EUROPEAN THEATER

From October 1, 1777, to December 31, 1777
EUROPEAN THEATER

From October 1, 1777, to December 31, 1777

SUMMARY

“It is not to be doubted My Lord, that the French will continue to send them every possible clandestine succour, no Remonstrance that can be made will prevent or check to any Degree this fraudulent Practice.” Thus, on 17 December, wrote the British ambassador to France of the secret aid being sent from there to America, aid he knew to be essential to the rebel cause. He urged the stationing of ships to intercept the shipments. Despite official French edicts to the contrary, American prizes continued to be sold in French ports, while French merchants and American agents prepared to dispatch large quantities of war supplies across the sea; even a warship, to be called the Deane, was building at Nantes for the Continental Navy. French treatment of the Americans wore an ambivalent face. American ships of war were ordered out of port at the first opportunity of wind and tide, yet were granted the use of the royal naval facilities to refit. Louis XVI’s return to their British owners of the Hanover Planter and the Clarendon, made prize by two American privateers, angered Americans, while the French court forbade the American Commissioners in France telling their compatriots of the large amounts of French aid. French officials opposed American recruiting of French seamen and prohibited French ship masters from sailing to American ports; but in mid-December they agreed in principle to enter an alliance with the United States and promised a naval convoy for a large shipment of war supplies.

The period covered in this volume began with the arrival in France of Continental Navy ships Raleigh and Alfred, and concluded with their sailing. Continental Navy sloop Independence sailed with dispatches for America. The American Commissioners took the merchantman La Brune into the Continental Navy as the Queen of France. John Paul Jones, in Continental Navy ship Ranger, arrived with news of the surrender of Burgoyne’s army at Saratoga, and Captain Thomas Thompson voiced a tentative appraisal of the Duc de Duras, Jones’s future command, the Bonhomme Richard.

The American Commissioners made arrangements to investigate conditions of, and arrange relief for, American prisoners in Great Britain, while concerned Britons took their own steps to insure good treatment of the American prisoners.

When American privateering activity moved south to the coasts of Spain and Portugal, the British Admiralty responded to the pleas of British merchants by stationing additional cruisers in those waters. Gustavus Conyngham, in Continental Navy cutter Revenge, disturbed relations between Great Britain and Spain by using the latter’s ports as bases for several successful cruises.

American captures of French and Spanish vessels laden with British goods led to a diplomatic crisis in which the Spanish temporarily suspended their clandestine aid to the United States. The American Commissioners defused the crisis by apologizing to the two courts and issuing a circular to commanders of American armed vessels adjuring them to respect neutral shipping.
American revolutionary activity reached as far as the ports of Sweden, where Americans connived at smuggling out gunpowder.

28 September (Sunday)

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE

On Bᵈ the Raleigh at Sea Septᵈ 28th.
Lattᵈ. 49° 35' No Longᵈ. 13° 13' W.

Gentⁿ.

I have the Honour to Acquaint you that we had a fine passage off the Coast of America—the third Day after Sailing I fell in with and took a small Schooner from New York bound to Hallifax in Ballast except 20 Barrels flour, 275 Spanish mill'd Dollars, 137 Counterfeit 50 Dollar Bills in imitation of the Bills emitted by Congress May 10th. 1775, and 40-7 Dollar Bills—Massachⁿ. Sword in hand money making in all 4390 Dollars which I shall commit to the Flames saving a Sample—the Schooner being of Little value we burnt her—Next Day we fell in with a Bermudas Vessel from Hallifax, him I releas'd, after supplying him with provisions which they refus'd to sell him or permit him to carry out of Nova Scotia—Intelligence obtain'd from him determin'd me to proceed to Bermudas to attack a Sloop of War or two that Infested that Island and greatly annoy'd the American Trade to the West Indies—I had a favourable Wind until we got in Lattᵈ. 36° No when we met with a violent Gale of Wind at South which oblig'd us to run under our Foresail N.E. for two Days, this Course carried us far back to the northwᵈ and Eastwd.—Finding ourselves thus situated Cap Hinman and I agreed to stand to the Eastward in hopes of falling in with the Jamaica Fleet or Stragling West India Ship—next morning at Daylight Septⁿ 2nd. we took a Snow call'd the Nanny Capt Hooper from St. Vincents, part of the Windward Island fleet which had out sail'd them the Day before; the Captⁿ & Two Gentlemⁿ passengers being Old Acquaintance of mine, communicated freely every particular they knew respecting the fleet; we found they were convoy'd by three Sloops of War & a Ship with 22 twelve pounders a very large lofty Ship in form of an Indiaman, the Camel, Druid, Weazel and Grasshopper are the names of the Convoy, the last three had 16 Guns each, one of the Sloops they said was to leave them in Lattᵈ. 39. and return back, which I concluded was gone—After dispatching the Snow for the first safe Port in the United States we made sail in quest of the Fleet and next morning discovered them from the Mast Head—at Sun Set we were near enough to distinguish the Leading Ship, also the number which was 60 Sail, bearing E by N. the Wind being then West, I made a Signal as being one of the Fleet left a stern in the Gale, (for I had possess'd myself of the Signal from the prize)—I hail'd Capᵗ Hinman and told him my Intention was to run into the fleet in the morning & attack the Convoy, which I thought we were able to Destroy. I therefore order'd him to keep close under the Raleigh's Stern, until we came along side of the Commodore which Ship we would both attack—unluckily in the night, the Wind Shifted to North, the Fleet then hauld up close to the Wind, which brought us to Leeward in the morning it came on to Blow fresh; at Daylight we saw the Body of the Fleet bearing about N.E. 2 or 3 Leagues Distance, Steerⁿ E.NE; we made Sail, and the Raleigh soon fetcht up to the Fleet under double reef'd Top Sails, the Alfred being Tender
sided could not carry Sail & therefore fell a great Way to Leeward and a Stern—I could
not take in any Sail for fear of being Discover’d to be a Strange Ship, we therefore
kept our Sails shaking in the Wind, thinking the Alfred might come up but to no pur-
pose—Captain Hinman made signal, his Ship was overpres’d with Sail—Seeing no
chance of his coming up & fearful of being Discover’d, determin’d me to make Sail
& stand into the Fleet and take any chance alone; while we had been laying too most
of the Merch' Ships, had got a head into the Fleet, however I hauld in & pass’d a few
of them, hailed them & desired them to go under the Commodore’s Stern; by this
they took us to be some Brittish Frigate which had join’d the Fleet—I stood on close
to the Wind, making for one of the Ship’s of War which was to Windward of all the
fleet, repeating the Commodore’s Signals; Our ports were down and Guns hous’d—
we shot up alongside unsuspected within pistol Shott—we up Sails and out Guns,
hoisted the Continental Colours & told them to strike to the Thirteen United States
or I would sink them, the sudden Surprize threw them into Confusion, and their Sails
flew all aback, we instantly complimented them with a Gun for each State (a whole
Broadside) plump into their Hull, there was a very great swell which made our Shots
uncertain, however they told pretty well, they return’d the Fire, and the Action com-
nenc’d, we kept up a very brisk Fire our Second Broadside was Aim’d at his Rigging,
wh had its desired Effect, our Shot cut away his Top sail Sheets, Top Sail Yards, part
of the main Yard Braces Bowlines &c &c &c at once disabled him, which render’d them
incapable of steering the Ship or making Sail toward the Commodore who lay to Lee-
ward; in about a quarter of an hour all hands quitted their Quarters on board the Brit-
tish man of War; we cleared the Decks instantly, not a man was seen nor a Gun fired
for Twenty minutes before we left her—She lay like a Log alongside of us entirely at
the mercy of our Shot which flew very thick, we fired 12 Broadsides, also a constant
Fire from the Musquetry—we were alongside 45 Minutes; when we left her, she seem’d
to be water Logg’d and in a most shatter’d condition (as you may well conceive)—
during this little Skirmage the Officers and men behaved with the greatest Fortitude
and Resolution, particularly the green hands—I was very glad of this little Opportu-
nity to try the Men and Guns, both of which exceeded my expectations—

We received but little Damage, one Shot went thro’ one side and several stuck
in the side, they fired high and shot away some of our Running Rigging their Grape
and Musquetry made several holes thro’ our Sails—if it could be suppos’d they had
any fix’d intention after such a surprize, they try’d to disable us, that the other Ship
might come up to their Assistance—I intended to sink the Ship if I could not bring
her off & should effectually sunk her in a few minutes more, could we have staid, but
to return to the fleet—At the commencement of The firing it threw them all into
confusion—a squall between us and the Fleet, prevented them from seeing us at first,
when it cleared up one was running one way and one another, some upon a Wind,
some before the Wind &c &c the Commodore and the other Ships of force tack’d
and stood right for us & had not the Wind favour’d him and our drifting to Leeward;
he could not have fetched us, and I should have certainly sunk the Ship, however I
staid by her until he came pretty near, & was in danger of being surrounded, we then
made sail and run down to the Alfred who was laying about 4 miles to Leeward; when
Capt Hinman see me Engag’d, he hauld up his Courses & hoisted Continental
Colours; when we got pretty near the Alfred, I took in the Top Gall’ Sails and short-
ned sail to wait for the Commodore, but he soon tack’d and stood into the Fleet
again, it was then about Sun set; we have challeng’d him three Days running since, to come out of his Fleet and Engage us, but he declines accepting the Challenge, they keep close together, himself and the other Arm’d Ships a little a Stern of the Fleet, fine weather favours them, we await a Storm to Seperate the Fleet & then if any Advantage Offers, we Intend to make the best of it, but it will not do to venture amongst the fleet as they are now prepar’d; neither can we trust to the Alfred’s sailing—had she got into the Fleet that Day, she is so tender-sided she could not have fit her Guns, she is in my Opinion a very unfit Ship for a Ship of War; had she been a stiff Ship and saild equal to the Raleigh, we should in all probability have destroy’d the Convoy and dispers’d the whole Fleet, badly mann’d as we are, which you must remember is the Case, we have 180 Men chiefly green Hands I cannot trust to working the Ship, were I now to go into the Fleet, if any Ship will Attack, where we have room, we are able to defend or destroy, but nothg further, I should have cut off several of the merchant Men, but must have by that means been discover’d & thereby lost our Chance at the Kings Ships & I am determind never to war against the Merch’s where I have an Opportunity of warring against the King—I should have preferred sinking that Ship to the Richest Capture in the Fleet—my Officers are invariably of the same sentiments which adds much to my happiness—

I leave you to judge of the daily mortifications I undergo; in sight of so much wealth—my Ship half mann’d, the Alfred a dull sailing Ship; whenever we have a chance to push, she cannot follow, yet not strong enough of ourselves to attempt any thing with her—I pity poor Capt Hinman and Officers, who are always ready to do whatever they can & with whom I am exceeding happy & wish for no change only a better Ship, of which I think them deserving, I hope soon to write you again & give a better Account of the Commodore and his Fleet; I shall take every Advantage consistant with the safety of the Continental Ships; I have left the Fleet for fear they should meet with more Ships of War, but in case of bad weather I believe shall know where to pick up the Straglers; I would not have it understood that I think the Raleigh a fast sailing Ship, I believe she will Sail tolerably well after being clean’d and properly Ballasted—she is stiff, tight, strong & roomy, she works and steers well, and is a good Ship in a Sea, she carries & fights her Guns as well as any Ship can do—Our loss in the Action was One Boy killed, 1 Do wounded and the First Lieut slightly wounded in the Thigh—Rigging and Sails damag’d considerably, but now all in good Repair I am [&c.]

Copy

Tho Thompson

Copy, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (73). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Docketed: “Copy of a Narrative of/Cruise in Ship Raleigh/sent to Congress—/1777.” Thompson signed this copy, which he made for the American Commissioners in France and enclosed in his letter to them of 10 Oct., below. The original he sent to the Continental Congress by a prize.

1. Lt. Peter Shores.

October

STATEMENT BY CHARLES PEREZ REGARDING JASON

[Portsmouth, England] 8bre 1777

Exposé des faits qui prouvent l’illegitimité de la prise faite par les Anglois du Navire le Jason expédiés par les S° Clozel freres negocians à la Mar-
tunique p- S. Pierre Miquelon sous le Commandement du S e J. Baptiste Cabarrus et sous la gestion du S Perez jeune ainsi que les mauvais traitemens exercés sur tout l'équipage.

Ce Navire le jason partit de la Martinique le 6. Janv. de la présente année chargé de sel, Rum, toileries &c. Sans munitions et d'autres armes que 4. petits Canons pour l'usage des signaux dont on a besoin ordinaire. Il éprouva les tems les plus orageux et les plus contraires qui l'eloigna de sa route. On s'aperçut ensuite d'une voye d'eau considerable qui exigea le travail à la Pompe de tout l'équipage sans distinction. L'eau fraiche même vint à manquer par un accident qui fit couler les 6. pieces qui restoient. L'équipage prêta à Succomber conjura le capitaine de courir sur la 1ere. Terre quelque. Il en fut procédé verbale duement signé et on Cingla vers la Virginie. Comme la terre la plus prochaine pret d'y arriver le Navire fut rencontré et arrêté par la fregate angloise La Brune de 36. Canons 1. Capitaine fergassone qui le conduisit à Newyorck, ou étant les officiers du Navire presenterent un Memoire à l'amiral Howe pour le prier de leur permettre de Sc radouber et de faire de nouvelles provisions pour Se rendre à leur destination. Cet amiral S'y refusa en Alleguant les ordres du Roy Son Maitre d'arrêter tous les Navires qui Se trouveroient sur les Cotes du Continent de l'amérique, quelque motif qui pût les y conduire. Il ajouta que cependant les officiers du d. Navire pouvoient faire valoir leurs droits pardevant l'amirauté qui seroit bientot etable à Newyorck. Laquelle Seule pouvait decider de leur affaire. Ils offrirent de lui faire abandon du d. Navire, Sauf à le reclamer à Londres. L'amiral Howe S'y refusa encore. En attendant l'établissement de cette Amirauté il luer fit fournir l'argent necessaire pour leur subsistance et celle de 19 matelots que composoient l'équipage. Il fit mettre des gardiens à bord pour empêcher qu'il n'en fut rien distruit. Deux mois S'ecoulerent dans cette attente après lesquels Sur une plainte particulière d'un des gardiens contre le Cap. et les Matelots, on vint prendre ces derniers et on les mit à bord d'un Navire Servant de prison de guerre. Les officiers du jason ayant voulu reclamer contre cette violence furent eux mêmes arrêtés et conduits à la même prison, ne laissant dans le Navire que le 2e. Capitaine. C'est la que confondus dans le fond de Cale avec 400. prisonniers Americans on leur fit souffrir toutes Sortes de mauvaises traitemens, fixés a 8. onces de biscuits plein de vers et a 3. onces de viande salée ou de lard cru. Ils ont vu un grand nombre d'hommes perir de fain, d'autres accablés de maladies Sans aucune espèce de Secours dans la plus rigoureuse saison.

Après 3. mois passés dans une Situation aussi affreuse on ordonna aux S Cabarrus, Perés et Bluchon S'embrasser sur un Vaisseau faisant voile pour Londres où il y avoit d'autres francais qui étoient depuis long tems dans les prisons de Newyorck.

Les mauvais traitemens ne furent pas interrompu pendant la traversée. Arrivés à Londres ou Le Capitaine de Vaisseau qui transportoient les exposans leur dit qu'ils pouvoient Se retirer et qu'ils étoient libres, il leur indiqua Seulement un jour pour se rendre au bureau de la Coutume y retirer le peu d'effets qu'Ils avoient sauvés. Ils S'y trouvèrent à l'exception de 5. en étant Ils furent arrêtés par ordre de l'amirauté et conduits à Portsmouth à bord d'un Vaisseau de Guerre qui sert de prison. Les 5 personnes qui S'échapperent du nombre desquels fut le S Bluchon trouvèrent le moyen de repasser en France.

Le S Cabarrus après un mois et demi de prison a obtenu Sa liberté par la protection du Monseigneur le Comte de Vergennes, et dans le nombre de 14 français tant officiers que marchands qui Sont detenus dans le Vaisseau de guerre à Portsmouth
est le Sire Charle Perez geree de la cargaison du d. navire Le Jason. Il Supplie tres humblement Monseigneur de vouloir bien autoriser M. Le Marquis de Noailles A faire les demarches a la Cour de Londres pour en obtenir Sa liberte Comme S. Ex. a eu le bonté de le faire pour le Sire Cabarrus qui etoit embarqué dans le même Navire.

On ignore encore le sort de ce Navire et le jugement qu’a aura prononcé L’amirauté etable à New York Monseigneur mettroit le comble a Sa bienfaisance S’il daignoit autoriser M. l’ambassadeur du Roy à Se procurer toutes les informations necessaires sur le Navire en question, et a le reclamer sa Cargaison est un objet d’environ 15000£.

[Translation] [Portsmouth, England] October 1777

An account of the facts that prove the illegality of the seizure by the English of the ship the Jason sent by Sieurs Clozel Frères, wholesale merchants in Martinique, to Saint Pierre Miquelon, under the command of Captain Jean Baptiste Cabarrus and under the management of Sieur Perez, the younger, as well as an account of the harsh treatment to which the crew was subjected.

The ship Jason sailed from Martinique, on 6 January of this year, loaded with salt, rum, canvas, etc., without ammunition and weapons other than 4 guns for signaling for which there is a frequent need. The ship ran into extremely foul and stormy weather, which drove it off its course. A large leak was then discovered that required the entire crew, regardless of position, to man the pumps. Even fresh water ran out because of an accident that caused the 6 remaining water casks to spring leaks. The crew on the verge of giving up, begged the captain to beach the ship on whatever shore was the closest. An official record was made of the crew’s urgent request and duly signed; we sailed before the wind for Virginia, the nearest land. At the point of reaching there, the ship was met and stopped by the English frigate Brune,1 carrying 36 guns, and commanded by Captain Fergassone, who escorted the ship to New York where the ship’s officers presented a memorandum to Admiral Howe to request that he allow them to repair the ship’s hull and to take on fresh provisions so as to continue on to their destination. The admiral refused their request citing orders of the king, his master, to stop all ships found along the coasts of the American continent, whatever the reason for their being there. He added, however, that the officers from the aforesaid ship could state their claims before the admiralty, which would soon be established in New York, for only the admiralty could decide their case. The officers offered to hand over the aforesaid ship to him, reserving the right to demand its return in London. The admiral again rejected their proposal. While awaiting the establishment of the admiralty, the admiral had the necessary funds given to them for their keep and for that of the 19 sailors who composed the crew. He had guards placed on board the ship to prevent anything from being destroyed. Two months had already elapsed during the period of waiting when, because of a complaint lodged in confidence by one of the guards against the captain and the sailors, the English seized the latter and put them on board a ship that was being used as a wartime prison.2 Having tried to protest this act of violence, the officers of the Jason were themselves arrested and escorted to the same prison, leaving only the second officer on board. On the prison ship, the men from the Jason, along with 400 American prisoners, were subjected to all kinds of harsh treatment. They were permitted only 8 ounces of wormy biscuits and 3 ounces of salt meat or raw fat. They saw many men die from hunger, others, disease-ridden, were without relief of any sort during the coldest of seasons.
After 3 months spent in so frightful a situation, Cabarrus, Perez, and Bluchon were ordered to go on board a vessel, sailing for London, on which there were other Frenchmen who had spent a long time in New York prisons.

The harsh treatment continued during the crossing without let up. When they arrived in London, the captain of the vessel carrying the petitioners told them they could leave, they were free. He only suggested to them a day for them to go to the customs office to pick up the few personal effects they had saved. With the exception of 5 men, they all appeared at the customs office where they were arrested by order of the Admiralty and taken to Portsmouth to a warship being used as a prison. The five men, who had escaped earlier, included Sieur Bluchon. All had found a way to return to France.

After a month and a half in prison, Sieur Cabarrus obtained his freedom through the influence of my Lord the Comte de Vergennes. Among the 14 Frenchmen, both officers and merchants, who are still being held on the warship at Portsmouth is Sieur Charles Perez, supercargo of the aforesaid ship Jason. He begs, most humbly, my Lord to be so kind as to authorize the Marquis de Noailles to approach the London Court to obtain his freedom as His Excellency had the kindness to do for Sieur Cabarrus who traveled on the same ship.

Nothing is yet known of the ship's fate nor of the decision that the court of admiralty convened in New York would have handed down. My Lord would cap his kindness were he pleased to authorize the king's ambassador to obtain all necessary information regarding the ship in question and to claim its cargo, which is a matter in the amount of some 15,000 livres tournois.

---

**October 1**

"**EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, OCT. 1.**"

"The Master of the Lion armed transport, arrived at Cove, says, that in lat. 50, 3. long. 20, W. she fell in with an American privateer, who fired a gun at him, and bid him strike to the United States of America; that he hoisted British colours in return, and fired a broadside into the privateer; that they continued a running fight for upwards of two hours, when the evening coming on, and they both seemingly having enough of it, the privateer sheered off, and the Lion continued her course. The privateer was a small brig, mounting ten guns, and the Captain of the Lion says, he very much believes she would have boarded him, but that his vessel was light, and consequently high out of the water, and the privateer very low. Had she boarded him, he says she must have taken him, as she seemed full of men, and the Lion was but weakly manned, four of his hands being ill, yet those would come on deck during the engagement, though they could hardly crawl."

Lieutenant-général Comte Duchaffault to Capitaine de Vaisseau
La Motte-Piquet

[Extract] [Brest, 1 Oct. 1777]

Instruction particulière donnée a monsieur de la Motte piquet Commandant la division en Croisiere

Sa majesté Recommende a M.de la motte piquet de Continuer a avoir les mesmes égards vis avis les petits Batiments de guerre qu'il pourroit Remontrer Sous pavillon anglais, mais de les observer d'asses prés pour que n'ayant aucune esperanse de faire des prises a nos Costes, ils les abandonnment.

En Consequence—Si M.de la motte piquet Rencontre un petit Batiment de guerre d'anglois á la Coste de france, il lui Signifiera de Se elogner et il detacher a vaisseau ou une fregate pour le Suivre de tres prés jusqu'a lequil ne Soit a vingt lieues de la Coste de france. 

Signé duchaffault.

Cette instruction est un extrait des lettres de monsieur de Sartines du 30 Sept et du 1er Oct. 1777.

[Translation] [Brest, 1 Oct. 1777]

Specific instructions given to M. de la Motte Piquet, Commanding the Division on Station

His Majesty requests M. de la motte piquet to continue to maintain the same respect he has toward the small warships he encounters which fly the English flag, but to observe them at close hand so that, if they have any hope of taking prizes off our coasts, they will abandon it.

Consequently, if M. de la motte piquet meets a small English warship off the coast of France, he will warn it to go away and he will detach a ship or a frigate to follow it closely until it is twenty leagues from the coast of France. 

Signed Duchaffault.

This instruction is an extract of letters from Monsieur de Sartine of 30 September and of 1 October 1777.

Copy, FrPNA, Marine B 129, fol. 88. The portion not printed here gives instructions on fleet exercises, on remaining at sea, and on required reports.

Journal of French Navy Corvette Etourdie, Marquis de Montbras, Enseigne de Vaisseau

[Gironde] du mercredy 1er octobre

les vents étoient ce matin au sud sud est, le temps nebuleux, ensuite pluvieux a onze heures ils se-sont rangé de la partie du sud ouest gros frais et pluvieux. a deux heures après midy il est entre un batiment ayant pavillon anglais renversé, j'ay commencé par luy heler de mouillier, ce batiment ne m'ayant pas repondu et continuant sa route, je luy ay tiré un coup de pierrier dans le meme moment il a manoeuvre pour mouillier. le capitaine est venu a bord et comme il m'a déclaré qu'il était une prise angloise (nommé le Mercury) charge de molûe faite par une fregate insurgente de 26 canons nommé le Portsmouth j'ay signifié a la dite prise de pousser au large. a cinq heures du soir l'inconstante et sa flotte sont venû mouillier aupres de nous. affin de mieux observer la prise j'ay appareillu pour m'aprocher celle.
[Translation]

[Gironde River] Tuesday, 1 October

The winds this morning were from the south south east, the weather cloudy, then rainy. At eleven o'clock they came from the southwest, strong breezes and rainy. At two o'clock in the afternoon there entered a ship with an English flag inverted. I attempted to call to the ship to drop anchor, this ship not having responded and continuing on, I fired a swivel gun. At that moment, it came to anchor. The captain came on board and, since he declared that the ship was an English prize, named the Mercury, laden with codfish, taken by an insurgent frigate of 26 cannon, named the Portsmouth, I instructed the said prize to head into the open sea. At five o'clock in the evening the Inconstante and its squadron came to anchor near us. In order the better to observe the prize, I sailed toward it.

D, FrPNA, Marine B4 147, fol. 285.

October 2

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, DATED OCT. 2."

"This morning was brought in here by a Prize-master, the sloop Alexander, James Cuthbert, from Antigua, laden with rice, indigo, and tobacco, which was taken some time ago by his Majesty's ship the Camel. Remain the ships as before."


JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE
OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES

[1777 October] 2 Thursday. AM Cloudy & Rain PM Fair Saw a Sail & Stood for her.—At ¾ past 11 gave 3 Bow-Chaces upon which She brought too & we took her. She was a Snow from Newfoundland with near 3000 Quintals of Fish called Eastly. Cap.

D, MSae. Journal was kept by the ship's surgeon.

1. "The Eastley, Anstill, from Newfoundland to Oporto, was taken three days after parting the convoy, 25 leagues from Oporto, by the Cromwell privateer, of 16 six pounders and 100 men, and sent for America." London Packet, 5-7 Nov. 1777.

October 3

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO ALL THE GOVERNORS OF THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS

Circular. Whitehall 3rd October 1777.

To all the Governors of the West India Islands.

Secret and Confidential

I think it proper to acquaint you that the Court of France intend to augment their Military Force in the West India Islands by the Addition of the Second Battalions of those Regiments, the first of which are already there; The strongest Assur-
ances have been given that this Measure is purely defensive, and is taken with no other view than the Security of their own Possessions; and, to evince their Sincerity, they have appointed only Frigates to convoy the Embarkation.

The arrival therefore of these Troops, under such Circumstances, ought not to alarm the Islands under your Government, or to give Occasion for any extraordinary preparation for their defence; but at the same time it is not fit we should rely so entirely upon the professions that have been made, as not to be upon our guard, and to take every necessary precaution against a surprize. you will therefore keep a watchful Eye upon what passes in both the French and Spanish Islands in your Neighbourhood, and if you perceive any Movement which carries a hostile appearance, you will give the earliest Notice of it to the Governors of His Majesty's other Islands, and the Commander of His Majesty's Ships upon your Station, whose Squadron will be immediately reinforced by the addition of several Ships of the Line should any Ships above the Rate of Frigates accompany or follow the French Forces into those Seas. I am &c.

Geo: Germain

1. In the margin: "it's".

**THE PUBLIC ADVERTISER (LONDON), FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1777**

London.

Account of the engaging and taking of the *Lexington* rebel brig of war, by his Majesty's cutter the *Alert*, commanded by Lieut. John Bazely, verbatim, as it was related to me, by Mr. Peter Bruff, midshipman, belonging to the *Alert*; who has charge of the prize.

