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Documents on Prisoners of War

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## DOCUMENT NO. 15

**TREATY OF PEACE AND AMITY BETWEEN HIS BRITANNIC  
MAJESTY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (Ghent, 24  
December 1814)**

## SOURCES

8 Stat. 218  
12 Bevans 41  
2 BFSP 357  
63 Parry 422  
1 Malloy 12  
2 Miller 574

## NOTE

This is the treaty of peace which brought to an end the so-called War of 1812 (1812-1815) between Great Britain and the United States. (Because of the nature of the communications of that era, the Battle of New Orleans was fought on 8 January 1815; and the U.S.S. Constitution fought two British warships on 20 January 1815 and was chased by three British warships on 11 March 1815. The treaty had been signed on 24 December 1814 and while Great Britain had ratified it on 31 December 1814, the first news of its signing did not arrive in the United States until 11 February 1815, and it was not ratified by the latter until 17 February 1815. By its terms hostilities were to cease only upon the exchange of ratifications.) Of particular interest is the provision requiring prisoners of war to discharge all local debts prior to repatriation.

## EXTRACT

## ARTICLE THE THIRD.

All prisoners of war taken on either side, as well by land as by sea, shall be restored as soon as practicable after the ratifications of this treaty, as herein-after mentioned, on their paying the debts which they may have contracted during their captivity. The two contracting parties respectively engage to discharge, in specie, the advances which may have been made by the other for the sustenance and maintenance of such prisoners.