluttered by academic jargon. His latest book is a piece of fine storytelling, accessible to the general reader. Prof. Watson makes historical events shine as if they were today's news...This sobering book reminds us that no one can overestimate the human capacity for cruelty or underestimate the capacity for perseverance and courage."â •Florida Weekly "A readable...account of the worst atrocity committed by either side during the Revolutionary War, as well as a damning portrayal of the British military's 'moral state.'"â •Wall Street Journal "The memory of the prison-ship captives is honorably served in Robert P. Watson's terrifying new history."â •New York Post "Watson has recounted this story to remind contemporary America of those who came before and kept their eyes on the prize in spite of the horrors and deprivations of wartime capture."â •New York Journal of Books "The Ghost Ship of Brooklyn sheds light on this little-known, yet dark chapter in American history...The narrative flair [Watson] showed in his previous works, such as *The Nazi Titanic* and *America's First Crisis*, continues with *Ghost Ship*. The text is

accessible to the casual reader, yet contains enough notes and appendixes to be a resource for the serious scholar...Watson makes a case that the Jersey was the bloodiest 'battle' of the war."â •The Gotham Center for New York City History" Well researched and written, using actual transcripts from the few survivors...Well worth a read-even if you're not interested in military history as such."â •Nudge Book

Robert P. Watson, PhD, has published over three dozen nonfiction books, two encyclopedia sets, three novels, and hundreds of scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and reference essays on topics in politics and history. A frequent media commentator, Watson has been interviewed by outlets throughout the United States and internationally and serves as the political analyst for WPTV 5 (NBC) in Florida. For many years he was also a Sunday columnist with the Sun-Sentinel newspaper. An award-winning author, Watson's recent books include *The Nazi Titanic*, *The Presidents' Wives*, *Affairs of the State*, and *America's First Crisis*, which received the 2014 Gold Medal in History from the Independent Publishers' Association (IPPY).

I received a free Kindle copy of *The Ghost Ship of Brooklyn* by Robert Watson courtesy of Net Galley and DeCapo Press, the publisher. It was with the understanding that I would post a review to Net Galley, Goodreads, , Barnes and Noble and my history book review blog. I also posted it to my Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google Plus pages. I requested this book as I read a great deal about the Revolutionary War, but this is the first time that I have seen a book devoted to the subject of the prison ships used by the British. It is the first book by Robert Watson that I have read. This is a well researched and engaging read. It is not a dry recitation of the facts surrounding the subject. The author used the written first hand experiences of five survivors of the infamous prison ship the Jersey that reportedly had over 11,000 men die as a result of their incarceration on it. Watson delves into the reasons why the British used the ship(s) and the amount of embezzlement that led to the horrid conditions on the ship. In addition, he discusses the differences in the groups of rotating guards on the ship. In the final chapter, he briefly presents what happened to the the 5 survivors and the main characters on the British side. I recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in the Revolutionary War and is interested in an interesting read about something of which there has been little written about.

I've been a huge history buff for a long time and was surprised that I never knew about this story. Dr. Robert Watson continues to amaze with his research and uncovering new stories to tell. I

recommend this book.

What a fantastic story. Truly, it shocks me that this horrific tale was hidden from the history books. This is a must read for anyone into the American Revolution, a fan of naval history, or simply someone looking for a good book. I couldn't put it down. Would love to see this made into a movie!

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