"On Friday, Sept. 19, at half past five, A.M. we saw a brig to the northward of us, steering about S.W. which we judged to be an American privateer. We made every necessary preparation for an engagement, and hauled the fore-sheet to windward, in order to let her come up, as our head was to the southward. At seven we tacked and stood for her. At half past seven, being near, fired a shot to make her shew her colours, and hailing her at the same time, asked from whence she came. They answered from Guernsey, and inquired from whence we came. Lieut. Bazely replied, from Whitehall, on which they immediately fired a broadside, which we returned, and putting in stays, when the cutter came head to wind, it fell calm, and we were obliged to get out our sweeps in order to bring her round; during which time, they fired two broadsides, and raked us fore and aft. Being about, the privateer hauled up her courses, and shortened sail, in order to engage, and we kept up a constant fire till ten o'clock, when they made all possible sail to get from us, being a good deal shattered.

"Most of our running rigging being cut by her shot, we could not make sail after her, for some time. But as soon as we had got to rights, we again gave chace, on which the enemy got out all his oars, as there was but little wind. About half past meridian, being again within gun-shot, we renewed our attack, on which they shortened sail, and began to engage us a-fresh—which continued with very hot firing on both sides till half past three—when they again made all the sail they could; but there being a fresh breeze we kept along side, both continuing a smart fire. At half past five the
Captain John Bazely, R.N.
Captain of the privateer hailed us, and desired us not to fire any more, as he would surrender; but his people were afraid to go aloft to strike the colours. Lieut. Bazely ordered him to bring to, hoist out his boat, and come on board, which he did, and delivered up his sword and congress commission.—We then got all the prisoners out of her, except eight, five of whom were dangerously wounded.

"She proved to be the Lexington brig of war, fitted out by the congress; and in the course of eight months, had taken, sunk, burnt, and destroyed 52 British merchant ships on the coast of Great Britain and Ireland, as appears by her log-book, as well as by many letters and papers that were found on board.

"She mounts 14 double-fortified four pounders and 2 six pounders, and 12 swivels. Had 94 men on board, as appears by the mess book.

"When the Captain came on board of the Alert, Lieut. Bazeley, pointing up to the pendant, asked him if he knew whom he had been firing at, and told him that he received him as a rebel prisoner, and hoped that he considered himself in that light, which Johnson acknowledged he did. Lieut. Bazely told him, that notwithstanding, if he behaved with propriety, he would treat him as a gentleman, and desired him to return on board the brig, and bring with him all his own wearing apparel, which Johnson accordingly did.

"Without flattering the commander of his majesty's cutter, I think every honest Briton will with pleasure applaud Lieut. Bazely's true gallantry and British sensibility of heart; for humanity and true courage are inseparable.

"The Lexington arrived off Dover on Thursday, September the 25th, and proceeded to the Downs to send the wounded prisoners to the royal hospital of Deal; and on the 26th she returned safe into Dover Pier, amidst the joyous acclamations of all the worthy inhabitants of the town, of which Lieut. Bazely is a native. The privateer is in a shattered condition; the head of the main-mast, with the main-top-mast, top-gallant-mast, fore-top-gallant-mast, and main-boom gone, fore-mast deeply wounded and obliged to be fished at sea, bowsprit much damaged, sails full of shot holes, and her hull shot through and through.

"The Alert had only 10 four pounders and 8 swivels.

"When we consider the superior force of the enemy, without exaggeration, we may venture to assert this engagement, on the side of his Majesty's cutter, equal to any that we have had an account of, either in the former war or the present unhappy contest with the fatally deluded Americans. I am [&c.]

Geo. Friend."

LIEUTENANT JOHN BOURCHIER, R.N., TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

Druid at Spithead, October 3rd 1777.

My Lord,—By a letter to Mr Stephens of this day's date, I begged him to acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of my arrival in the Druid and of the action sustained on the 4th of September with a rebel privateer.

Your Lordship may perhaps wish to be more fully informed of the rebel force and of circumstances relative to the action than comes within the compass of a public letter: this, my Lord, is my motive for addressing your Lordship in a private letter. On Thursday in the afternoon, about half after four, a ship in a very heavy squall
of wind and rain carrying a crowd of sail steering directly for us appeared to me (it being my watch upon deck) of force,\(^1\) which I acquainted Captain Carteret, who ordered me to see the ship clear for action and hoist the private signal to the Camel for a strange sail's being in sight. The irregularity and inattention of the merchant vessels occasioned the men of war to be at so great a distance from each other as they were: the Camel, commanded by the Honble Captain Finch, leading the fleet about five miles from us, had made the signal for the fleet to go under his stern, which we repeated, and kept to windward obliging that part of the convoy to obey the signal, and the Weasel, Captain Hope, on the same service ahead and to leeward out of our sight; we having but little sail out, the rebel privateer was up with us by five o'clock, hoisted his colours, hailed us, and desired we would strike to the honour of the Congress colours, at the same time gave us a broadside, most of which was fired upon our quarter and between wind and water. I could plainly perceive her force to be 30 guns on her main deck, 6 on her quarterdeck, and 4 on her forecastle. Her marines seem to be a great number and very regularly drawn up on the quarterdeck; but after discharging their pieces, I observed they retired to a round-house abaft to load. The decks and tops appeared very full of men, and for the first two or three broadsides they were very brisk and regular, but found them slack in the middle part and latter much more so; their cohorns from their tops did much damage to our rigging. I take her to be a new ship and had a very warlike appearance. The bars of iron and langridge shot they fired shattered our rigging in such a manner that rendered most of the sails useless, so that they had every advantage over us they could wish; but as their spleen was mostly aimed at the quarterdeck, it gave me an opportunity of managing the ship with the head sails and frustrate their design (as I suppose) of raking us—she at that time got the wind abaft, ceased firing, sheered off, hauled down her colours, and made sail, at which time I saw the Camel about 2 or 3 miles [off] giving chase; and about half-past seven the Weasel, Captain Hope, hiled us and gave chase also. After the action was over I saw another rebel privateer\(^2\) laying to with her colours hoisted bearing S.S.W. 6 or 7 miles. Have since been informed she mounted about 20 guns and was in that situation the whole time we engaged, but immediately the ship we engaged sheered off she made sail and joined her.

I am sorry to inform your Lordship that the first broadside that was fired killed the master and wounded Captain Carteret in the left thigh, of which he died the next morning after undergoing an amputation. I should do the greatest injustice was I to omit acquainting your Lordship that, though Captain Carteret was so dangerously wounded, it was with great difficulty he could be persuaded to quit the deck. His fortitude and intrepidity was such that he wished to have remained on deck to have seen the service performed, but the loss of blood was so great it was absolutely necessary to carry him to the surgeon.

I should be also wanting in gratitude and justice if I omitted acquainting your Lordship of the remarkable bravery of the officers, seamen, and marines, during the action, and the alertness they showed with the fatigue they went through to put the ship in order for service, when action was hourly expected, for three days and nights the rebels were in sight.

I think I have given your Lordship as full an account as I am capable of recollecting; and if your Lordship should think through the course of this service I shall
appear to merit any claim for preferment, I rest upon that known candour your Lordship has ever shown since your presiding at the head of the first maritime power in the world. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jnº Bourchier


2. Continental Navy ship Alfred, Captain Elisha Hinman.

3. Lt. Bourchier's letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty contains the following additional details of the battle: After the first broadside wounded Capt. Carteret, "I then took Command on the Quarter-Deck, and continued the Action. At Half past Five she came close along Side, and kept an irregular, but very hot Firing. At Six she made Sail a-head. I attempted to do the same, and keep her Broadside on, but the shattered Condition of the Rigging rendered the Sails almost useless to the Ship: As the Head Sails only wore of Service, we edged away, and kept her nearly on our Bow till 20 Minutes past Six. She then had the Wind abaft, sheered off, hauled down her Colours, and made Sail. I attempted to wear Ship and rake her, but the Rigging being entirely shot to pieces, could not bring her round. I then tried to make what Sail I could, and pursue the Enemy, but found most of the Masts and Yards wounded, and the Rigging, &c. as in the inclosed Defects of the Ship, with four Feet ten Inches Water in the Hold. At Half past Seven we brought too with our Foresail and Mizzen on our Larboard Tack, to plug the Shot Holes between Wind and Water, clear the Wreck, and pump the Ship out." Lloyd's Evening Post, and British Chronicle (London), 6-8 Oct. 1777.

"Defects of His Majesty's Sloop Druid. John Bourchier Esq. Commander"

[Druid at Spithead] the 3 October 1777. (Viz.)

The Main Mast wounded in three places.
Foremast wounded.
Main Mast wounded in three places.
Jibb Boom Shot through.
Bowspreet— Wounded
Mizen Masthead
Driver Boom.
Spritsail Yard Shot to pieces.
Mizn Top Gt Yard
Arm Chests &c
Standing Rigg except
2 of the Mizn Shrouds
Entirely Shot through.
Backstay's.
Fore & Main Jeers
Trusses
Brace Pendants
Runnig Rigging
Shot between Wind & Water

Eight No.
Through the Side— Three
Trough the Quarter— Five
Double-head in the Cabbin. One

John Bourchier

EUROPEAN THEATER

“A LIST OF MEN KILLED ON BOARD HIS MAJESTY’S SLOOP DRUID THE 4TH SEPTEMBER 1777. IN ACTION WITH A REBEL PRIVATEER.”

[Druid at Spithead, 3 Oct. 1777]

(Vizt)

M’r John Willson
John Cambran
George Baker
Simon Salisbury
Lawr: Macely
Henry Hulliott

M’r John Willson Master
John Cambran Seaman
George Baker
Simon Salisbury Marines
Lawr: Macely
Henry Hulliott Boy

Died of their Wounds, since Action.
Peter Carteret Esq’ Commander
George Smith. Invalid
George White. Marine
Lawr: Lawry. Seaman
Fennigan Doo

Wounded—
M’r John Wiggan Masr. M’r
M’r Jas. Nicholson. Lieut. Marines
James Connel Seamen
James Stanton
Dan’r Butler
Pet’r Chapman
John Scully
Rich’d Austin
Will’r Wallbrook
Cha’r Robertson
James Thomas
Thos. Connolly
Thos. Hood
M’r Nicholas Poulson Surg’n. Mate
Thos. Dunn
James Miller.
Thos. Allbutt
James Murray
Ro’r Osborn
Saml Ketson Boy

John Bourchier

Mon général

j’ai parcouru dans la Sortie que je viens de faire les parages du So. au No. d’ouessant à la distance de 18 à 20 lieues ainsi que vous me l’avez ordonné; je n’ai vu dans cette croisière que deux bâtiments que m’ayant paru être de guerre et en croisière: dimanche 28. à 4 heures du soir j’étais 4 15. lieues dans l’ouest d’ouessant lorsque je rencontrai le premier, je le rangerai d’assks prks pour lire son nom qui est le *hawk* corvete de 12 canons,1 lorsqu’il s’était approché que j’avais changé de route pour le reconnaître il avait mis en panne et arbori son pavillon et sa flamme, j’arborai les miens et après l’avoir depassi je repris ma route, il changea ses amures prk la bordée du ouest, les vents étaient au Sud.

eredy 2e de ce mois à deux heures du matin étant environ à 18 lieues dans le No 14 O d’ouessant je vis le Second qui courait le bord opposé à celui que je tenais; après l’avoir depassi je virai de bord et il en fit probablement de même dans l’intention réciproque de nous reconnaître, l’instant d’après nous nous retrouvames encore à bord contraire, je me décidai alors à continuer le mien pendant quelque temps pour voir sa manoeuvre; la premiere d’avoir viri sur moi, me faisait assés connaître qu’il était croiseur et je m’attendais à la lui voir répeter ce qu’il ne tarda pas à exécuter:

ayant fait mettre chacun à son poste, je diminuai de voile et nous nous trouvâmes à portée de la voix, il me parla anglais et je lui répondis en français ce qui ne nous permettait pas de nous entendre; la mer etait grosse et le vent assez frais, il me parut se décider à me conserver jusqu’un jour, et de mon côté je me tins à la même voilure; lorsque le jour se fit je mis pavillon et flamme française il arbora pavillon hollandais, nous étions à portée de fusil par le travers l’un de l’autre, et cette proximité ne me permettait pas de croire que ce fut réellement un vrai hollandais, malgré cela je manoeuvrai pour aller lui passer à poupe dans l’intention de lui dire que puisqu’il était hollandais j’insistais qu’il rendit au pavillon du roi de France mon Salut qu’il lui devait il amena le 1er pavillon et arbora celui anglais et la flamme alors je revins au vent et nous nous trouvâmes encore par le travers l’un de l’autre fort près, il tira un coup de canon et nous nous trouvâmes encore par le travers l’un de l’autre fort prés, il tira un coup de canon à boulet qui passa en avant de moi, je lui en fis tirer un qui lui passa au moins aussi près; Sur le champ il mit en panne et son canon à mer, je mis en panne de mon côté:

L’officier qui me vint à bord me dit qu’il venait me complimenter de la part de son capitaine et me demander le nom du bâtiment que je commandais; je le reçus assés mal et lui dis que je le priais de dire à son capitaine que le pavillon et la flamme que je portais assés dû lui faire connaissance que j’étais une fregate du roi de France mon maître le Salut qu’il lui devait il amena le Pavillon et arbora celui anglais et la flamme alors je le revis au vent et nous nous trouvâmes encore par le travers l’un de l’autre fort prés, il tira un coup de canon à boulet qui passa en avant de moi, je lui en fis tirer un qui lui passa au moins aussi prés; Sur le champ il mit en panne et son canon à mer, je mis en panne de mon côté:

L’officier qui me vint à bord me dit qu’il venait me complimenter de la part de son capitaine et me demander le nom du bâtiment que je commandais; je le reçus assés mal et lui dis que je le priais de dire à son capitaine que le pavillon et la flamme que je portais assés dû lui faire connaissance que j’étais une fregate du roi de France mon maître le Salut qu’il lui devait il amena le Pavillon et arbora celui anglais et la flamme alors je le revis au vent et nous nous trouvâmes encore par le travers l’un de l’autre fort prés, il tira un coup de canon à boulet qui passa en avant de moi, je lui en fis tirer un qui lui passa au moins aussi prés; Sur le champ il mit en panne et son canon à mer, je mis en panne de mon côté:

1. *hawk* est un nom de navire, probablement un corvette ou un canonnière.
on était à guerre, il voulut encore excuser son capitaine en me disant que les insurgents se masquent tous les jours sous la couleur étrangère et qu’ils en avaient pris un, il n’y avait pas long temps, qui avait mis pavillon et flamme blanche; cette conversation un peu longue et chauffée lui avait fait avoir recours pour interprète à un homme de son canot qui parlait et entendait fort bien la français, je repetai à ce même homme tout ce qui j’avais dit à son officier et le chargeai particulièrement de le rendre à son capitaine, cet homme me demanda le nom de la fregate, je me fis donner d’abord le nom de son vaisseau par écrit qui est l’Egmond commandé par capitaine Elphinston, le même qui à commandé une division chés les russes dans leur guerre avec les turcs;2 alors je lui dis que la fregate se nommait la Sensible commandée par le chr de marigny qui (Si jamais la guerre se renouvellait entre la France et l’angleterre) serait enchanté de rencontrer le capitaine Elphinston.

cet homme interprète ou soi disant me dit qu’ils étaient quarante bâtiments de guerre tant grands que petits en croisière depuis le cap clare jusqu’à ouessant, et me demanda si nous avions beaucoup de bâtiments de guerre en croisière dans le golphe, je lui répondis que nous pouvions en avoir 50. m’ayant alors dit que il n’y avait pas longtemps qu’il s’était trouvé à toulon ou il avait vu beaucoup de bâtiments armés, je lui dis que je ne comptais pas les vaisseaux que nous avions dans la méditerranée car alors le nombre pourrait être de 80. nous nous donnions ainsi gasconade pour gasconade, le canot s’en retourna je fis servir et diriger ma route et ma voiture pour me rapprocher d’ouessant, le vaisseau anglais me suivit pendant quelque temps, et il n’y eut d’avantage de marche bien marque si de part ni d’autre cependant s’il y eut quelque difference ce fut plutôt en ma faveur, ce bateau est percé 13 et 14; peu de batterie, n’a point de canon à son dernier sabord de l’arrière à sa seconde batterie, avait six canons sur son gaillard d’arrière du coté qu’il me presentait et deux sur son gaillard d’avant:

après avoir continué à faire route quelque temps ensemble je vis deux bâtiments dont je crus reconnaître l’un pour être la première corvette le hawke dont j’ai fait mention et que j’avais rencontré dimanche 28. 7bre. alors l’Egmond manoeuvrer pour le joindre et je les vis se parler l’un et l’autre.

je n’ai eu aucune autre connaissance de bâtiments de guerre dans le reste de ma croisière, j’ai eprouvé d’assés mauvais tems et des mers très dures par lesquelles la fregate la sensible a infiniment fatigue par ses hauts, ses soutes de l’avant etaient remplies d’eau, beaucoup de coutums ont evaisi toutes leur etoupe particulierement celles sous les porte haubans, toutes les coutums des goutieres ont absolument besoin d’être recouyés:

à Brest ce 3. 8bre. 1777.

Le chr de marigny

[Translation]

My General:

I have reviewed the sorties that I have just made in these waters from south to north of Ouessant, at a distance of 18 to 20 leagues, as you ordered. On this patrol I saw only two ships which appeared to me to be warships and cruising. Sunday the 28th at 4 o’clock in the afternoon I was 15 leagues to the west of Ouessant when I came upon the first. I sailed rather close to him in order to read his name which is the Hawke, a corvette of 12 guns.1 When he perceived that I had changed course in order to reconnoiter him, he hove to and hoisted his flag and pennant. I hoisted
mine, and after having passed him, I returned to my course. He changed his tack and set course for the west, the winds being from the south.

Wednesday the 2nd of this month, at two o’clock in the morning, being about 18 leagues NW by W of Ouessant, I saw the second, who was sailing on a tack opposite to the one I was holding. After having passed him, I changed tacks, and he probably did the same, with the reciprocal intent to scout each other. The next moment we again found ourselves on opposite courses. I then decided to continue mine for some time in order to see his manoeuvre, the first to have veered on me caused me to know enough that it was a cruiser, and I waited to see him repeat it, which he was not long in executing.

Having put everyone on station, I shortened sail and we found ourselves at hailing range. He spoke to me in English, and I replied in French, which did not allow us to understand each other. The sea was heavy and the wind rather strong. He seemed to me to decide to stay with me until day, and on my side, I held to the same sails. When day broke, I hoisted French flag and pennants. He hoisted a Dutch flag. We were the distance of a musket shot abeam of each other, and that distance did not allow me to believe that he really was a Dutch ship. Despite this, I maneuvered to have him pass under my stern with the intention of telling him that although he was Dutch I insisted that he render to the flag of the King of France my master the salute that was due him. He hauled down the first flag and hoisted the English flag and pennant. Then I came into the wind, and we found ourselves abeam of each other, very close. He fired a cannon-shot which passed ahead of me. I fired one which passed at least very close to him. Immediately he hove to and put his boat in the water. I hove to as well:

The officer who came on board told me that he came to compliment me on behalf of his captain and to ask me the name of the ship that I commanded. I received him rather badly and told him that I begged him to tell his captain that the flag and pennant that I carried should have made well enough known to him that I was a frigate of the King of France, and that I was very shocked and scandalized that he had dared to fire a cannon ball at me, that it was only by a little that I did not answer him with a full volley, and that only reflection that the foolishness of an individual ought not to be the cause perhaps of the trouble and misunderstanding that a similar event might occasion between two nations at peace had stopped me. He told me that it was their custom to which I replied that it was bad, that I certainly would make a report to the court of France, and that I did not imagine that it would be approved by his. When he repeated to me that this was his way of asserting his flag, I told him that one asserted it by firing to the side opposite to the one on which the ship is if it was not from a nation with whom one was at war. He wished again to excuse his captain by telling me that the insurgents mask themselves every day under foreign colors, and that they had taken one, not a very long time ago, who had shown a white flag and pennant. This rather prolonged and heated conversation had made him have recourse to an interpreter, a man from his boat who spoke and understood French very well. I repeated to this same man everything that I had said to his officer, and I charged him especially to report it to his captain. This man asked me the name of the frigate. I made him first give me the name of his ship in writing. It was the Egmond, commanded by captain Elphinston, the same one who had commanded a division for the Russians in their war with the Turks.² I then told him that the frigate was named la sensible, com-
manded by the Chev. de Marigny who (if ever war was renewed between France and England) would be charmed to meet Captain Elphinston again.

This interpreter or self-styled interpreter told me that there were forty warships, large as well as small, on cruise from Cape Clear to Ouessant, and asked me if we had many warships on cruise in the bay. I replied that we might have about 50, he having just then told me that not long ago he had been at Toulon where they had seen many ships outfitted. I told him that I did not count the ships that we had in the Mediterranean, since then the number might be around 80. We then were trading boast for boast. The boat turned back, and I had it assisted and set my course and sails in order to draw near to Ouessant. The English ship followed me for some time, and there was no marked advantage in speed for one or the other. If there were any advantage, it was, moreover, in my favor. This ship is pierced 13 and 14, has few batteries, has no cannon in his last after gun-port of the second battery, had six cannon on his quarter-deck on the side that he presented to me, and two on his forecastle.

After having continued to follow a course together, for some time, I sighted two ships which I thought I recognized, one to be the first corvette the hawke, of which I have made mention, and which I had encountered on Sunday the 28th of September. Then the egmond maneuvered to join it, and I saw them speaking with each other.

I have had no other knowledge of warships on the rest of my patrol. I have experienced rather bad weather and very heavy seas by which the frigate la sensible has infinitely labored by their height; its forward storerooms were filled with water; many seams have lost all of their oakum particularly those under the chain-wale. All of the seams of the waterways absolutely need to be re-covered.

Brest, this 3rd of October 1777

Chev. Bernard de Marigny


2. H.M.S. Egon (74), John Elphinston. As a rear admiral in the Russian Navy from 1769 to 1771, Elphinston had participated in battles against the Turks in the Mediterranean, including a notable victory at Chesme Bay, 7–8 July 1770.

Lieutenant-général Comte Duchaffault to Gabriel de Sartine

Monseigneur

jaie l'honneur de vous rendre compte que la freguete la sensible comandé par mr. le chev. de marini a trouvé un vax de guaire anglois en croisiere sur ouessant qui a aüsé tirer a boulet sur le pavillon du roi; il est bien humiliant pour nous davoir des vaü en rade et dettre insulté a notre porte et cela parceque nous somme touiour les plus faible; vous trouverais ci joint le detail que ma donné cet officier qui a mis toute la fermeté que ces petits moiens lui ont permi demploier vous en iugeraie, lexcuse est pir que loffence, pour moi le sang me boire dans les vennes, ie naie par etté acountumé a recevoir dinsulte sans en tirer vengance, permette monseigneur que ie vous retaire ma demande daller vaquer a mes affaire, lorsque la guaire sera declaré faitte moi l'honneur de demploier utilement ie scaurai faire respecter le pavillon du roi, et alors ie naurai aucune inquetudefe, je suis [&c.]

duchaffault

a brest ce 3 8bre. 1777.
[Translation]

My Lord

I have the honour to report to you that the frigate la *sensible*, commanded by M. le Chevalier de Marini, found an English warship off Ouessant which dared to fire upon the king’s flag. It is most humiliating for us to have ships of the line in the roads and to be insulted at our door, and this because we are always the weaker. You will find attached the report which was given me by this officer, who used all the force which the little means available allowed him to use. You will judge it; the excuse is worse than the offense. It makes the blood boil in my veins. I have not been accustomed to receive insult without getting revenge. Permit me, to restate my request to go tend to my business. When war is declared, do me the honour to employ me usefully. I will make the king’s flag respected, and then I will have no anxiety. I am, [&c.]

duchaffault

Brest this 3 Oct. 1777


COMTE DE VERGENNES TO MARQUIS D’OSSUN

[Extract] a Versailles le 3. 8bre 1777

... je debatterai comme de raison L’Etat qui est annexé a la Suite de leur memoire 1 et qui me paroit prodigieusement enflé; L’art de des 8 vaisseaux de Ligne quils voudroient se procurer en Europe est une chimere que nous ne pouvons et ne devons pas admettre et sil y avoit possibilite a l’effectuer et que nous Unionis Les moyens d’y fournir, nous nous assurerions de Ces memes vaisseaux pour Augmenter notre marine. ...


... I will, of course, contest the statement annexed to their memorial,1 and which appears to me to be prodigiously inflated. The item of the 8 vessels of the line which they would like to procure in Europe is a chimera which we cannot and should not admit, and if there were any possibility of doing so, and we had the means to furnish them, we would secure these same vessels to increase our navy. ...

Df, *Stevens’s Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 171 1. The full letter concerns reasons why France and Spain should continue aid to the Americans.


CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNHAM TO SILAS DEANE

Sylas Deane Esq1 Corona 3rd October 1777

Sir

I wrote you from Ferroll the 17th UIta to which pray refer, I saild from thence the 20th, d’ (being orderd by the Governer so to do) & on the 25th fell in with a ship who shew’d us portugeese colours on Asking her name & that of the Capta was told the S* John Evangelist* Capta Nicha Kelly bound from Dublin to opporto, to which last mentioned mentiond place he said the Vessell belong’d we then desird he wou’d bring his
papers on board, which he did, amongst which was none relative to her being portugese property, than old pass granted in the year 1774 with the Name of the Vessell for which it was originally granted, eras'd out & that of the St. John Evangelist put in, on asking the Capt" why it was thus erasd, said he cou'd not tell that it was sent him from oporto to Dublin & that his Vessell was sold the Voyage before in opponto, on being ask'd where he was born, & where his Eng: colours were, said he was Born in oporto & that his Vessell being portugese property had no occasion for Eng: colours & that there was none on board, all which we knew to be false, Some of our people being Intimately acquainted wit' him, knew him to be born in Wexford in the Kingdom of Ireland, that his Vessell was call'd the Brothers & the property of Patk-McGuire & Sons of Dublin, one of his people (a Spaniard) told us that that the Eng. Colours were hid in the Ballast & on our Searching found them there, he also told us, that when we chas'd them & Capt Kelly found, he cou'd not get clear had Burn'd all his Eng: Papers, this Capt Kelly did not deny but said they were papers of no use to him—

His light bill declares him to be a British ship & the Logg of his former Voyage is Kept under the Name of the Brothers, notwithstanding what Kelly had said of her being then sold in porto & her Name alterd to the St. Jeu Evangelist, on asking how all this cou'd happen he said that the whole was a mistake, In short, from his Vague ans' & many other Circumstances it appear'd to me that his Colours & passport were meerly fictitious & that his Vessell was not sold in opponto but did realy belong to Dublin, on which we put on board a prizmaster & sent her in here, where I fear we won't be able to dispose of her to any Reasonable advantage, if so, mr. Lagoanere will send her to some port in France (under french papers) where a Better & more ready Sale may be had. We are not permitted to Stay in the ports of Spain longer than to Supply ourselves with provisions &c I am not fond of trusting too much to them will therefore Sail hence in a day or two & make about a months Cruise in which time I hope to pick up one or two prizes, which is the most I cou'd man, Shal then put in here take in necessaries & proceed directly home, mean time woud be happy to hear from you, shou'd you please to give me any orders, direct to me at messrs Lagoanere & Cos Corona, my reason for puting in here was to see what cou'd be done with this [prize] that It might govern me in Simelar Cases—She was in ballast & burthen about 200 Tons

G, Conyngham

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "To The Honble Sylas Deane Esq'r/Paris." Docketed: "Capt. Cun-
ningham 3rd Oct' 1777."

1. Saint John Evangelist was, indeed, the British ship Brothers. See Katenkamp to Weymouth, 8 Oct. 1777, and John and Thomas Kirwan to Lord Weymouth, 25 Nov. 1777, below.

October 4

"Extract of a Letter from Milford, Oct. 4."

"The Worcester schooner, a tender to the Bonaes man of war, sailed with the fleet from Jamaica. In lat. 34. 10. she was ordered to chase a sloop, which she came up with and took. This ship proved to be the Adventure, from Martinico for Virginia,
laden with rum and sugar. The *Worcester*, which lost the convoy, and saw no more of them on her passage, is now with her prize, safely arrived in this port."


**CAPTAIN WILLIAM C. FINCH, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS**

Sir,

Camel at Spithead 4th October 1777

I beg, you will acquaint my Lords Commrs of the Admiralty, that on the 5th of September, the Fleet under Convoy of His Majesty’s Ship under my command, was attack’d by two Rebel Privateers. We had shortened Sail, the preceding Evening, for the Sternmost Ships & Vessells to come up with us, & carried that Night a very easy Sail, which gave an opportunity, to about thirty of our Convoy, to run a considerable distance a Head of us. I fir’d some Shott at them to bring them too, which they not attending to, I made the Signal, for the *Weazle*, to make Sail a Head, and collect the Convoy; which occasioned her to be near five mile a Head of me. The *Druid* at the same time hauling to the Northward, to make the Weathermost Ships, Bear down, might be about the same distance upon our Weather quarter. It blew, so fresh then; that we were under our close Reef’d Fore & Main Topsails, without any other Sail sett. In the innooon we had some heavy Squalls, accompanied with so thick Weather (during the Squalls) that we could not perceive any thing at a greater distance, than a Mile. In the heighth of one of these Squalls, we heard the report of many Guns, where the *Druid* was stationed. Concluding it to be an Engagement we immediately Wore, & stood after the reports, with the Ship prepar’d for action, having previously made the Signal for the Merchant Ships &c to lye by. As the Squall soon Blew over, we perceive’d His Majestys Sloop *Druid*, engag’d with a very large Rebel Frigate, who, (upon perceiving us, Wore, & stood from her, to join another Rebel Ship which lay to Leeward. We continued in Chace of them, till past 7, when, we were within random Shott of the two, who by that time had join’d, & were crouding all the Sail they possibly could from us. As it was then dark & we had lost sight of the Convoy; I judg’d it imprudent to stand after them any longer, & Wore, to join the Fleet. At ½ past 8 we join’d the *Weazle*, who inform’d me that the Fleet, had all, Bro¹ too, to answer the Signal that I had made; that the *Druid* had received considerable damage, & untill she got assistance, was not in a situation to proceed with the Convoy. I therefore, Bro¹ too: and continued, Laying too, untill 4 a Clock, the next Evening.

At day light we spoke the *Druid*, & sent the Carpenters from the Men of War, & a party of Seamen, to refitt her.

[As the *Druids* action, cannot derive any additional credit, from my description of it, I shall refer their Lordships to the accounts, sent to me by Lieu² Bourchier the only surviving Officer.² Whose exemplary behaviour & noble conduct, during the whole Action, was what alone could enable him, to beat off, so superior a force. I beg leave, likewise to observe to their Lordships that his activity did not cease there, for the Ships Company observing their Officer, to exert himself with so much Spirit, behav’d with such uncommon alertness, that they got the Ship new Rigg’d, & the Top Gallant Yards across, by 4 a Clock that Evening]
Their Lordships will perceive (by Mt Bourchiers Account) 3 the damages she sustain'd; that there was not any part of her Sails, or Rigging serviceable & her lower Masts, required being almost totally stripp'd, to enable the Carpenters to fish them.

Their Lordships, will likewise perceive, in the List of Kill'd & Wounded, 4 that Captain Carteret rece'd a Mortal Wound, the first broadside, which was likewise fatal to the Master. During the whole time we were employed refitting the Druid, the two Rebel Privateers were, Bearing down upon us.]

As soon as the Druid was refitted, I sent one of the Merchant Ships (that I had previously appointed to carry the lights) a Head, to lead the Fleet, & the Men of War continued in the Rear of the Convoy to receive the Rebels, the Ships Companies, being under Arms during the Night, expecting every Hour to come to action. But at day light we perceived that they had Hauld up to the Southward, at as great a distance as we could well perceive them from the Mast Head. They continued dodging the Fleet, for three days, during which time the Men of War, kept their Station in the Rear of the Fleet, & by occasionally altering the Course, kept the Rebels in our Wake, which we were the better enabled to perform, from the distance they took care to be every Morning, apprehending (as we supposed) that had we an opportunity of Chacing them the whole day, (at any reasonable distance) we might force them to engage us; [which as I saw there was no prospect of, I sent some of the best going Merchant Ships round the Fleet, to order them, to put out their Lights, & at an appointed time to alter their Course, which] the Rebels [not being aware of] were out of sight in the Morning at day light, & have not been seen by us since. I flatter myself I can assure their Lordships, they did not take any of our Convoy; as such of the Ships as made Sail from the Fleet, the night, & day after the attack, must have been far out of their reach before we lost sight of them. I am [&c.]

CAPTAIN WILLIAM C. FINCH, R.N. TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir

I beg you will acquaint the Lords Commrs. of the Admiralty, that I have got on Board His Majestys Ship under my Command the person of John Welch, late Commander of the Musketo Sloop a piratical Vessell, 1 fitted out by His Majestys rebellious subjects, taken by His Majestys Ship Ariadne, & sent on Board by order of Capt. Pringle. We have also four Rebel prisoners lately belonging to the Oliver Cromwell rece'd on Board from His Majestys Sloop Cygnett, at the request of Lord Macartney. I am [&c.]

W. C. Finch

1. Continental Navy frigate Raleigh, Captain Thomas Thompson, and Continental Navy ship Alfred, Captain Elisha Hinman.
4. "A List of Men Killed on board His Majesty's Sloop Druid the 4th September 1777. in Action with a Rebel Privateer," 3 Oct., above.

1. John Welsh commanded the armed sloop Marangoin, tender to Musquito, Virginia Navy brig, John Harris, commander. For the capture, see NDAR 9: 114, 122. See also Captain John Welsh to Benjamin Franklin, 20 Oct. 1777, below.

VENTURA GOMEZ DE LA TORRE AND BARRENA TO WILLIAM SPURRIER

Copy

Sir,

Bilbao 4th Oct 1777.

We received in due time your esteemed Favour 2d Ult, to which deferred replying expecting we should have had the Pleasure to advise you the safe Arrival of the William and Polly, Capt Symonds, who to our great mortification arrived here three Days ago as a Passenger in a Jersey Vessell. He informs us that he was taken the 28th Ult, 12 Leagues off Cape Pinas, by the American Privateer called the Success, Capt John Fletcher who having shipped him and his Crew on said Jersey Vessell (which he took to be a Frenchman) sent them, as he thought, to France, and ordered the William & Polly here, where both entered on the same Tide. We exceedingly feel this Misfortune we assure you as much as if our own, and sincerely wish it was in our power to remedy it. We have got Capt Symonds to enter his Protest in form, and on being extended shall get an authentick Copy thereof, and remit the same to you to enable you to recover your Loss of the Underwriters, by whom we hope you are covered.¹ We observe you ordered your Agent Mr Nobely at St Mary's to send us your Brig John Cap Wood and the George Cap Elswothy, with your best large Fish. We sincerely wish them safe to us that we may have the pleasure of making you speedy Remittances and agreeable Sales, unless those Prizes which the Americans are sending in may be admitted to be sold. We are really surprized your Government does not send a few Sloops of War to cruize along the Coast, which is at present so infested with Privateers that We really dread that one in ten of your Newfoundlanders will arrive safe or escape them. The best Stations for your Sloops of war would be Cape Ortegal, Cape Pinas, off Santander & Cape Machichaco; We refer you to Our next, and to what Capt Symonds writes you, and remain [&c.]

Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena.

D, Sir,

We cannot sufficiently express to you Our Grief for this Misfortune, for as we have such a real tender regard for you we feel it very deeply. We hope you are fully covered by Insurance however it is a Loss as the Situation of the Market promises an agreeable Sale. We wish your other Vessels may meet with better Success, and We remain as above.


¹. See Edward Symonds to William Spurrier, 4 Oct. 1777, below.
Sir Bilboa October 4th: 1777

I am sorry to inform you of the misfortune of my being taken by an American Privateer of 8 Guns, called the *success*, John Fletcher, Commander Cape de Pinas bearing SEE E 10 leagues, after having 22 days Passage from off the Harbour of St. Johns, where I called to see if there was any convoy ready to Sail for Spain or Portugal, but finding none ready to sail within ten days, proceeded without Convoy & made Cape ortegal the 26th. Sept' and on the 28 inst' fell in with said Privateer which took me & all my Crew prisoners on board her and sent the *William and Polly* away for Bourdeaux as they informed me. 29th fell in with a Jerseyman with french colours and hailed from St' Peters bound to Rochelle and put me and Crew on board her to send me to France, but as it happened she was bound to Bilboa, and on my Arrival in the Bay of Bilboa saw the *William and Polly* not 2 leagues from me working into this Port where she now lays but believe she will not be suffered to sell her Cargo there but be obliged to go to France or America. I had a Letter for You from Captain Spurier but they have taken it from me and am sorry to inform you of the ill success in the Fishery in your employ when I sailed from Oderin which was the 4th not above 170 Quintals p' Boat. We had on board 2280 Quintals: I am sorry to hear you have another Vessel bound to this Port for it is almost impossible to come clear as there is four Sail of Privateers betwixt this and Cape ortegal. There is no English Vessel arrived in this Port except sent in by the Americans. There was one Vessel taken off the Bar from N F land [Newfoundland] and brought in here,1 belonging to Jersey and another from Malaga with Raisins & Wine and another English Brig from N.F.land was taken off here and sent to S' Sebastians yesterday but do not know where she belongs as there is no English men left on board either of them, they would not have known where the *William & Polly* did belong had not I come in myself, for they hailed from N F land. I have noted a Protest but have not got it filled up but shall send it next Post. I have nothing more to write at present but remain

___

Edwd. Symonds


1. *Adventure*, taken by Massachusetts Privateer *Hawke*. See Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct. 1777, below.

**VENTURA GOMEZ DE LA TORRE AND BARRENA TO LEFRAS AND LE MESURIER**

Messrs Lefras & Le Mesurier

Sirs

Bilboa 4 Oct' 1777

In our last 1 Inst' we had the pleasure to advise you we had rec'd a few lines from Cap't Gorroquer advising us he was at the foot of Bilboa Barr waiting for the next Tide to come in, in consequence of which we expected to see him up that very day, but we were greatly allarmd to be informd that that very night the american Privateer calld The *Hawke*, Capt. Jeremiah Hibbert had Sailed from Santander that very morning [and] commited the Outrage of seizing & taking your Schooner *Adventure* in the very place where
she was riding at anchor with the Pilot of the Barr on board & under the Sanction of our forts & brought in immediately. no Sooner did we receive this Intelligence that we flew to the Comissary of Marine to represent the Insult that had been committed against his Majesty's fort & Territory by the American Privateer and as it was late at night & that we could not make our representations in writing, we did it this morning, offering to prove the facts & insisting that the Privateer should be punish'd & condemn'd to pay all damages, in virtue of which the Commissary order'd that we should prove the facts, & we have, that under our Security the Ship & Cargoe should be deliver'd to us, which we intend unloading with the first fair weather. the post being just on parting, only allows us time to refer you to our next, assuring you we will look & exert ourselves in this point with the Same assiduity as if our own remain most Truely [&c.]

Ventura Gomez de la Torre, & Barrena


DECLARATION OF MANUEL DEL ZERRO RUBIO

Señor

Dn Manuel de el Cerro Rubio vecino de la Ciudad de la Coruña Reyno de Galicia, con el mayor respeto que deve representa a V. Exa que abiendo Cargado en la Bahia de este Puerto de barios Jeneros procedentes de Inglaterra e yntroducidos en España Lexitimamz, pagado en la Aduana de Esta misma Ciudad los Derechos correspondientes a su salida, y formado el devido rexistro en una Embarcacion suya propia nombrada San Nicolas y San Pedro Felmo, de que Nombro por Capitan y Maestre Dn Franço Xavier Garcia Ruiz, y lo dirixio con los despachos y documentos Correspondientes, y con Catorce Hombres a las Hislas de Barlobento y Puertos a que hiba destinado segun su rexistro, parece que abiendo llegado a abistar en el dia 8. de Mayo la Ysla del Sombrero sobre las de Barlobento, la quese alla desierta, le acometio una Balandra Ynglesa Armada en Corso y procedente de los Yngleses Europeos establecidos en la Ysla de s° Christobal, la qualse sin Embargo de las protestas que el Dn Franço Xabier le a écho, le arrestó y Conduxo a la Ysla Nombrada de la Anguila, despues de abier le reconociendo toda su cargazon, en donde le recoxio por fuerza todos los Papeles y abrio el rexistro, Ócurrieron el Capitan, Piloto, y Contra maestre del Gobernador de la misma Ysla de la Anguila, quien cerciorado de ser Español, de la Lixitimidad se sus Papeles, y biaxe, y deno abier procedido confraude alguno le hizo de bolber todo, y le dio testimonio para su seguro y libertad, bien que la restitucion de viberes, y cargamento fue con muchissima falta de barios efectos quese abian robado, en los reconocimientos y Extorciones échas por la Jente de la Balandra, aébirthio el Capitan antes de acerse á la vela que en el Puerto se állaba otra Balandra companiera de la que le añia apresado, y también Armada en Corso, ynsignio lo a el Gobernador, y le aseguró este podia Emprender su biaxe sin rrecelo, como lo a ècho, y en el mismo dia aébirthio salió de aquel Puerto Esta segunda Balandra, le dio Caza, le apresó, y conduxo despues de cuatro dias á la Ysla de San Christobal, y Puerto de Basseterre, en donde despues de 22. dias de dilacion no obstante de abier
presentado el Capitan todos sus Documentos, y el testimonio de su absolución en la Ysla de la Anguila, se declaró todo aunque ynxustamente por buena presa, bien quenose dio testimonio de ello á el Capitan ni pudo conseguirllo por mas solicitudes que sobre ello á echo, como resulta de los autos que aformado el Gobernador y Capitan General de San Juan Bap$ia de Puerto rico, a donde se conduixo el Capitan y Tripulacion, con la necesidad, y estrechez quese puede reconocer de este açahècimiento, y de cuyos autos es la Copia adxunta:

Considera El Suplicante fue éste un atentado ynxusto de éstas dos Vlandras armadas en corzo, Executado contra las Leyes de la Guerra, y la Paz, én que se conserba esta Monarquia con la de la Gran Bretaiia, y sebe Expuesto á una quiebra avsoluta de su casa y comercio, como no dexara de rrreconocerlo la alta penetracion de V. Ex$ y por lo mismo:

Rendidamente suplica á V. Ex$ se sirva poner uno y otro en la consideracion de Su Magestad, áfin de que se digie en proyecion de sus Basallos de pasar los oficios conducentes para que en la Corte de Londres se den las probabilidades mas actibas y promptas, sobre que se rrestituyá á el suplicante su Embarcazion, con toda la carga, yntereses, Daños, y perxuicios que se le an ocasionado, con lo demas que la Justificazion de V.E. alle por combeniente, merced que espera recivir de la poderosa proyecion de V. Ex$ Coruña Òctubre 4. de 1777.

Manuel de el Zerro Rubio

[Translation]

Your Excellency

Sir,

Don Manuel de Cerro Rubio, resident of the city of La Corunna, in the kingdom of Galicia, with the greatest respect, represents to your excellency that having loaded in the bay of this port various goods of English origin, legitimately introduced into Spain, having paid in the customs house of the same city the proper duties for their departure, and having entered into the registry a ship of his own property named San Nicolas y San Pedro Felmo, of which Don Francisco Xavier Garcia Ruiz was captain and master, and directed it, with the dispatches and appropriate documents, and with 40 men, to the Windward Islands and ports to which it was intended according to its registry, it appears that on the 8th day of May having arrived within sight of the uninhabited island of Sombrero, above the Windward islands, his ship was assaulted by an English sloop fitted out for war and sent out by the European Englishmen established on the island of St. Christopher,¹ which, despite the protests that Don Francisco Xavier made, seized it and took it to the island named Anguilla, where they examined all his cargo, and forcefully seized all the papers, and opened the registry.² The captain, first mate, and boatswain went to see the governor of the same island of Anguilla, to whom they affirmed their being Spanish, the legitimacy of their papers and voyage, and their not having acted with any deception. The governor had everything returned to the captain and gave him a written protection for his security and freedom, although the restitution of provisions and cargo was very deficient of several items which had been pilfered during the examinations and extortions made by the sloop’s people. The captain noted before making sail that there was in the port another sloop,³ a companion to that which had captured him, and also fitted out for war. The captain ingratiated himself with the governor and secured the power to undertake his voyage without suspicion, which he then did. On the same
day he sailed, the captain witnessed the second sloop leave port, give him chase, seize him, and take him after four days to the island of St. Christopher, and the port of Basseterre. There, after 22 days of delay, notwithstanding the captain's having presented all his documents, including the proof of his acquital in the island of Anguilla, all was unjustly declared a good prize, although the captain gave no testimony nor was he able to do it through additional entreaties he made about it in consequence of the decrees issued by the governor and captain general of San Juan Bap-ed of Puerto Rico—where the captain and crew were taken under what necessity and austerity can be imagined from this incident—and of whose decrees the copy is inclosed.

Consider the supplicant was done an injustice by these two sloops fitted out for war, executed against the laws of war, and against the peace which this kingdom maintains with the kingdom of Great Britain, and was exposed to an absolute loss of his house and trade, which will not fail to be recognized by the great perception of your excellency, and for the same reason:

I humbly beseech your excellency to deign to place my case before the consideration of his majesty, so that he may condescend to act for the protection of his subjects to send official letters so that the most active and prompt measures may be taken in the court of London for the restitution to the supplicant of his ship, with its entire cargo, interest, damages, and losses which have happened to him, with whatever else may appear suitable to your excellency. Respectfully, I hope to receive the powerful protection of your excellency. Corunna, October 4, 1777.

Manuel del Zerro Rubio

DS, SpVAS, Estado, legajo 7021.
1. The privateer's captain was James Dunevan and its owner was a Mr. Strol, an innkeeper of St. Christopher. Conde de Floridablanca to the Marqués de Almodovar, 23 Nov. 1778, ibid.
2. According to Floridablanca, the captors inveigled a seaman to declare falsely that the San Nicolas y San Pedro Felmo had been in Philadelphia. Ibid.
3. In the margin: "Lively, su comandt Joseph Smith."

October 5 (Sunday)

ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir, Sandwich at Spithead 5th Octr 1777.

His Majesty's Ship and Sloop named in the Margin having brought home the Number of Rebel Prisoners (taken in the Oliver Cromwell American Privateer) expressed against their Names, I have ordered them to be sent onboard His Majesty's Ship the Princess Amelia for Security, and beg to know their Lordships Pleasure with respect to their Disposal.

Inclosed is the State and Condition of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels under my Command. I am [&c.]

Tho* Pye

1. Camel, with 5 prisoners, and Druid, with 7.
2. Not printed.
EUROPEAN THEATER

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

5th [Oct.] Sunday Pleas’t w’t One of the Centinals Arested Upon Suspicion of his taken a bribe of Cap’n Lee for to Let him & Cap’n Boardman & M’ Shoemaker & Morris & Cutter go Out of the Hospital—Who was tried by a Court-Martial, But not sufficient Proof against him to Condemn him: Will’m Smith who Deserted the 20th of Sep’t taken & Com’t’d to y’ B. [black] hole

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

VICE ADMIRAL BARON SHULDHAM TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir

Blenheim, in Hamoze 5th Octo’ 1777.

I am to acknowledge the receipt of two Letters from you of the 2d. Instant, acquainting me that their Lordships have given Captain Hartwell of the Blenheim fourteen days further Leave of Absence from his Duty on his private Affairs; and-signifying their Lordships direction to me, to enquire whether any of the Prisoners taken in the Lexington Rebel Privatier, and brought into Plymouth by the Alert Cutter, are French Men; and if they are, how many; Also to enquire and let their Lordships know how many French Men were on board her at the beginning of the Action with the Alert; in answer to which, I am to acquaint you that upon enquiry from the Clerk and examination of the Alert’s Books, as well as the confession of the Captain of the Privatier, I find there were Twenty one French Men on board the latter at the beginning of the Action, two of whom were kill’d in it, and that the remaining nineteen are committed to Mill Prison; a List of the Names of whom accompanies this. I am [&c.]

Shuldham

L, UkLPR, Adm. 1/806, 375. Addressed at foot of first page: “Philip Stephens Esq’” Notation in Stephens’s hand: “8 Oct [illeg.] Lord Weymouth for H M Information.” In their letter to Weymouth transmitting the information about the Frenchmen, the Admiralty added “that the Privatier had on board when taken 14 four Pounders and 2 Six Pounder Guns (which are as many as she was pierc’d for) besides 12 Swivel Guns.” Lords of the Admiralty to Weymouth, 9 Oct. 1777, UkLPR, S. P. 42/51, 237–39. Enclosure follows, below.

1. For the second letter, Stephens to Shuldham, 2 Oct. 1777, see UkLPR, Adm. 2/555, 380–81. See also NDAR: 673.
2. See the following document.

“A LIST OF FRENCH MEN TAKEN IN THE LEXINGTON REBEL PRIVATIER BY HIS MAJESTY’S CUTTER ALERT THE 19th SEP’ 1777.”

Raphael Gereau
Augustus Guichard
John Roseau
Luke Madiller
Joseph Bonna
John Dequeni
Charles Mauduit

Wm. Lagashire
Charles Febry
John Vansan
John Dufoe
John Roustant
Antonio Versailles
Charles Legou

Peter Richard
——— Raphier
Augustine Noelle
John Bubbis
19 John Parris

Monday Sept 8th. Latt 43° 31' N Long 43° 15' W. Gave chase to a Brig which we came up with; it prov'd to be a prize belonging to the Oliver Cromwell Privateer—she was from Exeter bound to Naples—laden with Woolen Goods—

Sept 11th. Latt 46° 16' N Long 34° 49' W. Met with a Strong Gale of Wind which Sprang our mainmast between the decks.—Nothing material hapned from Sep 12th to 28th—

Sunday Sept 28th. Latt 49° 35' N Long 13° 13' W. Took the Brig Sally Edward Marshall Mast from Dartmouth bound to Newfoundland out 7 Days—having on board 275 Hhds. Salt & 75 cwt. 2 26 Bread.—after taking out some Bread &c. sent on board a prizemast & Men & order'd her for the first Safe port in the United States—Lost our pinnace along side said Brig being overset by a large Sea—

Tuesday Sept 30th. Latt 49° 13' N Long 10° 56' W. Took the Ship Jamaica, David Watt Mast from Jamaica bound to London—out 2 months—sail'd with the Fleet under Convoy of two Men of War, but parted with them some Days before we took her.—she mounted 14 Guns—her Cargo consisted of Sugar & Rum—same Day the Alfred took the Anna Susannah another Jamaica Ship belonging to the above Fleet—both the prizes sail'd in Company with the Raleigh & Alfred—

October 4th. Lost Company with the two Prizes in the Night.

Sund Oct 5 Made the Land this morning which prov'd to be Bellisle—& saw the Island of Groix this Afternoon but it being almost Calm & night coming on, we Stood off & on 'till next Morn, when we discover'd, both our Prizes under our Lee—a pilot came on board & anchor'd us in Port Louis Harbour—the two Prizes came to Anchor under the Island Groix—

Copy, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (74). Enclosure to Thompson to the American Commissioners in France, 10 Oct. 1777, below.

1. Ville de Bayonne, taken on 16 Aug. NDAR9: 574, 647.

JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE

OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES

[1777 October] 5 Sabbath. Fair moderate & pleas'd. At 2 PM saw a Sail a head; also made Land, viz. ye Burlings and Part of the Coast of Portugal. Came up with the Sail & took her. She was a Brig from Newfound Land with 1200 Quintals of Fish called the Lark Capt. Canterbury

D, MSaE. Journal was kept by the ship's surgeon.

1. "The Lark, Kentishvere, of Poole, is taken by the Oliver Cromwell privateer." London Packet 7–10 Nov. 1777. Notice of filing of libel was published in Boston on 4 December ("Libels Filed in Maritime Court of Massachusetts, Middle District," above).
October 6

*Lloyd's Evening Post, and British Chronicle (London), Friday, October 3, to Monday, October 6, 1777*

London.

Letters from Limerick give an account, that the people there have been greatly alarmed by two American privateers appearing in the River Shannon. One of them mounted ten guns, besides swivels, and the other fourteen guns. They examined the Masters of the fishing vessels, what men of war were on the coast, which being informed of, they landed, and got some fresh provisions, which they paid for, took in some fresh water, and then sailed off towards Corke.

---

Gabriel de Sartine to Jean-François-Timoléon Viger,
Commissary of the Port and Dockyard, L'Orient, France

A Versailles, le 6. 8me., 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'aviez écrite le 30. du mois dernier et les pièces y jointes au sujet du Sloup Anglo-Américain nommé le Mars, commandé par le Capitaine Alexandre Holmes, entré dans le Port de l'Orient; Si ce Bâtiment est entièrement reconnu pour Bâtiment de Commerce, il ne peut y avoir aucune difficulté d'en user à son égard dans l'esprit des ordres que je vous ai donné par ma lettre du 6. Août, l'intention de sa Majesté n'étant pas de gêner les opérations licites du Commerce ni d'y mettre des entraves; Mais il faut veiller sur ce qui se passe, pour dans le cas ou il y aurait lieu de le considérer comme Corsair, ou comme une prise, se conformer à ce qui est prescrit par les traités et par les Ordonnances et règlements du Royaume que je vous ai expliqués, et vous entendre avec les Officiers de l'Amirauté en leur faisant part de ce qui seroit venu à votre connoissance, afin qu'ils agissent en conséquence. Je suis [etc.]

de Sartine

lors qu'il sera bien prouver qu'il n'est question ni de prise, ne de corsaire, je consens que les marchandises soient entreposées dans les magazines.

[Translation] Versailles, 6 October 1777

I received the letter you wrote me the 30th of last month and the enclosures on the subject of the American sloop called the Mars, commanded by Captain Alexander Holmes, come into the port of l'Orient. If that ship is identified entirely as a merchantman, there can be no difficulty of treating it in this regard in the spirit of the orders I gave you by my letter of the 6th of August, the intention of his Majesty not being to constrain the licit operations of commerce nor to put shackles on them; but one must watch what happens, for in the case there would be reason to consider it a privateer, or a prize, conform yourself to what is prescribed by the treaties and by the ordinances and regulations of the realm which I have explained to you, and act in concert with the officers of the admiralty, informing them of that which may come to your attention, so that they act in consequence. I am [etc.]

de Sartine
When it should be proven that it is neither a question of prize nor of privateer, I consent that the merchandise may be stored in the warehouses.

L, FrLAL, series 1, E 80, fol. 17. Addressed at foot of page: "M. Viger, à l'Orient."

GOURLADE, BÉRARD FRÈRES, & MONPLAISIR TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Port L'orient 6th October 1777.

We have the Satisfaction to inform you of the arrival in this Road of two Continental Fregattes one the Rolly of 32 Guns Cap'n. Thompson the other Alfred Cap'n. Hindman of 20 Guns both sailed from Portsmouth ye: 22d of August last. they have brought under our Island of Groix two Jamaica Men belonging to London taken at the mouth of the channell one the Jamaican Cap'n. David Watts the Anna & Suzannah Johnson. Both loaded together of 657. Hogsheads of Brown Sugar 210. Tierçons Idem 215. Punchon of Brandy or Rum 3. Bales of Cotton & five Hogs heads of Coffee one is a three Decker mounting 16 Six Pounders.

Commodore Thompson has no Dispatches from ye: States for you only a private letter for procuring Guns which since Cap'n. Thompson has had; he will forward it to you next post, being just come on shore too late to write any particulars. Cap'n. Thompson Brings no news the fleet of admiral Howe was at sea ye: last account was he was standing to ye: Southward and no appearance of his going to Boston. 300 Royalists had been Killed at fort Standwick and ye: Commander Jn. Johnson had been Slain.

Cap'n. Thompson had taken a Schooner from Newyork bound to halifax. Letters and prints give the same account of the Fleet. nobody Knew where they were gone to. the date was of 18th: August and will be forwarded to you next post.

These fregattes have several wants of Cables Ankers Sails Ballasts of Iron, Guns, and several other things which we will Provide them with having declared them in such a manner as to avoid trouble, they want likely to be graved, and it will do well you have the aprobation of the Minister that difficulties may not be Started.

We will do our best for the Prizes, and dispose of them as soon as possible as they stand before the answer of the court, or any aplication can be made from ye: Court of England or the owners and will acquaint you with our progress. We have the honor to be [&c.]

Gourlaude
Berard Freres & Cie.

demonplaisir

EUROPEAN THEATER

JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE ETOURDIE,
MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU

[Gironde] du lundy 6ème [octobre]
les vents variables de lest au sudest bon frais, mais très beau temps. ce matin a 6 heures
¾ la fregate du roy inconstante commandée par m' de cuverville a appareillié avec sa
flotte qui porte des troupes, plusieurs autres batiments marchands qui étoient de
relache dans cette rade ont fait la meme manoeuvre. il n’est resté que la prise faite
par les insurgents dont le capitaine est de retour de bourdeaux, et qui est venu me
demander la permission d'attendre les vents n'étant pas favorable pour aller a la cote
d'espagne ou il compte se refugier

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Monday, 6 October
The winds variable from the east to the south east, strong, but very fine weather. This
morning at 6:30 the king's frigate the Inconstante, commanded by M. de Cuverville,
sailed with its fleet, which carried troops. Several other merchant ships, which had
put into port in this road, made the same maneuver. There only remained the prize
made by the insurgents, whose captain has returned from Bordeaux, and who has
come to ask permission to await the winds, which have not been favorable for going
to the coast of Spain, where he plans to take refuge.

D, FrPNA, Marine B4 147, fol. 285.


"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ST. ANDERO, OCT. 6."

"The Hawke, an American privateer, Capt. Hibberts, lying in our Harbour, hearing
that an English vessel laid off the Bar of Bilboa, waiting for a wind to go in, im-
mEDIATELY got under way, and the wind that favoured her from hence prevented the
English vessel from getting in. She accordingly found her lying at anchor off the Bar,
with a Pilot on board, and made a prize of her: She is called the Adventure, belongs
to Jersey, and is laden with salt fish, from Newfoundland to Bilboa."


LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

My Lord.

By the Advices which since I had the Honour of writing to your Lordship, I have
received from Ferrol & the Corugna, I find that G Cunningham & his Prize quitted
Ferrol on the 17th of last Month; not however without strong Suspicion of his having
sold the Prize to the Master of a French brig, who was probably to take possession of
her at Sea. The Success Captain Fletcher had been ordered & sent out of St Andero
and the Hawke privateer had under pretence of Repairs put into the Coruna & had
received orders to quit that Port. Three Prizes which that Vessell had made & brought in, were ordered out & had sailed it is said for Bilbao. I have likewise heard that Cole of the Oliver Cromwell being questioned about his Capture of a French Ship, had declared that her being laden with woolen Goods, made it absolutely necessary for him to take & send them to America, as he knew that Washington’s Army was in the greatest Distress for want of all manner of Clothing.

The general Circumstances relative to the Privateers which I have mentioned have been communicated to me by M. Florida blanca by the Note of which I enclose a Copy [and] Translation; as well as of the Answer which I immediately sent to it.

When I came to talk to him on this subject, I must say that he seemed ashamed of the excuse he was making for the Stay of the Revenge at Ferrol. The Governor pretended the Orders had not reached him, that the Vessel had not been supplied out of the King’s Stores, but what he laid most stress on, was the closeness with which he pretended Our Ships watch the entrance of the Harbours. I pointed out to him the insufficiency of this excuse, and repeated my expectations that such cases would not arise again, and he promised me that they should not, and that all Sales should really be prevented... I have the Honour to be [.c.]

Grantham


1. Probably the brig Ville de Bayonne, Pierre Regnier. See NDAR9: 574, 647.
2. See NDAR9: 678.
3. This paragraph is in cipher in the original.

October 7

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

6th [Oct] Cap Lee Ret fr y Hosp
7th Cap Boardm & Shoemaker Ret fr y Hosp by the Doctor Upon Acc of the Suspicion of the other Night, they went into the Officers Prison.


AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

(Duplicate)

Gentlemen, Passy, near Paris, Oct 7

We received duly your Dispatches by Mr. McCreery, and Captain Young, dated May 2. and 30. June 13. 18. & 26. and July 2. The Intelligence they contain is very particular and satisfactory. It rejoices us to be informed that Unanimity continues to reign among the States, and that you have so good an Opinion of your Affairs, in which we join with you. We understand that you have also written to us of later Dates by Capt. Holm. He is arrived at Port l’Orient, but being chased and nearly taken, he sunk his Dispatches:
We are also of your Sentiments with Regard to the Interests of France & Spain respecting our Independence, which Interests we are persuaded they see as well as we, though particular present Circumstances induce them to postpone the Measures that are proper to secure those Interests. They continue to hold the same Conduct described in our last, which went by Wickes & Johnson, a Copy whereof we send herewith, as Johnson is unfortunately taken: We have lately presented an earnest Memorial to both Courts, stating the Difficulties of our Situation, and requesting that if they cannot immediately make a Diversion in our Favour they would give a Subsidy sufficient to enable us to continue the War without them, or afford the States their Advice and Influence in making a good Peace. Our present Demand to enable us to fulfill your Orders is for about 8,000,000 of Livres. Couriers we understand, are dispatched with this Memorial to Madrid, by both the Ambassador of Spain and the Minister here; and we are desired to wait with Patience the Answer, as the two Courts must act together. In the mean time they give us fresh Assurances of their Good Will to our Cause, and we have just received a fourth Sum of 500,000 Livres. But we are continually charged to keep the Aids that are or may be afforded us a dead Secret, even from the Congress, where they suppose England has some Intelligence; and they wish she may have no certain Proofs to produce against them with the other Powers of Europe. The apparent Necessity of your being informed of the true State of your Affairs, obliges us to dispense with this Injunction. But we intreat that the greatest Care may be taken that no Part of it shall transpire: Nor of the Assurances we have received that no Repayment will ever be required from us of what has been already given us either in Money or Military Stores. The great Desire here seems to be that England should strike first, and not be able to give her Allies a good Reason.

The total Failure of Remittances from you for a long time past, has embarass'd us exceedingly; the Contracts we entered into for Clothing and Arms in Expectation of those Remittances, and which are now beginning to call for Payment, distress us much, and we are in imminent Danger of Bankruptcy. For all your Agents are in the same Situation, and they all recur to us to save their and your Credit. We were obliged to discharge a Debt of Merckle's at Bourdeaux amounting to about 5000 Livres to get that Vessel away, and he now duns us every Post for between 4 & 5,000 Sterling to disengage him in Holland where he has purchased Arms for you. With the same View of saving your Credit M Ross was furnished with 20,000 Sterling, to disentangle him. All the Captains of your armed Vessels come to us for their Supplies, and we have not received a Farthing of the Produce of their Prizes, as they are ordered into other Hands. M Hodge has had large Sums of us. But to give you some Idea for the present 'till a more perfect Account can be rendred of the Demands upon us that we have paid, we enclose a Sketch, for your perusal; and shall only observe, that we have refused no Application, in which your Credit appeared to be concerned, except one from the Creditors of a Mr Ceronio said to be your Agent in Hispaniola, but of whom we had no Knowledge; and we had Reason to hope that you would have been equally ready to support our Credit, as we have been of yours, and from the same Motives, the Good of the Publick for whom we are all acting, the Success of our Business depending considerably upon it. We are sorry therefore to find all the World acquainted here, that the Commissioners from Congress have not so much of your Regard as to obtain the Change of a Single Agent who disgraces us all. We say no more of this at present, contenting ourselves with the Consciousness that we recommended that
Change from the purest Motives, and that the Necessity of it, and our Uprightness in proposing it will soon fully appear.

Messrs Gardoqui at Bilboa have sent several Cargoes of Naval Stores, Cordage, Sail Cloth, Anchors, &c. for the public Use, consigned to Eldridge Gerry, Esq. They complain that they have no Acknowledgement from that Gentleman of the Goods being received tho' they know the Vessels arrived. We have excused it to them on the Supposition of his being absent at Congress. We wish such Acknowledgement may be made, accompanied with some Expressions of Gratitude towards those from whom the Supplies came, without mentioning who they are supposed to be. You mention the Arrival of the Amphitrite & Mercury, but say nothing of the Cargoes.

Mr. Hodge is discharged from his Imprisonment on our Solicitation, and his Papers restored to him. He was well treated while in the Bastile. The Charge against him, was Deceiving the Government in fitting out Cunningham from Dunkirk, who was represented as going on some 'Trading Voyage, but as soon as he was out began a Cruise on the British Coast, and took 6 Sail. He is got safe into Ferrol.

We have received and delivered the Commissions to Mr. W. Lee & Mr. Izard. No Letters came with them for those Gentlemen with Information how they are to be supported on their Stations. We suppose they write to you, and will acquaint you with their Intentions.

Some Propositions are privately communicated to us, said to be on the Part of Prussia, for forming a Commercial Company at Embden. We shall put them into the Hands of Mr. Lee.

We do not see a Probability of our obtaining a Loan of the 2,000,000 Sterling from any of the Money holders in Europe, 'till our Affairs are in their Opinion more firmly established: What may be obtained from the two Crowns, either as Loan or Subsidy, we shall probably know on the Return of the Couriers, and we hope we shall be able to write, more Satisfactory on those heads by Capt. Young who will by that time be ready to return. With the greatest Respect, we have the Honour to be [&c.]

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 85, pp. 85-91 (M247, roll no. 114). Docketed: "From the Commissioners/Paris Oct. 7th 1777/see the Files Rec'd May 24th by Capt. Young/Via Baltim." The original was in a packet stolen by Joseph Hysson from John Folger, to whom it had been entrusted. See William Bell Clark, Lumbert Wickes, Sea Raider and Diplomat: The Story of a Naval Captain of the Revolution (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1982), 354-55.

2. Sloop Mars, Alexander Holmes.
3. NDAR 9: 653–34.
5. Ship Dispatch, Stephen Cleveland.

[Enclosure]
The Commissrs received of Mr. Gruel on Acc of the Indigo imported in the Reprisal

Of Mr. Solier Bank to Mr. Gruel, Mr. Pennet and Mr.Tho. Morris

(about) 23000

Liv: 64571. 17. 6
This is What they have rec'd in Consequence of Remittances, from
America,—Mᵪ Souliers Accᴿ has been delivered, but returns to be
corrected, & settled, but this is nearest the Sum received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Commissᵮs have paid to Mᵪ Chaumont for</td>
<td>Livres 188729...15...0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powder received by Mᵪ Bingham at Martinique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mᵪ Montieu for the Magazine of Arms at Nantes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the first Cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses already paid for repairing the Arms &amp;c about</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mᵪ Montieu for Cordage &amp; Duck &amp;c Shipped in the Therese</td>
<td>70655. 2. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Messᵮ Horneca Fitzeu &amp; Cᵪ at Amsterdain for the Construction of a Ship of War</td>
<td>300.000. —</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Messᵮ Sabbatier &amp; Cᵪ for 10000. Suits of Cloaths</td>
<td>339799. 11. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Messᵮ Delaps on Accᵪ of Mᵪ Merkle to get his Goods from Bourdeaux about</td>
<td>5000. —</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ditto, &amp; to other persons on Accᵪ of Repairs, &amp; Disbursements of the Lexington, the Reprisal, the Equipments of the Dolphin &amp; other Vessels about</td>
<td>90.000. —</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mᵪ Hodge for equipment of the Two Cutters at Dunkirk,</td>
<td>60000.—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and other Articles about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mᵪ Williams for 10,000 Suits of Cloaths</td>
<td>600000.—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and other Articles about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mᵪ Ross to pay for Goods he had engaged for Congress</td>
<td>450.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are some of the Capital Articles of Disbursements referred To a particular Accᵪ of which shall be sent as soon as the Bills are in & settled—


"EXTRAIT D'UNE LETTRE DES OFFICIERS DE L'AMIRAUTE DE BORDᵪ
A M DE SARTINE DU 7. 8ᵪ. 1777"

Mᵪ.

[Parle de la lettre dont vous nous avez honoré en datte du 28. du mois dernier, vous
nous mandés qu'on vous a assuré que depuis les derniers ordres que vous nous avés
donné concernant les Bâtimens américains, le Navire la liberté Capᵪ Seabrook a été
complettement équipé à Bordeaux, qu'on a acheté huit pieces de Canons pour
cette Bâtiment, qu'ils doivent y être montés avant qu'il sorte de la rivierre, et qu'on y a
embarqué plusieurs Caisses et barils contenant des armes et munitions de guerre
qu'on fait passer pour marchandises ordinaires; que le navire l'industrie, actuelle-
ment dans notre Port, est un Corsaire américain qui se donne pour Vaisseau Mar-
chand, qu'il n'avait que 14 Canons à son arrivée, et qu'actuellement il en a 18. et
qu'on a également dessein de le charger d'armes et de munitions de guerre.¹

Le premier de ces Bâtimens est parti depuis plusieurs jours² ainsi que nous avons
eu l'honneur de vous le marquer par notre lettre du 20 du mois d'œ comme ce Bâtᵮ-
ment etoit un de ceux sur lesquels portaient les ordres que nous avions reçu de votre
part en datte du 19. août d'œ nous avons eu le plus grand soin de le faire visiter avant
qu’il ne sortit de notre Port. cette visite a été faite avec le plus grand soin; l’huissier visiteur nous a assuré qu’il n’y avait vu aucune espèce d’armes ni de munitions de guerre, que ce Navire n’avoit que des Canons figurés en bois et que dans la 5e. Barbe il n’y avoit que quelques touques d’huile et autres memes objets d’usage et pas un grain de poudre; son rôle d’équipage a été visé au Bureau des Classes; il est donc bien certain que si ce Navire a été équipé en guerre ce n’est pas dans le Port de Bordeaux, ce n’est pas non plus avant d’être descendu au bas de la rivière, puisqu’il a du être visité par la frégatte du Roy qui y est en station. est-ce donc au moment ou il a mis en Mer; nous avouons Msr. que nous l’ignorons absolument en tout cas si la chose est praticable, de quel moyen aurions nous pu nous servir pour l’empêcher etant à 20 lieues de distance, et n’ayant absolument personne sur les lieu. nous ignorons égale-ment si dans le nombre des Caisses et barils qui ont été chargés abord de ce Navire il y en avoit ou l’on eut renfermé des armes et des munitions de guerre; rien ne doit se charger sans le permis du Bureau des fermes, ainsi si l’on a fait passer quelque chose en fraude, on ne pouvoit accuser que la négligence des Commis. Nous avons eu, Mgr l’honneur de vous représenter que nos fonctions ne peuvent nous permettre de veiller sur tout ce qui se charge dans un Port d’une lieue d’étendue, et nous avons lieu d’être surpris que les personnes interessées à faire passer en Cour des avis si bien Circun-stanciés, n’ayant pas encore eu l’avisement de nous instruire de ces Contraventions que nous pourrions empêcher dans le moment si nous en étions prévenus.

A l’égard du Navire l’industrie, nous sommes étonnés qu’on ait déjà pu Connaître les intentions qu’on lui prête puisqu’il est actuellement en Carène et amarré sur le ponton; nous le ferons néanmoins veiller autant qu’il dépendra de nous; mais il n’y a pas d’apparence que la quantité d’artillerie d’armes et de munitions de guerre qu’il a apportées ayant été constatée au moment de son arrivée, il ôse en prendre plus qu’il n’en avoit.

Vous nous marqués aussi, Mgr, qu’on prétend qu’il s’arme un grand nombre de bâtiments français qui ont l’apparence de s’expédier pour St- Pierre et Miquelon mais qui sont destinés pour l’amérique septentrionale et chargés des choses dont les américains ont besoin. nous ne sommes nullement étonnés; ce Commerce interlope offre des profits trop Considérable pour ne pas tenter les armateurs. les représentations que nous pourrions leur faire à ce sujet seroient absolument inutiles, ils sont assés instruits pour connaitre les risques qu’ils courrent. nous ne manquerons pas néanmoins de déclarer suivant vos ordres à ceux qui s’expedieront pour St- Pierre et Miquelon que s’ils sont assés imprudent pour s’exposer ils ne doivent avoir aucun espoir d’être réclamés par le Gouvernement. Nous sommes &c.]

[Translation]
Extract of a letter from the Admiralty at Bordeaux to M. de Sartine of 7 October 1777

My Lord

By the letter with which you honored us, dated the 28th of last month, you sent word to us that you had been assured that since the last orders you had given us concerning the American ships, the Liberty, a ship commanded by Captain Seabrook, has been completely fitted out in Bordeaux, that eight guns have been purchased for the ship and are to be mounted on board before the ship leaves the river, and that several barrels and cases that had been taken on board contained weapons and ammunition that were declared to be ordinary merchandise; that the Industry, a ship
presently in our port, is an American privateer being passed off as a merchant vessel, that it was carrying 14 guns on its arrival, and now it has 18; there are also plans to load it with weapons and munitions.¹

The first of these ships sailed several days ago just as we had the honor of telling you by our letter of the 20th of last month.² As this ship was one of those dealt with in the order dated the 19th of last August that we received from you, we took the greatest care to have it inspected before it left our port. The inspection was done with the utmost of care. The inspector has assured us that he had not seen on board any kind of weapons or ammunition, that the ship had only guns made of wood, and in the powder magazine there were only a few containers of oil and other similar articles for everyday use and not a grain of powder; the ship’s musteur-roll had been stamped by the Classification Office. It is, therefore, quite certain that if this ship was fitted out for war, it was not done in the port of Bordeaux, nor was it done before being moved downstream, since it had to be inspected by the king’s frigate on station there. Or was it when it put to sea. My Lord, we avow that we are totally ignorant, in any case; as to whether the matter is practicable, what measures we could have taken to prevent it, being 20 leagues away and having no one in the area. We are also unaware whether among the number of cases and barrels that were taken on board the ship there were some in which someone had enclosed weapons and munitions of war. Nothing was to be taken on board without the permission of the tax collectors bureau. So if someone has smuggled something on board, we could only blame the commissioners’ negligence. We have had, my Lord, the honor of pointing out to you that our duties do not allow us to oversee everything being loaded in a port a league in extent, and we have reason to be surprised that persons interested in forwarding to the court such thoroughly detailed information, when they had not the discretion to inform us of these violations that we would have been able to prevent immediately, if we had been forewarned.

In regard to the Industry, we are astonished that someone had already been able to learn what intentions are taken for it, seeing that it is presently being carceened and is secured to a pontoon. We shall, nevertheless, keep watch on it as long as it depends on us; however, there is no likelihood, the quantity of military supplies, weapons, and ammunition it brought having been verified at the time of its arrival, that it would dare to take on more than it had.

You indicate to us, my Lord, that it is alleged a large number of French ships are being fitted out which have the appearance of being sent to Saint Pierre et Miquelon, but actually are destined for North America and are loaded with things the Americans need. We are not at all surprised, for this unauthorized trade offers profits too large not to tempt the owners. Any representation we could make to them on this matter would be absolutely of no use. They are well enough informed to know the risks they run. We shall not fail, nonetheless, to state, in accordance with your orders, to those who will be sailing for Saint Pierre et Miquelon that if they are foolhardy enough to expose themselves to such risks, they must not hold any hope of being reclaimed by the Government. We are [&c.]

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fols. 67–68. Notation: "avec la lettre de M. de Sartine du 15"; "with M. de Sartine’s letter of the 15th." ¹ On 19 Aug. 1777, Lord Stormont protested to the Comte de Vergennes that in the course of the month the Admiralty of Bordeaux had allowed four American vessels, which had arrived from the Caroli-
October 8

**Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser (London), Wednesday, October 8, 1777**

London.

The *Hawke* Gribble, a letter of Marque, has taken the *Juno,*¹ an American vessel laden with rice, indigo, &c. valued at 5000l. and sent her safe into Sandwich.

1. *Juno,* Scott, from North Carolina.

**Lloyd's Evening Post, and British Chronicle (London), Monday, October 6, to Wednesday, October 8, 1777**

London.

The *Heart of Oak,* Patterson; *Eagle,* Dorew; and *Mary,* Jenkins, all from Senegal, are arrived in the Downs: They have retaken the *Thames,* Capt. Hill, from Oporto to Hull, that had been taken by the *General Mifflin* privateer.¹


**Lord Stormont to Lord Weymouth**

[Extract]

No 150

Most Secret Paris October 8th. 1777

My Lord

Tho’ I have no Expectation that any Endeavours of mine can correct the Duplicity of this Court, yet I continue those Endeavours, and I do it the rather My Lord
as I happen to know, that it has been intimated to the Rebel Agents by the French Ministers themselves, that my repeated Representations distress and perplex them. It was upon this Principle, and without much Hope of success, that I waited upon M de Maurepas yesterday Morning, and had a pretty long Conversation with Him of which I will give your Lordships a particular account.

I began with saying, that I was doubly sorry to break in upon his Retreat, as I was come to talk to Him upon a very disagreeable Subject.—I will put no Embarrassing Questions to you Sir about what you do, or do not know, but will only say, that if the Information I am going to give you is really new to you, such Orders may yet be issued as will prevent much Mischief, if it is not, the Evil I doubt is remediless, Whatever be the case, I shall not repent this further Attempt to preserve the Public Tranquillity.

I have certain Intelligence Sir, that several Vessels are building in Your Ports, particularly at Nantes, for the use of the Rebels: that Ship I have frequently mentioned to M de Vergennes, and which is to mount 36 guns, twenty six of them Brass, will be Launched this Week, and will be ready to sail towards the End of the Month. She is to carry a Quantity of Arms, and Ammunition for the use of the Rebels—all that regards this Ship, Her sails, Rigging, Guns, Ammunition &c are all furnished in France, and She will be manned with French Sailors, and all this Sir is done in a country the Ministers of which continue to make us the most Peaceable and friendly Professions—

M de Maurepas Attempted an answer, but it was so lame a one that I am almost ashamed to repeat it: He began by denying the fact, and said that our Spies gave us false Intelligence—I insisted upon the Truth of my Information—He then said that if any thing of this Kind was done, it was the Act of Individuals, of Merchants who had no orders from Court, who in this, as in every other Case consult their own Interest, and who built, and fitted out Trading Vessels whenever they thought proper—"but these are Armed Vessels"—They are armed only for their Defence—They are Vessels Sir Commissioned by Rebel Agents, and built for the use of the Rebels, and whether ordered by the Court or not it matters not for us to enquire, if such succours are suffered to be furnished in this country to the Rebels, c'est la France qui Leur fournit du secours, nous ne voions que cela Monsieur le Comte, et il est impossible d'y avoir autre chose—Without dwelling farther upon this Topic, to which I meant to return before the End of our Conversation, I went on to say, that I knew that the Hippopotame, that old French Frigate which Beaumarchais had purchased, and refitted, was now ready to put to sea, was laden with Arms and Ammunition, and was to sail at the same Time with the Frigates, that escort the Troops to the French Islands, in order to be protected by them. M de Maurepas replied that with regard to the Hippopotame, He could speak positively—as you had expressed some uneasiness said He, some suspicions with regard to this Ship, in order effectually to remove them, She is frétée pour le Compte du Roi will transport some of the Troops to St. Domingo, but will carry no Arms or Ammunition—I was the more surprised at this avowal, as my secret Intelligence says, that this is the very Point Beaumarchais has been endeavouring to carry. He has begged that two or three hundred French soldiers may be sent on board this ship, till she gets to a certain Latitude, I would not mention this for fear of a Discovery but only expressed my surprize, that a ship of War (this Frigate carries above forty Guns) should be employed as a Transport and asked Him whether He would engage that the Hippopotame should go to St. Domingo, and nowhere else. He replied that He could and did engage, that St. Domingo was her Destination that He could not say what would become of her Afterwards, but that she would
like all other ships give a soumission to return directly to Europe—I answered, that we knew this ship, knew her Figure, Dimensions &c and that if she did go to America we should know her at once, and should know too what Wind carried Her thither, and from what Quarter it Blew; after this Reflexion I went on with my Narration.

That ship at Marseilles called l'heuex, which at my sollicitation, was stopt, and forced to unload the Cannon, Mortars and Ammunition She had on board, has now Sir, loaded the whole again; all this has been Winked at, and she has besides in Consequence of a tacit Permission taken on board Eight thousand stand of Arms, and has also a secret leave to sail, and is upon the point of putting to sea—, if she is not actually sailed.

Your Lordship knows that this is the ship that is commanded by Captain Lundy, one of Bougainvilles Lieutenants, I hope our Fleet will be able to give a good account of Her as she passes the Streights. She surely would be a lawful Prize if ever there was one. When this Ship was stopt and unloaded it was believed that the Rebels were in no want of Warlike stores, and it was upon the News of their having lost such Quantities at Ticonderago, that a secret Permission was sent Her to load again, and set sail. Beaumarchais secretary Frances goes on board of her to distribute the Cargo.

M de Maurepas pretended that all He knew with regard to this ship was that she had been stopt, and obliged to unload the Canon, and Ammunition she had on board, He declared that He never had heard of her since, but would speak to M de Sartines upon the subject. It would not have been polite, and would have answered no good Purpose to contradict so positive an assertion, I therefore only said, that my Intelligence was sure and begged Him to consider, how directly contrary all this was to every Principle of friendship, and how impossible it was for us to believe, that they meant real cordial Peace, if they assisted our Rebels 3 . . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont


1. Frigate Lyon, which would become Continental Navy frigate Deane.
3. The remainder of the interview with Maurepas consisted mainly of Stormont's elaboration of the last point.

**LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEMYOUTH**

Confidential

My Lord

8 OCTOBER 1777

I think it my Duty, to dispatch this Extra Messenger to your Lordship to convey an important Piece of Intelligence I have just receiv'd. A servant of Monsieur Re chaumont sets out this afternoon for Havre de Grace charged with a large packet of very material dispatches from the Rebel agents to the Congress which Dispatches are to be sent to North America on board one of those French Packet boats at Havre of which M. de chaumont has engaged to furnish one Every Month for the Purpose of carrying Dispatches. These are very material, they contain Duplicates of all those sent by the Lexington and several Papers which Franklin and Deane sent to M de Vergennes for his Consideration before they would transmit them to America and which were returned them Yesterday. I can say nothing positive as to the Contents of these Papers but am inclined to think that they relate to a Treaty which is in Negotiation between France
and the Rebels. Franklin and Deane had long Conferences with chaumont and sat up writing all last night. The seizure of these Dispatches which would probably lead to most material Discoveries might I think be easily made in the following Manner.

Two Unarmed vessels protected by a small frigate or large Cutter might be ordered instantly to Havre de Grace. The Ship of War might be directed to keep at sea and one of the Unarmed Vessels go into the Harbour of Havre under some Pretence with an intelligent Person on board who should inspect the Harbour and take proper Measures to discover the french Packet. It will be easy to do this as Your Lordship knows that the ships lie within the Bason till ready for Sea and then take the Harbour which is small, only for the Tide. This french Packet is a new built vessel mounting 10 or 12 Guns; will be found very clean and will have french Master Crew and Papers of Expedition for St Pierre in the Island of Miquelon. The other unarmed Vessel may be directed to wait at a convenient Distance off the Port to receive by Private Signal the Discovery made and communicate it in the like manner to the armed Vessel. The Precaution of having two unarmed Vessels is the more necessary to prevent a failure which might be occasioned by shoal water or other accidents hindering the going out of the Harbour in which case however the Master of the vessel so detained by going upon the Pier wch projects a great way into the Sea might from thence make such signals as would easily be discoverd by the second unarmed vessel.

The Risk of not coming at the Papers after the Discovery of the Packet, is not so discouraging as at first sight it may appear. I know for certain that the General Instructions given to the Masters of those Packets are not to throw their Dispatches over board whilst they are in these seas, but trust to their being French vessels shew their Passes to any English cruizer they meet, and endeavour to prevent any further search if attempted. If there should be an objection to the using Force, a few hundred Guineas properly employed would probably tempt the french Capt'n to throw his Dispatches overboard in such a Manner as to let em fall into our Hands. M. chaumont's servt will not travel very fast and ships are often wind bound at Havre for many Days. My Zeal for the service has led me into tedious Details I am [&c.]

Stromont


JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE ETOURDIE, MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU

[Gironde] du mercredy 8ème [octobre]

les vents pendant la nuit ont été au sudouest, le matin ils ont passé a lest, et cette après midy ils sont au nordest. ce matin a cinq heures la prise faite par les insurgents a appareillée.¹

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Wednesday, 8 October

The winds during the night were to the southsoutheast, in the morning they passed to the east, and this afternoon they are to the northeast. This morning at 5 o'clock the prize made by the insurgents sailed.¹
DEPOSITION OF DANIEL GREY, MASTER OF THE SLOOP PEGGY

In the City of St Andaro this Eighth day of October 1777, before the Secretary of the Marine Department appeared the Cap' Daniel Grey lately of the English Sloop named the Peggy who by the interpretation of Santiago Blanco deposeth, that he sailed in all respects well equipp'd from the Port of St Johns in Newfoundland the 10th day of Sept' last past bound for Bilboa consigned to Don Ventura Gomez under Convoy of the Frigate of War the Squirrel Cap Harvey with 37 or 38 other Merchantmen all bound for the Coasts of Portugal & Spain & continued under the care of the said Convoy until the 30th of September when he endeavour'd to make the first port as his Ship made much water that on the 3d of Octo' he made Cape Ortugal designing to put into Corunna but which he could not do being prevented by strong contrary Winds which obliged him to bear away for Bilbao where he was bound for, his vessel still making more water, he proceeded in this course 'till the 7 of October when at about Six oClock in the morning, having made the great Cape of this Bay at S.S.E distant about three or four Miles he espied in American Privateer about a Mile & half from the shore who fired a Gun at him & hoisted his Provincial Colours notwithstanding which this deponent continued his Course, about a quarter of an hour after the Privateer fired another Gun & making all the Sail after him he possibly could, came up with the Peggy & passing under his Stern—demanded from whence he came & where bound & what Cargo he had on board, to whom he answered he came from Newfoundland & was bound to Bilbao, with a Cargo of Bacalao or Dry Salt Fish, the Cap of the Privateer then told him he must strike to the American Flag & sent his Boat on board him to take out his Crew with their Beds & Chests & all his Papers which where carried on board the said Privateer who gave orders to his people to proceed with their Prize to St John de Luz 'till further orders keeping this deponent & his Crew on board the Privateer 'till towards Evening when he sent them onshore in a small Boat being about five miles to land, to this City where they landed about 8th at night with their Beds & Chests &c, against all which proceeding the said Cap Grey this deponent protests against the Cap of the said Privateer for the Robbery he has committed & for all damages that may accrue from the same, not being able to make this his Protest 'till his arrival in this Port, for which reason he appears directly on his arrival here before me the Writer here of & makes this Protest likewise appears with him his Crew viz Wm Mylæ and W Craig, Alex Murray, Alex Mean Wm Baillie & John Brown his Mate

Having read & examined the Deposition of the Cap' Dan Grey & his Crew by the aforesaid Interpreter, together & seperately, they do all voluntarily swear according to their Religion that the above Deposition is true in all & every Respect & have hereunto set their hand & seals, the day & year above mentioned signed

L: A: Somonte

EUROPEAN THEATER

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 66 Corunna 8th October 1777

My Lord,

I have the Honor to acquaint your Lordship that the Rebel Privateer commanded by Cunningham returned last Thursday from her Cruise, having taken and brought in a large Ship named the Three Brothers Capt. Nicolas Kelly bound from Dublin to Oporto. He sailed on another Cruize the Sunday following, and has left his Prize here.

This Pirate has been at Ferrol and in this Port so long that it is almost impossible His Majesty's Ships cruising in the Bay of Biscay should not be apprized of it, yet none of them make their Appearance in this Neighbourhood, which, now the Season for the arrival of our Newfoundland Ships approaches, is resorted to more than ever by Rebel Privateers.

I humbly conceive, if Our Ships on this station were sometimes to put in here for intelligence, which they may do without any difficulty under pretext of bad weather, want of provisions, or contrary winds, that few of these piratical Vessels would escape them.

Orders have been received in Ferrol to put all the Ships of war in that Harbour in a fit Condition to be armed at a short notice. A great number of additional workmen are employed on this Service, and new Orders for completely arming seven Ships of the Line and two Frigates are daily expected.

I must humbly beg leave to recommend myself to the Continuance of your Lordship's Protection, having the Honor to be

H Katencamp

1. Ship Brothers. For Conyngham's account of the capture see Captain Gustavus Conyngham to Silas Deane, 3 Oct. 1777, above.
2. This paragraph is in cipher in the original.

October 9

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, OCT. 9."

"On the 5th inst. the brig Jenny and Betty, of Larn, Mark Workman master, bound from Antigua to this place, was taken by the Bellona American privateer, mounting sixteen carriage-guns, besides swivels, and was re-taken on the 8th inst. by the Champion, of Bristol, commanded by Captain Wm. Peacock, who behaved with the greatest spirit and bravery on the occasion . . ."


PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE

My Lord, [Admiralty Office] 9 Oct 1777

My Lords Comm of the Admty having been informed from very good Authority that a Ship named the Heureux, carrying 24 Six Pounders, commanded by Lundai
(late Bouganvill’s Lieutenant) is intended to sail from Marseilles for North America; that she will endeavour to make Portsmouth in New Hampshire, and that Baron Steinbar 1 is gone down to take passage in her; And that a small Vessel is expected to sail soon from St: Maloes with Dispatches for the Congress: I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith, and have the honor to be &c.

PS

I.B. UkLPR, Adm. 2/556, 104. Addressed at foot: "R: Honble Vice Adm! Lord Howe/in N: America. By the Maidstone/ at Spithead." Notation in the margin: "Acqd: that the Heureux is to sail from Marseilles to N: America & a small Ship from St: Maloes with the Dispatches for the Congress."

1. Friedrich Wilhelm Augustus, Baron von Steuben (1730-94).

CHARLES GLEYO LA CHESNAYE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Copie de la seconde lettre écrit par M Gleyo la Chesnaye à M' Williams 1

Monsieur,

de la Rade du port Louis ce 9. 8bre 1777

Les Vents contraires m’ont forcé de mouiller dans la rade du port louis, d’où je m’empresse de vous donner avis de mon arrivée, mais je suis bien faché de vous annoncer que j’ai été forcé de Submerger le paquet et jen’ai pu Sauver que mes ordres, une note de la vente, de ma dépense, mon reçu et cette lettre de M. Votre père que j’ai laissé en bonne Santé également que toute votre famille. j’aurais bien désiré le rendre aussi heureusement que celui dont vous m’aviez chargé en Partant.

j’ai appareillé de portsmouth le 4 7bre au soir et trois jours après environ 60 Lieues dans l’est de nantwet je fus au point du jour rencontré par une frégate anglaise qui me chassa et envoya à midi son Cannot à Bord. (j’étais alors par 40° 9’ de Latitude). il y fit une rude perquisition. l’officier fit le veoles tillacr de la chambre, fouilla lui-même jusques dans mon pot a Tabac et il n’y eut pas une bouteille qu’il ne déboucha. j’ai encore été visité Sur le grand banc par un corsaire anglais quoique de nuit le Cape Vint lui même à bord.

on me mena à bord de la frégate où je fis voir de faux papiers dont je m’étais muni expédiés du môle de St Domingue au l’est et allant à miquelon; avec un faux journal que j’avais disposé. cela m’a Servi à me Sauver mais de Rien pour la Conservation du paquet, que je regrette plus que vous ne croyez.

Vous avez du recevoir une lettre que j’ai eu l’h de vous écrire par les frégates le Rouli et l’autre qui l’accompagnait. 3 Sans doute elles Sont à nantes car elles ont parti trois Semaines avant moi. peut-être vous ont-elles appris la perte de 1000 hommes que les anglais avaient faite Contre les américains. mais elles n’ont pas pu vous annoncer qu’un détachement du général Burgoyne fut attaqué par un parti de milice qui lui tua 600 hommes tant morts que prisonniers. enfin de Compte arreté le général Burgoyne a perdu 2500 hommes depuis la prise de ticonderado.

Vous savez sans doute que la frigate de 22. Canons Commandée par le Cap’ john doit être en mer actuellement, car elle devait partir en peu quand j’ai quitté portsmouth. 4

je vais écrire à M. Cornic 5 pour lui demander ses ordres que j’attendrai ici, à moins que vous n’en ayez à me donner.

je suis bien faché que les vents m’ayant empeché d’entrer à Nantes. mais je l’eusse encore été davantage, si j’avais été assez heureux pour vous remettre le pacquet.

on ignorait quand j’ai parti ce qu’était devenu le général howe embarqué avec son armée. j’ai L’h’ d’etre &c.
Copy of the second letter written by M. Gleyo la Chesnaye to Mr. Williams

Sir, from the road of Port Louis this 9th of October 1777

Contrary winds have forced me to anchor in the roadstead of Port Louis, whence I hurry to give you news of my arrival, but I am very sorry to tell you that I was forced to sink the packet and I was able to save only my orders, a memorandum of the sale, of my expenses, my receipt and this letter from your father, whom I left in good health, as is all your family. I would have very much wanted to render him as happy as you had charged me to when I left.

I sailed from Portsmouth 4 September in the evening and three days afterward about 60 leagues to the east of Nantucket I was at dawn met by an English frigate which chased me and at noon sent its boat alongside. (I was then in 40° 9' of latitude). A strict search was made. The officer had the decks of the cabin raised, rummaged himself even in my tobacco pot and there was not a bottle he did not uncork. I was again visited on the Grand Banks by an English privateer although at night the captain himself came on board.

I was taken on board the frigate where I showed the false papers that I had supplied myself, sent from the Mole of St. Domingue to the east and going to Miquelon, with a false journal that I had ready. This served to save me, but did nothing for the conservation of the packet, which I regret more than you might believe.

You should have received a letter I had the honor of writing you by the frigates the Rouli and the other which accompanied it. Without doubt they are at Nantes for they left three weeks before me. Perhaps they have informed you of the loss of 1000 men that the English have had against the Americans. But they were not able to announce to you that a detachment of General Burgoyne's was attacked by a party of militia who killed 600 of his men, as many deaths as prisoners. At last count, General Burgoyne had lost 2500 men since the taking of Ticonderoga.

You know, doubtless, that the frigate of 22 guns commanded by Captain John ought to be at sea by now, for she was nearly ready to sail when I left Portsmouth.

I am going to write to Mr. Cornic to ask him his orders, which I will wait for here, unless you have any to give me.

I am vexed that the winds have prevented me from entering Nantes. But I might have yet been of some benefit, if I had been happy enough to send you the packet.

It was unknown when I left what had become of General Howe, embarked with his army. I have the honor to be &c.


1. La Chesnaye was master of the packet Mere Bobie, which had carried dispatches for Congress from the American Commissioners in France, as well as cargoes for the owner, Jacques Le Ray de Chaumont, and on the Congress's account. See NDAR 9: 368–71. The first letter, dated 11 Aug., told of the packet's arrival in Portsmouth 14 July, its refitting there, and La Chesnaye's sojourn to Boston. PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 71, no. 112.

2. For La Chesnaye's orders, including instructions to sink the Congress's dispatches rather than allow them to be captured, see NDAR 9: 845.


5. Veuve Mathurin Cornic & fils, Morlaix merchant firm.
INTELLIGENCE FROM NANTES

Octo'r 9th 1777—

Information of Edw'd Kerby late Surgeons Mate of His Maj's Brig Hope but discharged in Halifax on Acc' of his Health & who had been taken in his passage in the Brig Margaret & Mary from Halifax to London by the Mars Privateer of 22 Guns & carried into Nantz.

That soon after his Arrival there He saw the Captain who commanded the above Privateer which took him, swaggering about Town & was told by Him that the Prize and Cargo were sold in France.—He likewise says that Two days before He sailed from Nantz which was on Wednesday the 24. of September, a Brig arrived from Carolina at Penbeuff laden with Rice, at the Sight of which all the Privateers in the Harbour hoisted their Colours of which He says the following are now actually lying there:
The Hancock & Adams—a Ship
The Liberty Brig &
Bellona Brig mounting 16 Guns each

The Mars of 22 Guns by which He was taken & which is now repairing at Penbeuff. The Fanny Brig who had taken 9 Prizes & carried them all into France.


JOHN KING TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen Nantes October 9th 1777

Agreeable to my promise I beg leave to inform you that I shall leave this place in about Nine Days, & will with pleasure take charge of any Letter’s &c. that you may send to America, I have met with no person inclinable to advance their Credit in behalf of the State of Virginia,1 except Messrs J. Gruel & Co., who have undertaking for £6000 Sterling & the Goods are now getting ready to be Ship’d immediately for Ocarocoak in N° Carolina, It was necessity that obliged me to engage with those Gentlemen, I shall take care to have proper articles signed before I leave here—please forward me the latest Paper’s to take with me, on the other side is the Signal to be observed at Cape Henry for the Benefit of those that may go to Virginia & Maryland I remain [&c.]

John King

Signal to be observed at Cape Henry
If it’s very dangerouse to get in, that is to say if the Men of War command the Capes—Four Distinct Fire’s will be seen—
If they are within the Cape’s & ly in Hampton Road, or pretty high up Chespeake, three distinct will be seen—
If no Danger their Two distinct Fires will appear,
A Guard of 50 Men stationed their for the Protection of Vessells that may go on shore to get clear of the Enemy—

J. King

1. On 21 July 1777, King, a merchant of Petersburg, Va., who was then “speedily going to France,” had been authorized to contract on the behalf of the state of Virginia “with any Persons willing to undertake the supplying ten thousand Bushels of Salt for this State by the first Day of January next.” *Journals of the Council of the State of Virginia*, edited by H. R. McIlwaine, et al., 3 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1931–52) 1:454.

2. On 8 December, as soon as he returned to Virginia, King informed the governor that “many Vessels may be shortly expected here laden with the Commodities which are most necessary for the Army, & that for their greater safety he had appointed them certain Signals on Cape Henry . . .” In consequence, the governor, with the Council’s advice, directed the county lieutenant to employ up to 20 militiamen to tend the proposed signal fires. Ibid., 2: 43.

October 10

**NEW-LLOYD’S LIST (LONDON), FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1777**

The *Dover*, Walsby, from Oporto to London, was taken the 11th of Sept. by the *Civil Usage* Privateer; 1 the *Leonora*, ———, from Mountsbay, was also taken by the said Privateer, and released after being plundered.

1. The *Dover* was later retaken by the *Levant* letter of marque. *New-Lloyd’s List*, 4 Nov. 1777.

**SILAS DEANE TO JEAN H. AND SAMUEL DELAP**

[Extract]

Dear sir  

[Paris, Oct. 10, 1777]

Yours of the 4th. to Messrs. F. D. & L is before me & I now inclose you a Copy of mine of the 19th of August last since which I have had none of yours 1 Mr I. 2 is in the Country for a few days, in the meantime the measures you have taken as well with respect to the Vessels detained as the Prize 3 are undoubtedly the most proper & I hope you will yet succeed so as to get Liberty for the Prize to go to Bilboa, where our Correspondence is with the house of Messrs. Gardoqui, fils & Co. & if it be practicable I wish you would engage the Pilots to deliver to the Commanders of Prize Vessels arriving in future directions how to conduct on their entering the River or being examined, which will be singly to shew American Colours, keep their Prisoners (if any) out of sight & report the Vessel from Boston. But as two Prizes are now detained at Nantes which were reported from St. Eustatia & as you have many busy person in Bourdeaux as well as Nantes the safest way may be to advise them for Bilboa & to apply there to Messrs. Gardoqui &c. These Prizes are made by Privateers on private acct. consequently are not at our Controul & all we can do is to advise . . . &c.


1. Neither letter has been located.

2. Perhaps Ralph Izard.

3. On 7 Oct., John Ross sent Silas Deane an extract from a letter from the Delaps, dated Bordeaux, 27 Sept. 1777, in which they asked Ross to inform the American Commissioners “that we are impatient to hear from them. We have however got the two Vessels that were stoped cleared. They both left Blaye last Monday. . .” Connecticut Historical Society *Collections* 23: 117. The two vessels that had been stopped were the *Seaflower*, Patrick Barry, and the *Liberty*, Capt. Seabrook. See notes to “Extrait D’ une lettre des officiers de l’amirauté de Bordé a M De Sartine Du 7. 8me 1777,” above.
To The Honb. Benjamin Franklin, Silas Dean, & Arthur Lee. Esqrs.

Gentn.

You will perhaps be surpriz'd at two Continental Frigates arriving in France, & not bringing Dispatches or Letters of any kind to you respecting the Public Service— I will therefore do myself the Honour of making known to you the reason of this un-expected appearance in France—Having waited a long time for Guns and being often disappointed, I went in person to Congress to obtain leave to proceed to France & procure Guns and necessaries, I return'd to the Ship again at Portsmo, on my return I found a probability of getting Cannon in a short time, which I thought would be much better than risquing the Ship to France without Guns; I obtain'd most of them after along time waiting.—Then I was put to a difficulty for Men; however I made up the Complement to 180 being 80 short of our number—however considering the little probability of obtaining more, the Season advancing; the Ship growing very foul, & the chance of being block'd up, or watch'd by Brittish Frigates—I say, taking all these things together I thought best to proceed to Sea & make the best of our way to France making what prizes in our way we possibly could Man—From my former Instructions I thought I was authorized to take this Step; therefore without waiting an Answer from Congress I put to Sea, informing them what I had determined; being the Senior Officer I order'd Capt Hinman in the Alfred to proceed on the Cruize in Company, whose Ship was in the same situation as the Raleigh, respecting Men and Guns, and in want of many other Articles not to be procured in America, such as Cables Sails and Rigging—we proceedd in full confidence Congress will justify the Step, rather than the Ships should remain in port & be block'd up as the other Frigates are—we are now arriv'd, we want our Ships clean'd and repair'd, some Cables, Cordage, and Canvas &c', the Raleigh will not want much except some Cables, and a Main Mast, which we had the misfortune to spring at Sea in a Gale of Wind; shall also want Six twelve pound Cannon & some military Stores—I shall use all the fru-gallity possible, allowing the Ships ought to be well fitted, now they are where Mate-rials are to be had cheap—We have obtained leave, after various pretences, not con-sistant with the Honour of the United States, nor the Respect due to a Man of War belonging to a free and Independant Empire—But small Folks must sing small, & for the sake of Convenience must abate their Dignity my Line of Conduct shall be mark'd with prudence and Circumspection, and the Interest of the States whom I serve, shall be my governing principal; I meet with every personal Respect & the prin-cipal people shew a friendly disposition towards America; they seem even to Love them for murdering their Old Enemies the English—I wish they were as little afraid of them as the Americans are.—With this you will receive a Letter which was wrote to you at that time for the Special purpose abovemention'd; I don't know that it contains anything that can be apply'd to the present Case, but I thought it proper to forward it to you, in order you might see the Contents; The Frigate I have the Hon-our to Command is of equal Quality to any in Europe & will do Honour to the United States, wherever she goes—I have a very crowded Audience every Day—I should be proud of a Line from you, pointing out a Line for my Conduct during my stay here (which will be as short as possible (except you have any Commands to execute for the good of the Continental Service) if so the Ship shall wait your Commands—I
wish I had hapned in a place where I could have had an Interview I might have given you a just description of our Naval Affairs; as I flatter myself none have a more comprehensive view, nor have the Honour of the Service more at Heart, & am confident any Measure I might recommend, would be agreed to by Congress—

What we did after leaving New England, will appear by the Copy inclos'd of a Narrative of our Cruize, with I have forwarded to Congress by a Vessel I Boarded at Sea. I also send you the Minutes of our Voyage afterwards until our Arrival at this Port, which was on the Evening of Monday Oct. 6th when the Raleigh & Alfred came to Anchor in Port Louis both in Distress. I orderd the prizes to Anchor without the Harbour under the Island of Groix, until I could be Inform'd what reception we might meet with—they are yet at that place, but not at our Risque—I hope you will approve of our proceedings; the Ships and Cargoes are Sold for about half their value; but there seems a necessity for secrecy & dispatch, & half a Loaf is better than no Bread, says the Old proverb—I must refer you to Messrs Berard & O'qetter for further particulars respecting the Ships in the Road—The Frigates we are preparing with all Expedition to have down, & As to News in America when we sail'd—can say but little about it—How's Fleet was at Sea, seen last, standing out of Delaware Bay, suppos'd bound to Chesapeake Bay he knows not where to go, he sends his Dove often out of the Ark to see if there is any resting place for his foot on Land, he will not find any except New York—Our Grand Army was at and about Philadelphia, wanting nothing but a General Battle with the Enemy—Ticonderoga to be sure is a cursed Affair & not cleared up to the Satisfaction of the public when I sail'd; the whole proceedings there are very misterious & very unfortunate at present; but I believe it will turn to the Enemies disadvantage—

The Enemy were at Still-water 50 Miles above Albany dealing out pardons and Proclamations: our Forces were Collected about 10 Miles below; where it was 4th they would make a Stand; 4,000 under Genl Sullivan were marching to their Assistance and many other Reinforcements of Militia—All the Enemy can do will not hurt us so much as the Averice & Loss of Virtue among the people, not that they are less united in Voice but less Active in Body; some parts of the Continent are in a seemingly lethargic Security—Necessaries are very high, which some have not fortitude enough to bear with—short sighted Mortals don't see the prospect brightening before them of Ease, Freedom & plenty—the Day we sail'd we spoke a Sloop in Boston Bay, who said an express arriv'd in Boston as he came out, that General Burgoyne was surprized with his Guards, & taken—how far this may be depended on you will judge from the nature of the Information—I wish I could add anything further that would be either Interesting or Amusing—I must beg pardon for the Freedom I have taken in troubling you with the Lana and I fear Insiped Letter—but it is stampt with truth & just as things appear to me with respect to America—I am [&c.]

Tho. Thompson

Port Louis Oct. 10th. 1777

Since concluding my Letter—here has arriv'd a small Vessess [Vessel] which came as a pacquet to America—She sail'd from Portsmouth 4th. Septem' Capt. de La Mere Bobie, he was boarded & search'd by an English Frigate of 22 Guns, 50 Leagues from Nantuckett Shoals—he threw over his Mail and all his Letters except one for Mr Williams w'ch he has sent—he further adds there was no Acco of How's Fleet &
Army, & that Burgoyne had lost 2,500 men in different Skirmages, since he took Ticonderoga—600 of which number a party of our Militia had taken Prisoners—This all I can learn respecting American News—I am [&c.]

Tho' Thompson

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 71.

1. Continental Marine Committee to Captain Thomas Thompson, 29 Apr. 1777, NDAR8: 472–75. Raleigh sailed before Thompson received the Marine Committee’s subsequent orders, dated 6 Sept. NDAR 9: 887.

2. Continental Marine Committee to the American Commissioners in France, 29 Apr. 1777, NDAR8: 475.

3. Thompson to the Continental Marine Committee, 28 Sept., above.


5. Gourlade, Bérard Frères & Monplaisir to the American Commissioners in France, 6 Oct., above.

6. Charles Gléy Lo Chesnaye was master of the packet Mere Bobie.

7. Charles Gléy Lo Chesnaye to Jonathan Williams, 9 Oct., above.

Copie D’une lettre de M. Louvel Comm’re des Classes à M De Sartine.

M’gr. De Paimboeuf Le 10. 8°. 1777.

Le Mars doit en fin sortir demain. ce Corsaire armé de 22. Canons et de 120. hommes parroit bien disposé à tirer parti des Circonstances et des rencontres qu’il pourra faire, je le vois ici avec une certaine inquiétude par le souffle belliqueux qu’il répand dans notre petite Cité un peu Républicaine, surtout parmi nos Marins naturellement disposés à se laisser séduire par l’appas de la fortune avantageuse. heureusement que plusieurs, déjà détrompés par l’infidélité des Cap’tes Corsaires à leur tenu leurs promesses, en qui ont déserté de leurs bords bien résolus de n’y pas retourner, dégoutée les nôtres de ce métier pénible et dangereux. en effet ces Capitaines ne trouvent plus guère que des mauvais Sujets, des vagabonds et avanturiers qu’ils traitent en conséquence et dont la société ne peut être assurée tot purgée.

On m’assura hier, M’gr qu’un navire amériquin qui eut sorti d’ici il y a environ 3. semaines comme Marchand n’ayant que quatre canons en cas de besoin, avait fait trois prises dans nos Mers dont une chargée de sucre, Caffé et indigo évalué à 900£, que l’on prétend avoir été déchargée sous voiles au large dans quelques Navires françois ou étrangers qui sont entrés dans cette riviere. voila les moyens usités actuellement pour éviter toute défense et prévoyant à ces egard. je ne vous eus parler M’gr. que pour vous prévenu de l’impossibilité ou je suis de pouvoir vous instruire exactement de toutes les ruses et intrigues que la Cupidité inspire à nos spéculateurs de fortune. Je Suis [&c.]

[Translation]

Copy of a letter from M. Louvel, Commissaire des Classes, to M. de Sartine.

My Lord From Paimboeuf, the 10th of October 1777.

The Mars should at last depart tomorrow. This privateer, armed with 22 guns and 120 men, appears well disposed to take advantage of the circumstances and encounters it may confront. I see her here with a certain uneasiness because of the warlike influence that she diffuses in our little, somewhat republican, town, especially among our seamen, naturally disposed to let themselves be seduced by the temptations of adventurous fortune. Happily, several, already undeceded by the bad faith
EUROPEAN THEATER

of the privateer captains in keeping their promises to them, who have deserted them, firmly resolved not to return, gave a disgust to our seamen for this troublesome and dangerous calling. Indeed, these captains find hardly more than bad subjects, vagabonds and adventurers whom they treat accordingly, and of whom society cannot be purged soon enough.

I was assured yesterday, My Lord, that an American vessel that left from here about three weeks ago as a merchant ship, having only four canons in case of necessity, has made three prizes in our seas, one of which was laden with sugar, coffee, and indigo valued at 900 thousand &; which, it is asserted, was discharged under sail at sea into some French or foreign vessels, which have come into this river. Those are the means now employed to evade every defense and precaution in this regard. I have spoken to you, My Lord, only to show you the impossibility of my being able to tell you exactly of all the ruses and intrigues that greed inspires in our speculators of fortune. I am [&c.]


JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE ÉTOURDIE,
MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU

[Gironde River] du vendredi 10ème [octobre]
beau temps toute la journée, et petit vent de sud-sud-est. ce matin a huit heures ayant eu connaissance d’un bâtimant a trois mats armé en guerre, sur le champ j’ai fait embarquer la chaloupe, et fait [indecipherable] le branlebas chacun a son poste. a dix heures j’ai appareillé. j’ai fait gouverner sur le susdit bâtimant a onze heure le pilot luy ayant manqué, il a mouillé au dessous de royant.1 a midy étant assez près de luy pour le reconnaître pour insurgent, j’ai envoyé un officier a son bord. a une heure j’ai mouillé auprés de luy. mon canot est revenu a bord avec le capitaine du dit bâtimant qui est le sieur jean heart commandant la fregate le portsmouth armée de dix huit canons en batterie, quatre sur ses gailliards, et de cent trente hommes d’équipage. a cinq heures, j’ai fait débarquer la chaloupe. a six heures j’ai appareillé ainsi que la fregate insurgente, et apres avoir couru six bordées les vents au sudest nous sommes parvenu a [laide?] du flot a une heure après minuit dans la rade du verdun. ou nous avons mouillé par les 10 brasses fond de sable gris. et filé 45 brasses. l’insurgent a mouillé a coté de nous.

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Friday 10th [October]
Fine weather all day, and light wind from the southsoutheast. This morning at eight o’clock having had knowledge of a three-masted armed ship, I immediately brought on board the ship’s longboat, and had the ship cleared for action, sending each to his station. At ten o’clock I set sail. I steered toward the above-mentioned ship. At eleven o’clock, lacking a pilot, he anchored below Royan.1 At noon, being close enough to him to recognize that he was an insurgent, I sent an officer on board him. At one o’clock I anchored near him. My boat returned with the captain of the said ship, who is Mr. John Heart, commanding the frigate the Portsmouth, armed with eighteen cannons in broadside, four on the forecastle and quarterdeck, and with a
crew of 130. At five o’clock I ordered the longboat away. At six o’clock I set sail, as did the insurgent frigate, and after having tacked six times, the winds to the south-east, we had reached the fleet, at an hour after midnight, in the road of Verdon, where we anchored in 10 fathoms, a bottom of gray sand, and payed out 45 fathoms. The insurgent anchored beside us.

D, FrPNA, Marine B4 147, fol. 285.

1. Royan, town on the north bank at the mouth of the Gironde.

October 11

**LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GOVERNOR EDWARD HAY**

[Extract]

(No. 9.) Whitehall 11th October. 1777.

Governor Hay.

Sir,

I have received and laid before The King your two Dispatches of the 12th July, & one of 17th numbered 19.¹

The Assembly having refused to make provision for defraying the expense of the Rebel Prisoners landed by Cap’ Pringle,² you have no other resource than that of drawing upon the Treasury for your reimbursement, & I doubt not their Lordships will give orders for the payment of your Bills, if they are accompanied with the proper vouchers.

It would certainly be very improper to set these Prisoners at large, or to put them on board Merchant Ships without any obligation from the Masters for their safe delivery. But in order to relieve you from your present embarrassment on this account, as well as to ease the public of the extraordinary charges of keeping them confined in the Island of Barbados, I would recommend to you to put them on board any of His Majesty’s Ships that may touch at Barbados, in such numbers as they can be received, in order to their being sent to England by the Admirals directions; and in case you cannot so dispose of the whole you might agree with the Masters of different Merchant Ships to take the remainder in small numbers, & to carry them home as Prisoners, their passage to be paid upon Certificates of their delivery on board any of His Majesty’s Ships at Plymouth, Portsmouth, in the Downs, or at the Nore; and this method I should advise you to pursue in all future Cases of the same nature. . . . I am &c.

Geo: Germain

¹ An extract of the second letter is printed at NDAR 9: 294.
J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la Lettre que vous m'avez écrite Le 6 de ce mois pour m'informer de l'arrivée dans la Rade du Port Louis, des deux frégates anglo-américaines, Le Raleigh de 26 Canons, Captn. Thomsein, et l'Alfred de 20 Canons, Captn. Elechia Henman, et des deux navires de Commerce, pareillement Anglo-américains, Venus sous l'escorte des deux frégates et chargés d'environ 200 Tons de Sucre et de Rhum. Vous aurez soin de faire constater par des procès verbaux les réparations dans les deux frégates peuvent avoir besoin pour être mises en état de reprendre la Mer, et vous leur ferez fournir, en payant, les secours de subsistance et autres qui leur seront nécessaires; mais vous veillerez exactement à ce qu'il ne soit embarqué sur ces Bâtiments aucuns effets ou munitions de guerre, et à ce que, conformément aux traités, ils ne restent dans le port que le temps absolument nécessaire pour se réparer et pouvoir à leurs besoins. Vous aurez soin de me rendre compte des moyens que vous aurez mis en usage pour accélérer leur départ.

à regard des deux navires Chargés de Sucre et d Rhum vous les laisserez jouir tranquillement de la liberté du Commerce que Sa Majesté accorde dans Ses Ports à toutes les nations. je Suis [&c.]

d'*artine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 11 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, the letter that you wrote to me on the 6th of this month, informing me of the arrival in the roadstead of Port Louis of the two Anglo-American frigates, Raleigh, of 26 guns, Captain Thomsein, and Alfred, of 20 guns, Captain Elechia Henman, and of the two merchantmen, also Anglo-American, arrived escorted by the frigates and laden with almost 200 tons of sugar and rum. You will take care to verify by means of official reports the repairs to the two frigates, putting them in a condition to put to sea again, and you will furnish them, for payment, provisions and others assistance that they will need, but you will keep a close watch so that there will not be embarked on these ships any warlike supplies or munitions, and so that in accordance with the treaties, they only remain in that port for the time absolutely necessary to make repairs and to fill their needs. You will take care to report to me the means that you use to speed their departure.

In regard to the two ships laden with sugar and rum, you will allow them to enjoy calmly the freedom of trade which His Majesty grants to all nations in his ports. I am [&c.]

d'*artine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E* 80, fol. 18. Addressed at foot of page: "M. Viger l'orient."


"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ST NAZER—RIVER MOUTH OF NANTZ—DATED 11TH OCT* 1777—"

"In hopes of being of service to my Country & to some Friends I give you the following information whch may be publish'd if you think proper,—"
“One day this Week a Brig Letter of Mark of 16 Guns that sail’d from hence ten days before for S Carolina return’d with a large Jamaica Man wth she pick’d up from out of a Convoy this prize is Loaden with 400 & odd Hhd Sugar & 150 Puncheons rum, besides Mahogany & pimento—they say to value of £20,000 Stg they have endeavourd to erase the Name from the Stern, but still remains a sufficiency to see, she was call’d the Manners, she is a long ship without a Head has Quarter Galleries, close Quarters Boards & four Windows in her Stern—the Crew are close prisoners on Board the Brigg whose Name I cannot learn but is commanded by one Cross, this day they sent a New sail on the prize wth denotes they intend sending her out again—a practice—they use with all prizes since the Clarendon & Hanover Planters—interruption & then return under French or some other Neutral Colours, or else after reaching some adjacent small port send the Goods thence in Barks it is said that Cross is determin’d to sell his prize for the first offer, may be made him & dare say wou’d not refuse £8 to 10,000 Stg for her tho’ she may be actually worth three times the sum,—

“There are in this River Eight privateers the Mars of 18 Guns to sail in course of next Week as well the Liberty of 16 Guns in Concert with another Brigg, whose Name I cannot learn, Its really distressing to any good subject to see these pirates swarm in this manner & daily insulting the Brittish Flag—God grant the present troubles may soon subside—& then I woud be glad to see our perfidious Neighbours receive their Meritt for their underhand dealings.”

Copy, UkLPR, C.O. 5/155, 174. This extract, without the first paragraph, was published in the London Chronicle, 1-4 Nov. 1777.


EDMUND ELSDEN TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord

Lynn R° Octo° 11th. 1777

Mr Chamiers obliging Letter by direction of your Lordship, dated 1st July, regarding the Ransomer of the Ship Patty, John Green Master, was duly rec’d, agreeable to which I take the earliest Opportunity to inform your Lordship that, James Grice the Ransomer for said Ship, was carr’d into Feroll abt the 10th. of Sep’ & by the Letter herewith inclosed, which came to my Hands late last night, it appears. in Case they did not receive an Acc’ there, that the Ransom was paid, they were to proceed to Bilboa, which no doubt they will do. As stop, was put to the Payment of the Bill, Bilboa is the Port the Northampton was ordered to. by what ever Name the Privateer may go, or who ever may appear as Commander, Cunningham is the Person who has the command of her. as appears by a Letter from Benj’ Bailey who was Prize Master of the Northampton Dated Forton Goal 19th Sep’ to Mr Hogg Owner of s’d Ship. The Privateer was called the Pegasus by the People on board, but by a Letter from Mr Frazer at Dunkirk I find, that s’d privateer went from thence 17th July under the designation of the Levrier John Hutchinson of Newcastle—Master, and Richard Allen went as Super cargo, bound to Bergen. I hope your Lordship will use your good Offices in endeavouring to get the Ransomer released, and flatter my Self there is no doubt of your succeeding, your Lordship will observe something has been cut from the bot-
tom of the Ransomers Letter which I apprehend was done by the Ransomers Wife before she sent the Letter to Lynn, I remain [&c.]

Edm. Elsden


1. Letter not found. For the capture of Northampton and the subsequent activities of Benjamin Baily see NDA 9: 517-19, 522, 534-36, 539.

October 12 (Sunday)

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, OCT. 12.”

“The Master of the Hero transport, arrived here from New York, says, that in lat. 50, 30, long. 9, he fell in with an American privateer, whom he engaged some time, he having ten six pounders on board during the action. The Two Brothers, another transport, and part of the convoy, came in sight, and bore down to them, on which the privateer crowded all the sail she could, and left him. He said he should have chased her, as the Two Brothers came to his assistance, but that he knew she had much the heels of him, and he could never hope to come up with her, unless by some accident of her carrying away a mast, &c. The privateer is described to have 10 guns, a black vessel, snow rigged, to sit very well on the water, and to have a number of hands on board, from whence it is concluded she was not long from port.”


“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CAPTAIN BRAIN, OF THE ALEXANDER LETTER OF MARQUE, BELONGING TO GREENOCK, DATED 12TH OF OCTOBER”

“On the 20th of June last I fell in with two American sloop privateers, the largest of which mounted 12 carriage guns, besides a great number of swivels, and came up with me about eight o’clock in the morning, and hailed. I fired a gun aboard of her, and hoisted an English ensign. She gave us a whole broadside, and hoisted an American pendant. After a smart engagement, which lasted above three glasses, she sheered off. There was reason to believe a great many of the privateer’s men were killed, as there was not above one third of the people seen on deck when she went away, which at first appeared to be about 120 or 130. The Alexander had only 30 men and a few passengers, who all behaved exceeding well. The Alexander had only some shots through her masts and sails, and her stern a good deal shattered.”


JOURNAL OF H.M.S. CENTAUR, CAPTAIN RICHARD HUGHES

October 1777

Lizard No. 10. 4E Distant 55 Leagues

Sunday 12th. AM, at 6 Saw a Sail to the S’ward  Gave Chace  at 8 Fired 4 Eighteen Pounders & Brought the Chace too, on Examination found
hir to be the Betsey¹ Schooner from Nantz, bound to N° Carolina, American Property, which we made a Prize of; Sent a Lieutenant and Two Petty Officers & Ten Seamen on Board of hir.

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/172.

1. The master's name was variously reported as Gill, Gale, and Galle.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

[Translation]

Most excellent Sir.

My Lord,

I have taken into Consideration what Your Excellency says in your Office of the 9th Inst: relative to two Cases, which you mention, of Ships which have lately entered the Ports of Coruña & Bilbao.—With regard to the first, your Excellency states, that it is not an American Vessell as it is thought to be, but an English one, named the Three Brothers,¹ which was taken by the Privateer Cunningham, & the Sale of which is intended, adding, that the Commandant General is apprized of it, although you think he may have been misled by wrong Informations.

With regard to the second, it has been asserted to your Excellency that the Privateer Hibbert took another English Vessel under the Cannon of Bilbao,² and carried it into that Port. I am writing to both Places to know thoroughly the Truth of both the Cases, and can assure your Excellency, that the King's Orders are strictly observed everywhere: But I will not omit laying before you, that, according to the Advices which I have already received from Coruña, there has been no Intention of selling the Ship called the Three Brothers, but merely of disarming and laying her aside there for the present; and with respect to the other, which is said to have been taken under the Cannon of Bilbao, I cannot but think that the Information must be groundless, from the Circumstance of the Judge not having made me a Complaint of it, it not being natural that an Insult of that Nature should be left to be represented by a third Person.

A short Time ago an English Frigate attacked and took, under the Cannon of Muros in Galicia, a Vessell commanded by Captain Buchomere coming from the Colonies, and carried his Prize into Lisbon, where he sold it.—We undergo other frequent Grievances of the like kind from English Ships of War, which cruise within Sight of our Ports and Coasts. The Insults which the Spanish Flag suffers in the American Seas are even more frequent and more serious, although our Ships are on the direct Course to our own Possessions, (nor are even some of the Ships of the King's Navy exempted from this Treatment,) it being now a regular Practice of the British Navy to fire immediately with Ball, to take possession of the Ships, to recognize the Cargoes, to break open the Papers & sealed Registers, to occasion many other Vexations, & even to declare some Vessels to be legal Prizes. Facts, which unless proved as they are, would appear incredible.—We have made infinite Applications & Complaints to the English Ministers, in the most moderate and friendly Terms, upon these irregular proceedings, but unfortunately we have not yet received due Satisfaction in any one Instance.—Your Excellency loves the publick Good & Justice, and knows how important the preservation of Peace between the two Courts is, and that, in order to procure it, both Courts should strive to exceed each other in fixing it by the
Root, by avoiding all Disturbances, & lawfull Causes of Complaint. I therefore leave it to your Excellency's Penetration & Prudence to consider, whether We, who watch the doing Justice to British Subjects in the most slight & minute Objects, can indifferently see, that while we receive continual Protestations of the like kind from the British Cabinet, no Measures yet reach the stopping the Evils of which we complain, nor give any Satisfaction for the Grievances already suffered.

I repeat my Obedience [&c.] 3

S: Lorenzo,


1. Ship Brothers, Nicholas Kelly. See Gustavus Conyngham to Silas Deane, 3 Oct. 1777, above. Grantham argued in his note to Floridablanca on 9 Oct. that the prize crew of the Brothers tried to sell the ship, pretending it was an American-owned vessel recently set sail from Bordeaux. The Americans said they were trying to sell it because its condition was too bad to make it to Philadelphia. See Lord Grantham to Floridablanca, 9 Oct., UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 270.

2. Massachusetts privateer Hanoke, Jeremiah Hibbert. See Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct., above.

3. A second letter from Floridablanca followed this one. See Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 12 Oct. 1777, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 268. It was written in response to another letter sent by Grantham, and essentially summarizes the points made in Floridablanca’s first letter of 12 Oct.

October 13

*Lloyd’s Evening Post, and British Chronicle* (London),
Friday, October 10, to Monday, October 13, 1777

London.

Capt. James Angues of the ship Betty, who sailed from Blew-fields, in Jamaica, along with the fleet and convoy, lost sight of them in a gale of wind a few days after he had got clear of the Gulph of Florida. In prosecuting his voyage to England he fell in with an American privateer brig, of 16 guns, 4 and 6 pounders, name unknown, about 100 leagues to the Eastward of the Banks of Newfoundland; she, being a fast sailer, ranged up along-side of the Betty, without shewing any colours. Capt. Angues, who suspected her to be a foe, hailed her twice, but received no answer; but before she came up he consulted his men to know if they would defend the ship, which they promised to do, and gave three cheers. The colours were hoisted, and this was no sooner done than he gave orders to play off his guns against the Rebel privateer, which was answered by them with great spirit for three hours, when she thought proper to bear away. She had not quitted the Betty above half a mile, when she hauled her wind, with an intention to renew the attack. Capt. Angues perceived it, and again prepared to give them a hearty reception. The main deck was commanded by Capt. Traill, a passenger, who, with great calmness and bravery, kept up a constant fire against the enemy; nor was Mr. Fawcett, the Mate, who commanded in the cabin, wanting in good conduct and alacrity. The privateer, finding them hardy, and seeing they had but few men, prepared to board the Betty; but the Captain, who stood all the time of the engagement upon the round house, perceiving their intention, ordered the man at the helm to run her aboard in the waist; the privateer providentially avoided her fate, as she was under proper guid-
ance of her helm; so that the Betty shot past her; and another vessel appearing to come
to their assistance, she put on all the sail she could carry, bore away, and in two hours
was out of sight. What is remarkable, the Betty had only eight 3 and 4 pounders, and
16 hands, men and boys; the other, besides her superior weight and number of guns,
was manned with 150 men. Capt. Angues had one man killed, and there is reason to
believe some of his shot took place on board of the privateer.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO GOURLADE, BÉRARD FRÈRES, & MONPLAISIR

Gentlemen

Paris 13 Oct° 1777.

Yours of the 6th. 1 is before us. When the Private Letter referred to 2 & the situation
of the Frigates shall be communicated to us we shall be in a Situation for forming
a judgment & writing you more particularly. meantime we inclose a Letter for
Capt. Thompson which we take the Liberty to ask you to deliver to him. We must rely
on y° assisting these officers as well to Careen their Vessels & procure the necessary
refreshments, as in having the Prizes disposed of to the best possible advantage. We
have the honor to remain [&c]

1. See above at 6 Oct.
2. Captain Thomas Thompson to the American Commissioners in France, 10 Oct., above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Sir

Paris 13 Oct° 1777

We rec'd. from Messrs. Gourlade &c an acc° of ye arrival 1 & were informed that
you had a Private Letter for us which we have not yet rec'd. 2 conclude it must Come
to hand in the Course of this week. Mean time we desire you would inform us in a
Letter under Cover of Messrs. Gourlade &c what is the situation of ye Vessels & what
their destination, as well as what articles of supplies you are ordered to purchase &c
so far as may be consistant with ye instructions to Communicate to us, that so far as
any thing depend on or may be expected from us we may be apprized as early as pos-
sible. We recommend to you to write no Letters but under Mr. Gourlade's Cover who
will inclose them to Mr. Chaumont by which means we shall receive them with less
danger of their being intercepted & opened—we are with Compts. to Capt. Hinman
as well as yourself on ye safe arrival Sir [&c]

1. Gourlade, Bérard frères, & Monplaisir to the American Commissioners in France, 6 Oct., above.
2. Thomas Thompson to the American Commissioners in France, 10 Oct., above.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO JEAN-FRANÇOIS-TIMOLÉON VIGER,
COMMISSARY OF THE PORT AND DOCKYARD, L'ORIENT, FRANCE

Fontainebleau 13 8bre. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, vos Lettres par lesquelles vous m'informez de l'arrivée des
deux Batimens Américaines avec deux prises angloises. Vous me avisez que celles-ci
I have received, Sir, your letters by which you informed me of the arrival of the two American ships and the two English prizes. You told me that these latter had received orders from you to leave within twenty-four hours without having sold anything, and I have learned from another source that the entirety of the two cargoes was sold to foreigners. I could hardly believe it after the positive orders I gave to you and the king's wish which is well known to you. Send me a report of it by courier.

You will do well to advise the merchants at Lorient not to compromise themselves at all, which would, nonetheless, occur to them, according to the circular letter which I wrote to all the ports of commerce and which must be known to them. I am [&c.]

d s

As I have to hurry to make the next mails, and as I have not kept a draft of this letter, you will make a copy and send it to me.

d s

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N° 56. Escurial 13th October 1777.

My Lord,

I have received the Honour of your Lordship's N° 22.1

I enclose to your Lordship an Office, marked N° 1, which I sent to M. Florida blanca upon hearing that the Vessell mentioned in it had put into the Port of Coruña under false Pretences; and upon my first Notice of a Prize carried into Bilbao by one Hebbert. I have likewise spoken to him upon it, and he promised to write immediately with regard to both Cases; asserting that he had yet received no Information concerning either.

My several Letters ever since the Date of Cunningham's Entrance into Ferrol, will have shewn your Lordship how constantly attentive I have been to that Object, by speaking and writing upon it to M. Florida blanca: And the Office, N° 2, which I now enclose for your Lordship's Information, was sent to him after I had spoken to him on the Subject of it. For tho' in our Conversation he had promised to take particular Steps to stop so daring a Proceeding as Cunningham's, yet I thought it necessary to appeal to him in writing in order to refer to every part of the Case, and to his repeated Assurances.
No Argument has been omitted on my Side to convince him how necessary it is, that the Governors should execute the orders he has sent, if he had any Intention to be thought in earnest about them. and upon my referring to some fresh orders issued in France, which He treated as great concessions in that Court, I added, that such measures might become very necessary here, and would be expected, if those, already taken, were not better executed.5

I need not repeat the Circumstances of Cunningham's last Entry into the Coruña, as I recapitulate them in the enclosed Office, N° 2., to M. Florida blanca.—The Governor of Galicia, Don Felix O'Neale, allowing the Ammunition & Provisions to be taken out of the Prize, is a Proof of his not having, as he pretended, suspended all Proceedings 'till Orders from Court: And I have represented his Conduct, which has been so partial, in the strongest Light to the Minister.

I have mentioned in my Office the Attention, which I was sure would be given to all Matters of Complaint from hence, because a fresh one has been made to me.—It is of a Ship, laden at the Coruña with Provisions for Porto Rico, being taken by a Letter of Marque from St Christopher's, carried into the Island of Anguilla, there set free by the Commissary, and retaken by another Letter of Marque Ship from St Christopher's, carried in there and condemned. From the Information which I have received, I believe the Vessell was laden at Bilbao, & was really carrying Provisions to Porto Rico.6

I shall continue, as I have hitherto done, to represent to the Minister every Instance of the elusive Practises of the American Agents, and press him to consider them seriously in a liberal Manner without resting on the misrepresentations of interested Parties, or the bad Apologies of Governors and other inferior Officers.

By my last Advices from Ferrol, I learn that the S' Isabel, and the Soledad Frigate had sailed for Cadiz: And by different Accounts from Bilbao I find, that there were no American Vessels or Prizes in that Port, except that commanded by Hebbert and his Prize. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Grantham

P:S: I have just received together two Offices from M: Florida blanca, in answer to those which I have mentioned in this Letter, & have only just Time to enclose to y'r Lordship a Translation of them 4—G.

2. This sentence, beginning with "and upon . . . " is in cipher in the original.
4. Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 12 Oct. 1777, above; see also its note no. 3.

October 14

J. L. DOERFELD TO WILLIAM EDEN

N° 31. Stockholm October 14th. 1777.

Sir,

I am honored with Your Letter N° 6, containing the Earl of Suffolks commands relative to the American Brig, which came in August last to Marstrand, and was said to be English property, taken by an American Pirate.1
All ever since I had presented a Memorial on this subject to Senator Baron Falckenberg, I have made every inquiry in my power to learn such particulars as might confirm, that the Vessel had been taken by an American Pirate. But I got only a very vague Report, by which nothing could be proved; and when I applied lately to Baron de Falckenberg, he told me that according to the accounts which were sent hither from the Governor, strict inquiries had been made, but it had not been found that the Brig in question had ever been English property. I took this opportunity of declaring to Baron de Falckenberg, that I made no doubt but the amicable, just, and dignified Principles, which had induced His Swedish Majesty to prohibit the admission of Pirate armed Vessels into His Ports, would operate equally against the admission of all Piratical Prizes. He said, that, he did not know exactly the King his Masters sentiments about such prizes as might come in unarmed under the title of Merchant Ships some time after they had been taken, but he supposed that whenever the case should exist, His Swedish Majesty would declare Himself in a satisfactory manner: with regard to those as should be carried into Swedish Ports by American Pirates, or such as were sent within twenty four hours after having been made Prizes they would certainly by no means be admitted. I replied, that I could wish orders without distinction would be given on this subject before any of these cases happened to exist, because there was reason to apprehend, that were they to be dispatched afterwards, several accidents were likely to happen, by which the execution of them would be rendered difficult, or perhaps impossible. But he did not seem to be much inclined to comply with this request, and told me only that it would be best to decide the question as soon as the case existed.

Upon an information that the Master of the same Vessel had of late been received Burgher at Marstrand, and his Ship made a Swedish Bottom, I gave Baron de Falckenberg to understand, that this proceeding could not fail but give encouragement to all Rebel Vessels coming to Marstrand; and that notwithstanding their being made Swedish Bottoms and carrying Swedish Flag, I would not venture to say that they would be secure should they be met with by His Majestys Cruizers, and that therefore it was to be apprehended that the Swedish Flag would of course be exposed to disagreeable accidents. He said that according to the Laws of Sweden and a long continued practice every Foreigner was to be admitted Burgher, whenever he had got a formal possession by purchasing a House or Estate, that many Foreigners and particularly Britaniers had thus settled in this Country, and when they had amassed some Fortune, they returned with it to their Country under divers pretences. He said farther that he knew nothing positive of the Vessel in question having been made a Swedish Bottom; but that at all events he could not suppose that such a step would give cause of complaint, as it was impossible for any Vessel to export Arms or Ammunition, because His Swedish Majestys orders were so strict that he was confident they would be most exactly observed, and that therefore the Swedish Flag would always meet with the same consideration as before, the rather as the King his Masters assurances of friendship and attachment to His Majestys Cause against His Rebelious Subjects were true and sincere.

I think it necessary to observe, that it is difficult to enter with the Senator into Points of Business, and to get an immediate and positive Answer, as his Power with regard to publick affairs is extremely limited. This is the Complaint of almost all the Foreign Ministers here, who generally prefer to treat with Mons Scheffer, having in
14 OCTOBER 1777

every Respect infinitely more Power than the other. As he is expected here towards the End of this Month, I hope to obtain a more direct, precise, and favorable Answer.¹ I have the Honor to be [&c.]

J. L. Doerfeld.


1. When the unarmed brigantine Molly arrived in Marstrand in August, with a cargo of rice, shingles, and barrel hoops, the master, who gave his name as Lawrence Dunbar, stated that the vessel’s home was in the Bahama Islands and that he had last departed Bermuda. The British consul in Göteborg, Thomas Erskine, made inquiries and discovered that the master’s true name was Woodhouse, and that the vessel was the former Sea Nymph of Bristol, which had been taken as a prize into Philadelphia, where it had been refitted. UkLPR, S.P. 95/127: Thomas Erskine to Earl of Suffolk, 2, 6, 9 Aug., 27 Sept. 1777; J. L. Doerfeld to William Eden, 12, 22 Aug., 23 Sept. 1777; Eden to Doerfeld, 2, 23 Sept. 1777. See also NDAR 9: 549. This may have been the brigantine Sea Nymph captured by Continental Navy sloop Providence, John Paul Jones, 3 Sept. 1776, and libelled in Philadelphia the next month. NDAR 6: 684–85, 1203–4.

2. Melker Falckenberg (1722–95) was acting foreign minister in the absence of Count Scheffer.


4. This paragraph, to this point, was originally in a numerical cypher.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO COMMANDER ROBERT P. COOPER, R.N.

So soon as the Provisions & Stores of the Sloop you command shall be completed agreeable to our Order of yesterday date, you are hereby required and directed to take His Maj’s Sloop the Alert under your command (her Comm¹ being directed to obey your Orders) and then putting to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather proceed to the Coast of Portugal, and cruize between Oporto & Lisbon for the Protection of the Trade of His Maj’s Subjects in those parts, and diligently to look out for, and to use your utmost endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America, which you may be able to come with, calling alternately off those places, and making enquiry of the British Consuls there for Intelligence.

And in case you shall receive information that can be depended upon of any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies above-mention’d, being in parts contiguous to tho’ not actually within the Station you are hereby directed to cruize upon, you are at liberty to proceed in quest of them, taking care to return immediately to the said Station, as soon as you shall have taken, destroyed or driven them away, or be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there.

You are to be very careful never to go into Port in the Ship you command or to suffer the Alert to do so, except when there shall be an absolute necessity for so doing & even then not to stay there a moment longer than you can possibly avoid, & when you shall have occasion to go into the Tagus you are never to go higher than the Bay of Wares.

You are to enter all seamen being His Majesty’s Subjects who shall offer and to bear such as may be more than sufficient to complete your allow’d Complement as supernumeraries for Wages & Victuals until you shall have an opportunity of putting them on board any of His Maj’s Ships or Vessels which are short of Complement, or of disposing of them in such other manner as we shall think fit to direct, and you are to give similar directions to the Captain of the Alert.
EUROPEAN THEATER

You are to transmit to our Secretary by every opportunity such Intelligence as may have come to your knowledge with an account of your proceedings, & of the State & Condition of the Sloops, and you are once a Month (or as often as opportunities offer) to transmit to him also a Copy of your Journal, and to direct the Commr of the Alert to do the like.

You are to continue upon the above Station and Service until you receive further Order, or til' you reliev'd by some other of His Maj's Ships or Vessels which you may expect will be soon sent out for that purpose, and then, if you do not receive orders by them to the contrary you are to return with both Sloops to Plymouth sound & remain there until you receive further Order, sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings, And in case any such Ships or Vessels whose Commr shall be Senior to you shall be appointed to cruize upon the Said Station while you continue thereon, you are to follow his Orders, and, on the other hand, if he shall be junior to you, he is hereby required to obey such as he shall receive from you. Given &c. the 14th of October 1777.

Sandwich
C. Spencer
H. Palliser

By &c. P.S.

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON), TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 1777

The Judith, Lofthouse, from London to St. Augustine, is taken and carried into Charles-Town. 1

The Anna, Hooft, from St. Eustatia, is Arrived in the Texel, after being plundered by the Americans. . . .

The Triton, Bertram, from Jersey to Honduras, was taken the 7th of June, off Desirada Island, by the Mary Privateer, of 12 Guns and 18 Swivels, and carried into Guadeloupe.

The Revenge, Letter of Marque, of Jersey, has taken a Brig from Virginia to Nantz, with Tobacco, &c. and carried her into Jersey.


JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.,
TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honble Gentlemen—

I have the pleasure to announce the return of the mere Bobie Packet Boat, who delivered your dispatches in Safety but by the inclosed Copy of a Letter 1 that I have rec'd from the Captain you will see he has not been so fortunate with those he was charged with in return. As there were no Dispatches and the news only a confirmation of what you already have at Paris, I thought that for the delay of one day it was
not worth while to put you to the Expence of an Express; If I am wrong in this I will in future send a Courier on every such occasion, but the expence is so great I always wish to save it except where the public Service requires the Contrary.—

I have sent Cap' Nicholson to L'orient to see the Captains of the two Frigates that are arrived there,² and to assist them with his advice in what may relate to their Ships &c, as they being Strangers may stand in need of it; and at the same time I have desired them to address themselves to M' Gourlade for what assistance they may have occasion for.—

A Gentleman has receiv'd a Letter from Bordeaux which mentions that a vessel is arrived from (Kinnipuxen) the same place Cap' Young came from, which sailed the 21 of Aug & brings no news of Howe.³—I have the honour to be [&c.]

J Williams J

BRITISH PRIZES AT GIBRALTAR

Gibraltar 14th. October 1777.

The Enterprize, Sir Thomas Rich, came in yesterday with the following Prizes. The Alarm Frigate is still out, and has a Schooner with her, as a Tender, which she took.

The Peggy, a French Brig, John Poindester, Master, from Nantz for S. Carolina with Salt and Bale Goods, taken by the Enterprize off Cape Finisterre.

The American Brig, Venus, John Adron Master, from Siniputron in America for Bordeaux, with eighty Hogsheads of Tobacco, Staves, Flour, &c. taken by Ditto.

The Ship Alexander, Thomas Blandell, Master, from S. Carolina for Nantz with 1000 Barrels of Rice, five do. of Indigo, and some Mahogany, taken in the Bay of Biscay by Ditto.

The Schooner, Catherine, William Boyne, Master, from Charlestown with Rice, Tobacco, and Indigo, taken by the Alarm, Capt, off Cape Finisterre, intended for Bordeaux.

The Nancy Brigantine, William Payne, Master, retaken by the Alarm. She loaded at Malaga for Dublin, was taken by a Rebel Privateer,¹ and carried to Bilbao, but on going away from thence she was met by Captain Mann.

It seems there is a French and an Irish Merchant on board the French Brig.

October 15

THE LONDON PACKET; OR, NEW LLOYD’S EVENING POST (LONDON),
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1777

London.

The Sally, Rose, from Philadelphia to Nants, with tobacco, is taken by the crew, and carried into Milford-Haven.

The Patty, Marquis, from New-York, is arrived at Teneriffe; in her passage she engaged a rebel privateer of 14 guns and 80 men.

WILLIAM LEE TO JOHN KING

[Extract]

M' Jn°. King Nantes.

... If Cap° Barron¹ is not gone please to present my Comp° to him & desire him to be very careful when he goes out, for several very swift sailing ships left Portsmouth &c the beginning of this month to cruise in the Bay of Biscay—let him not depend too much on his heels, for there are several vessels now cruizing that can run round him especially if there is any thing of a Breeze. He perhaps had better wait under Belle isle, untill he has a fit wind & then take a fair start. In this he must be directed by the circumstances as they are when he sails. . . .

LB, ViHi, William Lee Papers. The beginning of this letter dealt with several protested bills, and the end of the letter offered Lee’s services in King’s absence if King was unable to complete the state of Virginia’s business. Virginia had engaged King, a Virginia merchant, to purchase salt in Europe.

1. Robert Barron commanded the St. Tammany from Hampton, Va.

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Paris 15th October 1777—

... I find the two prizes¹ are not yet delivered up, and from what Williams told me few days since they will not—

Cap² Young² who arrived here, some time since brought in with him a Vessell which he took on his passage from America to France, this Vessell was disposed of before any person knew of same, without the least noise whatever, the money was paid immediately, in this way they mean to proceed in future, in order to deceive your Court, and in which manner they are encouraged and advised by the French.

This Vessell left America the twelfth of August, at which time there was in the Deliware and Chesopeak upwards of Sixty Sail of Merchandmen ready loaded, all which must fall into the hands of Lord Howe, if the Army advances towards Philadelphia—Amongst the Number of these Vessells are Seven or eight French merchantmen, who have been waiting some time past for proper Season to leave the American Coast by which detention I hope they may fall into your hands—
The Affair between Morris & the Commissioners here, has not a little humbled their pride—they have promised never to mention any thing to the Congress concerning him in future—

Two Continental Ships of War,\(^3\) are Arrived in the Port of L’Orient—they are the same which had the Engagement with his Majestys Ship the *Druid* Coming from the Leeward Islands—with the fleet under their Convoy, they brought in with them two Vessells\(^4\) which they took out of said fleet, and which was sold for nine thousand six hundred pounds Sterling, which Ships are fitting out with all expedition, and mean for sea immediately, these Vessells left America, with two hundred men Short of their Complement also Cannon, &c &c—

The Cap’ Green who I mentiond to you some time since, has a Ship\(^5\) of 24 Six pounder which he means to proceed to America with, this Vessell will be richly loaded—and Sail in about 3 Weeks... I am [&c.]

Geo: Lupton

1. Clarendon and Hanover Plantex

---

**GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VERCENNES**

**Fontainebleau 15 Octobre 1777.**

Lorsque j’ai reçu, Monsieur, la note que vous m’avez fait l’honneur de m’envoyer de Milord Stormont\(^1\) sur l’arrivée à l’orient le 6. de ce mois de deux Corsaires américains l’*alfred* et le *Polly* avec deux prises,\(^2\) le S. Viger Commissaire de la marine en ce Port m’en avoir déjà instruit par Sa Lettre du 8. Il résulte de la Déclaration des Capts Hinman et Thompson qu’ils ont relâché pour cause d’avarie; et le S. Viger ne leur a permis l’entrée qu’après avoir soin constater, par un Procès Verbal, la nécessité des réparations; mais il a prévenu en même tems les ordres que demandé M. l’ambassadeur en Signifiant qu’il fallois que ces Réparations fussent faites promptement et que ces Batimens remissent en mer par le p’vent favorable. Quant aux deux Batimens que ces Capitaines avoient annoncé Batimens de Commerce de leur Nation qu’ils escortoient, le S. Viger ayant reconnu que c’étoient des prises faites sur les anglois, et leur avoir defendu l’entrée du Port. J’ai lieu de croire que d’après ce détail Milord Stormont sera convaincu de l’exactitude que l’on a porte a l’exécution des ordres précédemment donnés. J’ai l’honneur d’être [&c]

de sartine

[Translation] Fontainebleau, 15 October 1777.

Sir, when I received the note from my Lord Stormont,\(^1\) which you honored me by sending to me, and which concerned the arrival on the 6th of this month in L’Orient of two American privateers, the *Alfred* and the *Polly*, with two captured ships,\(^2\)
Sieur Viger, the naval commissioner in this port, had already informed me of the fact by a letter dated the 8th. According to the declaration made by the Captains Hinman and Thompson, they had put into port as a consequence of damage to their ships. Sieur Viger, however, allowed them entry only after having made a point of confirming, by a report, the necessity of repairs, and, at the same time, told them of the orders requested by the ambassador emphasizing that the repairs had to be done promptly and that the ships had to put to sea with the first favorable wind. As for the ships these captains had said were merchant ships of their nation which they were escorting, Sieur Viger, having recognized these were ships captured from the English, had forbidden their entry into the port. I have reason to believe that my Lord Stormont will be convinced by this detail of the exactitude that has been applied to the execution of the orders previously issued. I have the honor of being [&c.]

de sartine


2. Continental Navy ship Alfred, Continental Navy frigate Raleigh, and their prizes Anna Susannah and Jamaica.

[Extract]

No 151

My Lord

Fontainebleau October 15th. 1777

This Morning I had the Honour of your Lordships Letter No 62,¹ and immediately waited upon Monsieur de Vergennes, and Monsieur de Maurepas, to both of whom I made those Representations your Lordship directs.

I gave M de Vergennes a list of the french Sailors taken on board the Lexington, and made Strong Remonstrances to His Exe² and to M de Maurepas upon this Proceeding, so contrary to their repeated declarations and Professions. They both assured me that the most positive Orders had been sent to all the Ports, to do every thing possible to prevent an Abuse, which they said was manifestly as prejudicial to France as it could be to us; they pretended it was impossible after the Orders that had been given that any french Sailors should be suffered to go on board American Vessels in the Ports, but that they probably slipt out to sea in small Boats and embarked there, being Allured by high Wages, and the prospect of Captures—I observed to them both, that this Evil might be corrected at once if they would cut the Root of it, by Shutting the french Ports to all American Privateers, to which they only answered, that the former Orders would be punctually executed.

In consequence of Information which I received this Morning, I drew up the inclosed Note,² which I delivered to M de Vergennes—after stating the circumstances of the Case.—He made his usual answer, that he would talk to M de Sartine upon the Subject. He spoke as if the whole had been new to Him, which I think can scarce be the Case, as Monsieur de Maurepas owned to me, that He, Maurepas, knew of the Arrival of the two American Privateers,³ knew that they had been admitted into the Port of
L'Orient: He said that they were Leaky, and in great distress, and that as soon as they had received those succours which upon principles of Humanity cannot be refused, they Should be ordered to put to Sea; as to the Prizes he said he was persuaded they were gone off—I observed to Him that whilst the Orders given with regard to the American Privateers were evaded under various Pretences, no benefit whatever could acrue to us from them; that Vessels would always appear Leaky to those who had a Mind to think them so, and that in a Word the whole was a mere jest, and was considered as such by the Americans themselves, who were known to have said, that these Orders would change a little their mode of Operation but would do them no essentiel Harm—His answer to this was general and evasive, that the french Ministers did all they could, and were very sincere in their Professions, but could not prevent every abuse. . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont


1. In this letter, dated 10 Oct., Weymouth instructed Stormont to remonstrate with Vergennes and Maurepas concerning the French sailors taken on board the Continental Navy brigantine Lexington, a list of whom he enclosed. Weymouth also instructed Stormont to claim the Manning and its cargo, which had been captured on 30 Sept., if carried into any of the ports of France. Ibid., no. 1720. For the list, see "A List of French Men taken in the Lexington Rebel Privatier by His Majesty's Cutter Alert the 19th Sept. 1777," printed at 5 Oct., above.

2. The note from Stormont to Vergennes requested that orders be given to prevent the sale of the two prizes brought into Lorient by two American privateers and for the expulsion of those privateers. UKLPR, S.P. 78/550.


4. Jamaica, David Watt, master, and Anna Susannah, John Taylor, master.

October 16

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN JOHN ELPHINSTON, R.N.

By &c

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & Cruize off the Port of Oporto for the Protection of the Trade of His Maj' Subjects & diligently to look out for & to use your utmost endeavours to take or destroy Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America, sending Letters to the British Consuls at that Port & at Lisbon by the first Vessel you may meet with going thither, to inform them of your arrival & of the time you are appointed to Cruize on the Coast of Portugal which is to be, off Oporto, as above directed, for the space of Fifteen Days after your arrival upon that Station & at the expiration thereof for the like number of Days off the Tagus, whither you are to proceed & Cruize accordingly for that time & for the above purposes; and then repair to Lisbon where you are to make enquiry for all such homeward bound Trade as may be desirous of accompanying you, and (after a stay not exceeding Ten Days from the time of your going into that Port) you are to take the said Trade under your Convoy & make the best of your way (consistent with their security) with them towards England & having seen them to Spithead or as near to it as your way & theirs may be together remain there until you receive further order; sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings.
And Whereas the Commanders of His Majesty's Sloops named in the Margin are directed to proceed & Cruize, for the like purposes off the Ports of Portugal abovementioned until relieved by the arrival of other clean Frigates intended to be sent out as soon as possible; we signify the same to you that you may know of their being on the Coast & give information thereof also to the British Consuls as above directed, And, in case you shall receive information that can be depended upon, either from them, or others, that any Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned are in parts contiguous to, tho not within the Stations you are hereby directed to Cruize upon you are at liberty to proceed in quest of them; taking care to return immediately to the said Stations as soon as you shall have taken destroyed or driven them away or be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there. Given &c 16th Octr 1777

Sandwich
J Buller
H Palliser

1. “Hauke Alert.”

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, OCT. 16."

"Since my last arrived his Majesty's ship the Weazel, from Jamaica, but last from Corke, and the Revenge letter of marque, Capt. Gautier, belonging to Jersey, from a cruise, who fell in with a vessel called the Friendship, Capt. Bennett, laden with 110 hogsheads of tobacco, staves, and flour, which prize was bound to Nantz from Maryland. Capt. Gautier put a prizemaster on board, and sent her to Jersey."


CAPTAIN RICHARD HUGHES, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Extract of a Letter from Capt'n Hughes Commanding His Maj'y's Ship Centaur to Mr Stephens dated at Sea the 16th Octr 1777—

I am to desire, you will be pleased to inform my Lords Commrs. of the Admiralty that on the 12th. Inst., I fell in with, & took, an American Schooner called the Betsey, from Nantz, bound to Edington in North Carolina Laden with Gunpowder, Arms Tents &. Woollens, for the use of the Rebel Army, Salt and several other Articles; the whole Consigned to the Congress; and I have sent the said Prize into the Port of Plymouth under the Charge, of the first Lieutenant of the Centaur.

Having gained some little Intelligence, from the Master, & Crew, of this Vessel, I have caused the same to be transcribed, on the other side hereof, for their Lordships Information; The Schooner had been only Three days out, when she fell into my hands.

P.S. I beg leave to mention, That I found Two English Prisoners, onboard the Prize who inform'd me That Although, they will not admit, any American Privateer's coming into the Port of Nantz under that Title, They do nevertheless receive them upon their reporting themselves as Letters of Marque when they stop at St. Lucie, w'h is about 13 Leagues from Nantz; This seems a very equivocal Distinction, but as the English Prisoner's persist in its being a Fact, I thought it my Duty, to Report it to their Lordships—
An Account of American Vessels at Pember Reef
& St. Lucie, near Nantz—

Two Irish Wherrys, bound to Virginia Very Deep—
One Brig of 150 Tons, bound to South Carolina.

One Brig, Fitting as a Privateer, Capt'n Abbott—commonly call'd Silver Fist, expected to sail in a Fortnight—

A Ship called the Mars, fitting as a Privateer to mount 22 Guns only waits for Men.
A Privateer Brig, Capt'n Cross, mounting 14 Guns which lately carried in a Jamaica Man expected to sail in Three Weeks—
A Privateer Brig, call'd the Fanny Capt'n Kendrick which took the Hanover Planter the 8 Augt last Ready to sail, mounts 14 Guns—
A Privateer Brig, call'd the General Mercy took the Clarendon the 8th Augt last mounts 14 Guns & ready to sail.
A Ship call'd the Hancock & Adams Fitting for America
There are a Great many others up at Nantz of which the Person, (who gave the Principal Part of the above Intelligence) can give no Account, by reason of his being strictly confined but heard that there was amongst them a 36 Gun Frigate, Fitting for Sea.

Rd. Hughes

Copy, UkLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 243–44. Docketed: “In Mr. Stephens’s to SSP [Sir Stanier Porten]/21 October 1777.”

1. Paimboeuf.
2. Virginia Navy brig Liberty, Thomas Herbert.
3. Massachusetts privateer ship Mars.
4. South Carolina privateer brig Bellona.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Hon'ble Gentlemen—

Nantes 16 Octo't 1777.

The present serves to inform you that Cap'n Brown who has the Dolphin wishes to be excused from taking her as his owners have directed his return in the Mars which belongs to them; Cap'n Brown hopes you will not misinterpret his Desire, and says that if you choose he will continue, but if the Change will not displease you he wishes she may be given to some other man. Her new mast is gone alongside and they are getting it in; while the Dolphin stays here she is very useful to keep our men together, as they can not appear on board the Frigate, and it would be very expensive & inconvenient to keep them on shore, I should therefore be glad if she were not to sail 'till the Lion is ready: Or if you think to sell her she may possibly be put off.—Please to return the french Captains Conditions as soon as signed. I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Jon'a Williams

The 1000 Fuzils from Dunkirk are arrived & answer the model exactly, but the Lighter that brought them up to Town unfortunately Sunk so am obliged to unmount and clean every one of them.


1. On the conditions agreed on, and the need to have a French captain for the Lyon, which was to become Continental Navy frigate Deane, see Williams to the American Commissioners, 11 Oct. 1777, in Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 60.
EUROPEAN THEATER

JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE
OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES

[1777. October] 16 Thursday. At 1 AM Saw a Sail, thick Weather.—At 5 Saw her again in Chace close under our Stern, made Sail from her; but She came up fast—Discov-er’d her to be a Frigate.—Now she began to fire at us—many of her Shot went over us—Several struck our Hull & Sails.—We have our Guns overboard, & stove some Water & by that means got a little from her.

D, MSAE. Journal was kept by the ship’s surgeon.

ETIENNE-HONORÉ DUPLESSION DE MONGELSIS TO
JEAN-MARIE LE SAULNIER DE LA VILLEHELIO

Copie de la Lettre Ecrite a M. Villehelio
Commissaire des Ports et Arsenaux, a Nantes
dattée de Gibraltar le 16. 8bre. 1777.

Monsieur

La presente est pour vous faire part de l’arrivée d’un Brigantin francois de Nantes, la Poggy, qui veut dire en français la Catherine de Nantes Capitaine Jean Prochétier qui a été conduit icy par la frégatte l’Entreprise Commandée par le Capitaine Tomas Lier, on l’a entré dans cette Baye le 13. du courant avec Pavillon Anglois, malgré toutes les diligences que je fais pour découvrir la vérité de ce fait, il m’a été impossible, seulement j’irai accoster le Capitaine lorsqu’on le meneroit a l’Amirauté de cette place pour prendre sa déclaration, je postay un homme dans la Cour pour entendre la déclaration qu’y feroit le Capitaine et ensuite je l’attendis, pour savoir de luy ce qui s’etoit passé, mais les officiers de la frégatte qui l’escortoient pour le conduire abord ont dit qu’il est encore prisonnier, et ont même defendu a personne d’aller abord, ils l’ont empêché de me parler, sinon le rapport que m’a fait l’homme que j’avois posti, que le Bâtiment appartient a M. Grüel, Negociant a Nantes a qui j’Ecriray aujourdhuy, Sin qu’il donne pouvoir de suivre son affaire.

Il me semble à propos qu’il envoye une procure afin que je puisse avoir toutes les forces qu’exige cette malheureuse affaire, Quoiqu’ autorisé de la Cour je ne puis presenter en fait de justice, que lorsque je suis muny par procure, aussitôt que j’au-roi la déclaration du Capitaine, j’en ferai part a Mgr De Sartine afin de prendre ses ordres et luy marquer la façon avec laquelle les anglois agissent envers notre pavillon, cet èpoque et bien d’autres survenières icy en peu de tems, je vous prie, M. de faire part a M. Gruel que son Batiment fut pris après 3. jours de navigation de Nantes sur le Cap finistere ou la fregatte de cette place est toujours en croisiere.

Je finis en vous assurant que j’apporterai tous les soins possibles pour faire rendre justice au Cap. Je suis, M. &c.

P.S. Je viens d’apprendre dans le moment par une personne qui etoit a l’examen du Capitaine qu’il s’appele, Louis Le Grand et le Brigantin Le Pompéau lieu de la Catherine, c’est ce que j’éclaireray lorsque j’aurai vu le Capitaine. Les Anglois ont donné ce nom masque afin que je ne prisse point connaissance de l’affaire.
17 OCTOBER 1777

[Translation]

Copy of the Letter Written to M. Villehelio
Commissioner of Ports and Arsenals, at Nantes
dated at Gibraltar, 16 October 1777.

Sir

This letter is to inform you of the arrival from Nantes of a French brigantine, the *Poggy*, which means in French the *Catherine*, commanded by Captain Jean Prochetier, who was brought here by the frigate *Enterpize* under the command of Captain Tomas Lier. The vessel entered this bay the 13th instant flying an English flag. Despite my haste to uncover the truth regarding this act, it was impossible for me to do so, but I was going to approach the captain when he was brought to the Admiralty of this place to take down his statement. I stationed a man in the courtroom to listen to the statement the captain would make there and I then waited to learn from him what had happened; however, the officers of the frigate, who were escorting him to the ship, said he was still prisoner and even forbade anyone to go on board. They prevented him from speaking to me. According to the report the man whom I had stationed in the courtroom made to me, the ship belongs to M. Gruel, a merchant in Nantes, to whom I shall write today so that he may give me authority to take action on his case. It seems appropriate to me that he send me a power of attorney so that I may have all the legal power that this unfortunate case requires. Although I am recognized by the court, I can appear before the court only when I am in possession of a power of attorney. As soon as I have the captain’s statement, I shall inform my Lord de Sartine that I have it so that I may receive his instructions and shall report to him the way the English behave toward our flag, at this time and on many other occasions, during a short period of time. I request, Sir, that you inform M. Gruel that his ship was seized off Cape Finistere, three days out of Nantes, where the frigate is still cruising. I close by assuring you I shall exercise all possible care that the captain is treated justly. I am, Sir etc.

P.S. I have just now learned, from a person who was present during the captain’s examination, that he is called Louis Le Grand and the brigantine is called the *Pompée* instead of the *Catherine*. I shall clear that up when I have seen the captain. The English used this false name so that I would not enquire into the matter.


October 17

*Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* (London),

**Wednesday, October 15, to Friday, October 17**

London.

A Letter from Kinsale, by yesterday’s Mail, says, that the Irish Coast is again visited by American privateers; that two appeared off the mouth of that Harbour, and sent a boat in to see what ships were there; but there being none of consequence, soon disappeared.
EUROPEAN THEATER

JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE
OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES

[1777. October] 17 Friday. The Man of War in Chace hard by. We Rowed & kept at a Distance
d, MsAE. Journal was kept by the ship's surgeon.

October 18

THE DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1777

London.

The Captain of the Merier, a French Bilander, arrived on Thursday in the River, gives an Account, that off Teneriffe he spoke with four American Privateers, which had been some Time cruising off the Pike, viz. a Ship of 24 Guns, bright Sides, yellow Stern, and her Head the Figure of Venus; another ditto of 20 Guns, Lion Head, and painted black; a Snow of 16 Guns, bright Sides, red Stern, and Billet Head, and a Brigantine of 12 Guns, black Sides, green Stern, and a Figure Head.

GEORGE GOSTLING, JR., TO PHILIP STEPHENS

D's Commons 18th Oct: 1777

Sir.

Pursuant to your desire I beg leave to inclose you an authenticated Copy of the Letter from Messrs Berard freres & c* to Captain Tobias Oakman, which was found on board the Ship Thames at the time She was retaken by the non-commissioned ships Mary, Morgan Jenkins M*; Eagle, Michl Dove M*; and Hearts of Oak, Robert Paterson M*

I take the liberty to observe, that Tobias Oakman to whom the said Letter appears to be directed, was the Prize Master put into the Thames by Captain Day of the rebel armed ship called the General Miffling, after he had taken the said ship.1 I am [&c.]

Geo. Gostling Jr.

[Enclosure]

Extracted from the Registry of his Majesty's High Court of Admiralty of England.

To Cap*n Tobias Okman
of the Ship Rebecca

Sir

Captain Day of General Miffling's Ship who is safe in our Road, having informed us of the particulars of the Cargo and situation of Ship Rebecca, that would be sold to great disadvantage at Morlaix We have advised him to give you Orders to proceed to this Port and follow our Directions on ye* same which is the purport of the Inclosed to you from Capt*n. Day.
We intended at first to have given you in writing the necessary Instructions how to clear your Vessel from Morlaix for this Port, but finding that many Incidents might start which might embarrass you or render our Plan perhaps abortive, we have thought best that one of us should go on yer spot to Execute and compleat our plan of clearing out your Vessel from Morlaix for this place under french Colours and Clearances to avoid all risks and difficulties of landing here your Cargo. Mr. De Montplaisier who will deliver you this, is the Gentleman that will attend you from us on said affair; you'll please to follow his Directions, and dispatch yourself as expeditiously as possible; he will with his friends provide a Pratich who will appear Master of the Vessel with 2 or 3 men or more if he can get them, you'll take care to keep as close as possible to the Land all the way and hoist your french Colours when you come in our Road; you'll send all your own Men on board the General Miffling at Groix and will keep only what shall be necessary to work in yer Ship from Groix in the harbour, where you'll only come in when we send you an approbation and take care the Pilot you'll take care on yer Coast knows nothing about you being a Prize.

If absolutely Mr. De Montplaisir could not settle at Morlaix in a satisfactory manner your french clearance, then you'll come in under Dutch Colours or according to Mr. Montplaisirs Directions, but remain in our Road of Groix here till you hear from us and send us an express boat of Captn. Day's ship of your being arrived on which we take proper Measures for your being admitted without any difficulties.

As Captn. Day wants all his hands before he proceeds on his new Intended Cruize, he desires you'll make all haste possible that he may not be detained long here on your Account. Whatever Expences you may have been at during your stay at Morlaix, Draw for the same on us who will Discharge it when presented.

In hopes of seeing you soon safe here We Remain

Berard freres & Co.
Gourlade

You'll please to give Mr. De Montplaisir a Note in writing of the Contents of your Cargo that he may take the clearance for the same

Should you hear of the Brig and the Sloop prize to Captn. Day, Mr. De Montplaisir will likewise clear them wherever he'll find them for this Harbour, Pray write in that case to the prize Masters to follow Mr. Montplaisirs Directions as it is Captn. Day's intentions

Yours—Berard

(superscribed)
To
Captn. Tobias Oakman
of the ship Rebecca
Morlaix

Godf. Lee Farrant
Registrar.

Examined at Drs. Commons London, with the Original Letter; remaining in the Registry of the High Court of Admiralty of England this eighteenth day of October, 1777 by me,

Geo. Gostling, Jr.
Note Pubk.
L, UkLPR, Adm. 1/3884, with enclosure, Copy. Addressed at foot: "Philip Stephens Esqr."

1. For the capture of the Rebecca, see NDAR 9: 484, 490–91, 638–39. For the Thames’s recapture, see Lloyd’s Evening Post and British Chronicle (London), Monday, October 6, to Wednesday, October 8, 1777, above.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

18th [Octr] my Self & Docte Powers Moved Down to the Officers Prison

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honble Gentlemen.— Nantes Octr 18. 1777.—

I have receiv’d a Letter from Cap’t Thompson Commander of the Rawleigh Frigate by which I find the prizes made by the two Ships consisted of

- 750 hhds Sugar
- 325 Punch’s Rum
- 70 Plank Mahogany
- 15 Casks of Coffee and the two Ships which Capt. Nicholson tells me are 500 & 800 Tons Burden, this Property was sold for 9700 Sterling, which I take to be about ¾ of the real value, & about ¾ of what in their circumstances they ought to have been sold for; this appear’d to me such a shamefull waste of property, that I thought it my duty to signify my disapprobation of it & have written to L’orient accordingly; offering 2000 Sterling more, on your acco’ if the bargain is not past redemption; should that be accepted I will go over to L’orient [torn] some dutchmen, and send the whole as french Property to Holland.

I hope you will not think me wrong in what I have done, but it is too painful to see such measures taken with the public Interest, to remain silent.

I have too good an opinion of Mr Gourlade to suppose he has acted improperly, but I am afraid that all concerned are not like him.¹ I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Jon Williams J


JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE

OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES


D, Msae. Journal was kept by the ship’s surgeon.
October 19 (Sunday)

SILAS DEANE TO
MIGUEL LAGOANERE AND COMPANY

Gent.

Paris 19 Octr 1777

We did ourselves the honor of replying to your\'s of the 20th. ulto. since which are favourably received. with your\'s of the 27th. came to hand last Evening only, so that I presume this will hardly reach you before the affair of Capt. C\'s Prize will be adjusted. we wrote Messrs Gardoqui & Fils at Bilboa to honor the Bills for G. Cun. repairs which hope has been done. As to the Prize mentioned it is to be hoped that it may be disposed of at some rate or other. & the less the loss the better. some must be inevitable circumstances as we are at present. In future should prizes arise the most prudent method as we apprehend will be to have them reported as Vessels belonging to America & to dispose of them without loss of time, keeping every thing secret until the Sale is made. Unacquainted as the Cornrs. at this distance must be with the modes of Procedure with you in such Cases they can only give general directions relying on your prudence & knowledge of the situation of affairs to do the best which can be done in these affairs. I have the honor to remain [&c.]

S. D.


JOURNAL OF H.M.S. MARS,
CAPTAIN GEORGE FALCONER

1777 October

Sunday 19

Cape Finisterre S ¾ W. 16 or 17 Leagues—

Light Airs and fair Weather. . . . 8 AM Saw a Sail to the Westward, Hal'd our Wind and Gave Chase 11 Spoke a Spanish Brig from Malaga bound to Amsterdam Bore Away and Gave Chace to the NW. Several Sail in Sight—½ past a privateer Brig, (as we Supposed) passed under our Stern to take Our Attention from the Chace Who hoisted a White field With a Pine Tree In it.—

First part Moderate and Cloudy. Middle and Latter Fresh Gales and Cloudy at 1 fired a shot and brought too the Chace a Brig from South Carolina bound to Bourdeaux 1 Sent an Officer and 10 Men to take Charge of her. Rec\'d on board 7 Americans and One French man Emp\'d. Sending Necessaries onboard 6 Wore Ship Brought too and Got in the Boats. Saw the Privateer Brig Standing to the Eastward 11 handed Main Sail Mizen Tops\' and [illeg.]Sail and Got down Top Gall\' yards.

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/566.

1. Charming Betsy, Ephraim Gardner, master, from South Carolina with rice and oak staves.
October 20

*Lloyd’s Evening Post, and British Chronicle* (London),
Friday, October 17, to Monday, October 20

London.

The *Caesar*, Tobias, from the West Indies to New York, is taken by an American privateer, off the Banks of Newfoundland, and sent to Newbury.

The *Arthur and Betty*, Prittjohns, and the *Eleanor*, Bailey, are taken on the Banks of Newfoundland, by the *Pluto* and *Hancock* privateers.

The *Sterling*, an American vessel, from South Carolina to Nantz, with rice, &c. is taken and sent into Lisbon.

CAPTAIN JOHN WELSH TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Portsmouth Oct 20\(^{th}\) 1777

Sir,

Excuse the Freedom of my Presumption, in Writing to you tho not Personally Acquainted, Still from the Character you bear from every Loyal American, induces me to let you know of my Misfortune of being taken Prisoner, & brought here from the West Indies Where I commanded a Privatier fitted out by Wm. Bingham Esq, Agent of the Honourable Congress of the United States\(^1\) am in a Distress’d situation, the Particulars you’ll Excuse as times does not permit. begs your Assistance if Convenient & hopes you’ll make Known to Congress, as we may Expect a Carteele some time Tho God Knows When. however any service I may Recive will be Greatly thankful, as Wm. Bingham or Rich’d Harrison of Martinicoe Wood be Answerable—I am [&c.]

Jn\(^o\) Welsh

N.B. those letters you’ll be Pleas’d to forward to Martinicoe: I mention to these Gentlemen in these letters of my Application made to you Which I hope will Reach them. if this Answers you’ll Direct to Portsmouth at Fortune Goal I draw for 20 Guineas as a Note—

Superscription thus

To

Cap\(^t\) Jn\(^o\) Welsh
at Portsmouth
in the Goal of Fortune

L, PHI, Benjamin Franklin Papers. Addressed: "To/Franklin Esq/Agent of the United States of America/in Parris."

1. Welsh commanded the armed sloop *Marangoine*, tender to *Mosquito*, Virginia Navy brig, John Harris, commander. For the capture, see *NDAR* 9: 114, 122. For Welsh's arrival at Portsmouth, see Captain William C. Finch, R.N., to Philip Stephens, 4 Oct. 1777, above.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GOSPORT, OCT. 20."

[Extract]

"The Rising States privateer, taken by the *Terrible*, was purchased by Mr. Samuel Robin-
son, merchant, of Portsmouth, who is fitting her out as a letter of marque. She will soon be ready for sea.”

1. For the capture and sale of Massachusetts privateer brigantine Rising States see NDAR9: 523, 635.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

L’Orient. Raleigh
October 20th. 1777.

Gent’s

I have the Honour to have now before me your Letters of the 13th & 15th. Instant 1—in the first you desire I would write our situation; mine of the 10th. 2 will satisfy you in that particular, therefore shall not say anything more on that head; in your first you advise us to Gurlard and Company—and to send our Letters under Gurlard’s Cover—in your last you say “wish you to take the Advice of Mr. Gurlard in your affair, who is our Friend,” we wish you to be particular on that head & to know if you give a preference to Mr. Gurlard, as we look upon the whole House now concerned—with whom jointly we at present do our business.

We have no apparent reason to find any fault with either—but must say Mr. Gurlard seems to be the Man of Candor & Honour.—I have had an Application from Mr. Morris rather singular.—he deputizes a Mr. Pinet & recommends him to us—Mr. Pinet picks up a third person & dispatches him express to us to do the Business—they all urge Secrecy & dispatch, & solicit the selling the prizes themselves; altho’ neither Pinet nor Mr. Morris are nearer than Nants, they offer to come & give dispatch if wanted—I wrote Mr. Morris for answer—I had found persons properly authorized by the Commissioners & as he said the Business required Secrecy & dispatch I had repos’d an entire Confidence in them and they had dispos’d of our Effects—I thank’d him for his Offer of Service, & promis’d to apply to him if I wanted any Assistance from the Continental Agents

I am sorry to inform you we have but this Day been able to get to the place destin’d to heave down; their Customs here are clog’d with so many Applications & so much Ceremony, ’tis impossible to make dispatch—we propos’d being at Sea in three Weeks after we first arriv’d—I shall keep you Inform’d of our proceedings whenever our positions alter materially.—I am [&c.]

Tho+ Thompson

PS I wish with you the Prizes had sold for more I know not the worth here except by Hudebrass & Neels in England the two with Cargos, would have been 21000£

1. For that of the 13th, see above; that of the 15th has not been found.
2. Above.

October 21

PAUL WENTWORTH TO WILLIAM EDEN

Sir

I flatter myself you will Pardon the liberty I take to acquaint you that a Certain Ph: Merckle 1 a German, has found Credit enough at Leige to Purchase
3000 fusils of the Prussian Modell
2000 lighter D°
200 Brass Blunderbusses.
100 Iron D°
200 Swivel Guns—of 1° Caliber
1000 Pairs of Cavalry Pistols
5000 Spare Gun locks
1000 Spare Pistolokę

Which are now actually in Amsterdam—But as the failure of the Remittance (by the Shipwrecks on the Coast of Holland) put a stop to his progress, the House of Hor- nica, Fiseaux & Co at Amsterdam, have interposed their Credit, & have received Or- ders from M. Grand the Banker at Paris entrusted with the Conduct of these Expeditions—to pay the Engagements of Merckle & assist him to ship them to America—A M° Deane,2 brother to the American Commissioner at Paris, left that City last Tues- day for Amsterdam, from whence he proposes to Embark for America—He lately ar- rived at Nantes from Guadaloupe—and probably with Merckle may sail in the New Ship lately built & to be Commanded by M. Boux3 (Brother to the Chevalier). She was launched from M. Staats Wharf at Amsterdam about Six Weeks Since, & is of a Construction too remarkable to escape the slightest notice. You will make any use you please of this intelligence, as my wishes are to prevent the destructive Success of the Enterprise. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

Poland Street. [London]
the 21 Octr. 1777

P. Wentworth

1. Johannes Philip Mercklé.
2. Simeon Deane.
3. The 36-gun ship Indien, built by Jacques Boux.

PAUL WENTWORTH TO WILLIAM EDEN

[Extract] [London, Oct. 21, 1777]

General intelligence & Observations.

... about 50 Sail for Trade.

George Grand, Chev° of the order of Vasa, is the concealed partner of this House. He reced the Knighthood at the request of C° Vergennes, whose principal agent he was in Sweden, in the Part france acted in the late Revolution. He also attended on the part of the C° Vergennes As umpire, between the Farmers General, & the
American Commrs during the late Tobacco Contract. He is also the Contractor for the Dutch Tobacco—with the Farmers General, M. Prevôt of the Royal Americans at Augustine, married his Daughter; has sent His Children to Ams who are in Grands house—and they Correspond—but I do not mean to suggest that M. Prevôt is unfaithfull to his Majesty. M. Grand—Bqr. at Paris, has the trust of the American Commrs. Mony reced from M. Micault d’Harvebey, Court Bqr for foreign affairs—under the direction of M. Vergennes.

Monthieu is Brother in law to Belgarde; & M. de Grebevalle is his Agent. The reformed fusils were of a hexagon form; Beaumarchais bo’th them at £4.10. reduced the angles & sold them at £18—to the Commrs for the Congress—they are found to be dangerous in the day of Battle. But they have been better supply since—and they say it was a french Gift. Beaumarchais has No Contract, nor has he ever hinted the Idea of payment.

Six Weeks to carry 24—18 Pounders. M. Boux Brother or Relation to the Chevalier inspects them, but the Chavalier was in Amsterdam in the months of May & June, when these three Ships were Contracted for & put on the Stocks for French & Spanish Account—they were to be ready for Sea by the 1 Nov., but ’haps the two largest will not be so soon finished. The other, probably will take on board M. Ph: Merckle’s Cargoe of Small arms &c—besides Cloathing from Germany & Cordage Sail Duck &c &c for two Ships of the Line building at Portsmouth & Newberry in N. England—It will be remembered that the Estimate, proves that M. Grand of Paris Brother to the Chevalier at Amsterdam remits the mony to Amsterdam to H, F & C there for this Ship, & that the Same House has been lately ordered to draw on him, for the amount of Merckle’s engagements &c &c.

Besides the great Quantity of Warlike Stores Collected & Collecting at Nantes by M. Monthieu according to the Contract with the American Commrs. which I Copyed from the Original—there are in the Kings Warehouses at Marseilles under Beaumarchais, for the use of the Congress—the remainder of the following Articles—

13000 Bombs
27 Brass Mortars with their Beds &c
68 D° field Cannon, with their Carriages &c
50000 Sulpher
36000 Gun Powder
25000 Tools for Artillery, Engineers, Miners, &c &c
6 large Hogsheads Soldiers Knives
a large Quantity of Cannon Balls.
Of which were Shipped onboard the *Heureux* (often mentioned) besides the Articles mentioned p<sup>3</sup>—
44 Brass field Cannon—
Carriages &c—
20 Brass Mortars &c
5000 Cannon Balls
2000 Bombs.
6 Hhds soldiers Knives.

There are several ships building in Private Yards in France, & in foreign Ports—pretendedly for India Ships, but are all Pierced for 54 & 64 Guns, & more probably intended for Ships of War.

L, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fol. 242-47. The portion not printed here reported the establishment by Congress of a Committee of Foreign Affairs, the appointment of commissioners to various European capitals, congressional politics involving western lands and George Washington, Silas Deane’s apparent disillusionment with the Revolution, Franklin’s attitude toward French aid, inflation of Continental money, the Continental Army’s difficulties raising enlistments, the American military’s use of slave labor, and Congress’s troubles with the foreign officers sent them by Deane.

1. Alexandre Cassier de Bellegarde, inspector general of artillery, and his brother-in-law Jean-Joseph Carié de Montieu sold the commissioners a large number of old and faulty muskets, probably the same they had earlier been accused of trying to pass off to the royal arsenal as new. Lieutenant-général Jean-Baptiste de Vaquette de Grieveau was director general of the artillery. See Papers of Benjamin Franklin 22: 461-64.
2. For the contract between the Commissioners and Montieu, see ibid. 24: 122-26.

**LEFRAS AND LE MESURIER TO LORD WEMYOUTH**

My Lord,

We take the Liberty to inclose to Your Lordship a Letter which we received Yesterday from our Correspondents Messrs. Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena of Bilboa<sup>1</sup> (the first of whom is Vice Consul for the English Nation at that Port), by which Your Lordship will see the daring Insolence of Captn. Jeremiah Hibbert of the American Privateer called the *Hawke*, by taking the Schooner *Adventure* of Jersey Captn. Philip De Gorrequer, bound from Newfoundland with a Cargo of Fish to the said Port of Bilboa, when lying at an Anchor near the Bar at the Entrance of that Harbour with a Pilot on board, and under the Sanction of the Forts, As it may be a Matter of Doubt whether the said Vessel and Cargo will be restored, we have thought it necessary (and more particularly at this time that the Newfoundland Ships are daily arriving at the different Ports of Spain, where and on that Coast we are informed several American Privateers are waiting for them) to inform Your Lordship of this, that Your Lordship may take thereon such Steps as in Your Wisdom may be thought necessary for the Protection of the Trade of the English Nation. We have the Honor to be [&c.]

Walbrook 21 October 1777

Lefras & Le Mesurier

---

<sup>1</sup> Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct. 1777.
October 22

"Extract of a Letter from Beerhaven, Oct. 22."

"An American privateer, which had been cruising for some time off Cape Clear, put in here two days ago, in order to heel ship, on account of a leak. They gave out that they were a letter of marque belonging to London, and on a cruise; this took with the common people, and many others; they bought a great quantity of live stock, and some spirits, for which they paid in dollars, and after lying here almost 24 hours, put again to sea."

London Chronicle, 6–8 Nov. 1777.

The London Packet; or, New Lloyd's Evening Post (London), Monday, October 20, to Wednesday, October 22, 1777

London.

The brig *Martha*, from Waterford to Bourdeaux, partly in ballast, was boarded in the Bay by an American privateer, who, after rummaging the vessel and taking away some provisions, suffered her to proceed: she had taken four prizes, and it was supposed she had not hands to spare to put on board the *Martha*, if they had kept her.

Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Captain James Cumming, R.N.

By &c

So soon as the Provisions & Stores of the Ship you command shall be completed agreeable to our other Order to you of this date,¹ you are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command, without a moments loss of time & to proceed and cruise between Cape Pinas & Cape Machacaca for the protection of the Trade of His Maj's Subjects & diligently to look out for, and to use your best endeavours to take or destroy Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America; And in case you shall receive information, which can be depended upon that any such Privatiers are cruizing in parts contiguous to, tho' not within the abovemention'd Station, you are at liberty to proceed in quest of them, taking care to return to the said Station when you have taken, destroyed or driven them away, or shall be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there.

You are to continue, upon the said Station for the space of one Month after your arrival thereupon, and then make the best of your way to Plymouth & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c. the 22d Oct 1777.—

Sandwich
J Buller
H Palliser

By &c. P.S.

¹. Ibid., fol. 244. *Aurora* was to be provisioned for four months.
AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN HALL, SEAMAN ON SNOW NANNY

(Copy)

John Hall maketh Oath before me that on or about the begining of Sept: 1777, that he the said John Hall was taken Prisoner in the Nanny Snow Capt: Smith—Commander in Latt: 40..00. by the Roler of 32 Guns & the Alford of 20 Guns, two American Privatiers and was Carried into Port Lewis, in France the 10th of Oct: 1777—and was brought over to England, with 70 other Prisoners in a French Brig & landed at Chrischurch the 20th October 1777, that he the said John Hall further says, that when he left Port Lewis that the two abovementioned Privatiers had taken out their Guns and was going to Heave Down at that Port, and he further adds that the Commanders of the Privatiers had given out their, that they had taken the other West Indiamen, which Ships were in Port Lewis & had sold their Cargoes at that Port, & likewise had taken a Brig bound to Newfoundland & a Schooner;—The Roler Privatier was the Ship that engaged His Majesty’s Ship the Druid, in the Ingagement the Privatier lost one Boy & a Lieut: wounded—Their Station for cruizing is in Latt: 40..00—near the Western Islands.

John Hall

Sworn before me at Southampton the 22nd: day of October 1777.

R Vernon Sadlurs


LIEUTENANT COLONEL EDWARD SMITH, MEMORANDA

Memos 8th 22d 1777

Cap: Weekes was at St Maloes ten days before Hynson left Havre de Grace having never been out of that port since he was drove in by the Burford Man of War.—

Weeks was all ready to putt out for Bilboa (tho’ his Guns were still in a private store), but could be on board and be gone the first tide.

The Pacifique a large fine Ship of fourteen twelve pounders at Havre de Grace, has shott, in for ballast, is to loaded with coarse Linnens cloth, and Lead. She is private property, and will proceed to Bilboa with two or three other ships of private property, to be convoy’d by four or five ships of force & value belonging entirely to the Congress.

The Ports of Nantz St Maloes and Bourdoux will altogether furnish a fleet of about sixteen to twenty sail of private adventurers, who will run down to the Latitude twenty three or twenty two, and having gott as far westward as the Island of Bermudas will then push for Virginia while the Convoy hawl up to the Northward & push for Boston Coast, hoping to gett in safe by coming there in the depth of winter.

The ships belonging to private adventurers push for the Southward in order to bring back a good Freight. The Congress ships attempt the North that is the coast of Boston as the last Effort the Congress Commissarys can make in order to keep up the Rebellion there next Summer, for they give up the Provinces to the Southward.
The Congress fleet is to assemble at Bilboa and is to consist of, a French fifty gun Ship.
Cap't Weekes in his old Ship, with Clothing, & Linnens.  
Cap't Thompson, who (If the Rich'd Pen is not on her way) will be provided with a two & twenty gun frigate with Bails of Cloth and Linnen.  
Cap't Nicholson in a fine four hundred tonn Ship of six or eight and twenty guns with Arms, Cloth, Linnen. Clothes.  
Cap't Patten from Cadiz in a two and twenty gun Ship with arms. Clothes. Linnen.  
Mr Williams the Agent at Nantz has forty Men at work daily in his very commodious Magazine in preparing & arranging every provision and armament that His Commissioners can procure, for to be ready for this next year's campaign. This Magazine is most commodiously situated at the back of the Town—and can load any ship from their doors without being seen from any part of the Town. Hynson saw this building the Work men and preparations.  
All American Ships falling in with Bermudas Island must stand for the West end and by their hoisting a Jack at the Main Topmast head, A Mr Tucker would send if [it] about, and procuring them as required assistance would give them orders or satisfactory information.  

E Smith


LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 155  
Separate  
My Lord,  

Fontainbleau 22 Oct' 1777.

I shall not trouble Your Lordship with a Detail of my Conversation with M de Vergennes, which turned nearly upon the same Points as that with M. de Maurepas: I read him the same Papers, and made almost the same Observations upon them. His Remark upon the Paragraph of Franklin's, and Deane's Letter, which he read again and again, with great Attention, was rather singular. "They may assert what they please said he; it is most certain that the Sequestre was ordered by the King as a Mark of great Displeasure; If they are not hurt with such Treatment, Ils sont de bons Chretiens qui savent pardonner." I am inclined to think My Lord that Nicholson's Letter is not only very material, but comes in a very critical Moment. I easily saw by the Account M. de Vergennes gave me of a Raport he had had from M. de Sartines, that without this authentic Proof they would have continued to deny the Truth of my Intelligence: M. de Vergennes actually told me, that upon Inquiry such a Ship as I had described had been found at Nantes, but that it belonged to a French Merchant who had built it for his own Use: I answered that there might be such a Prête Nom, but that Nicholson's Letter afforded clear and irrefragable Proof, and amounted to Demonstration. I dwelt much upon this, and made no Scruple to add that now They had an absolute Certainty, that this Vessel, built, armed, and equipped, in one of their Ports, was for the use of the Rebels, it was impossible they should suffer her to go out of Port, if their pacific Professions were really Sincere, as it was manifest that the conniving at such Assistance, would be contrary to every Idea of Friendship. He answered that he un-
derstood the Frigate was a good one, and that the best Way to end the whole Matter was to purchase her pour Le Service du Roi, he did not promise that this should be done, but spoke of it as a Thing he should advise. He desired an Extract of Nicholson’s Letter, and of that of Messrs Berard. I saw no Objection to this, and sent him the Extracts as soon as I got home. Upon reading Messrs Berard’s Letter he said, he was glad it had fallen into our Hands, as it shewed us, what Fraud and Duplicity was used, to elude the Orders given by this Court, and to deceive the Officers that are charged with the Execution of them. I answered that I must always be of Opinion that the Orders given could not be so constantly eluded, if there was a real and earnest Endeavour to execute them, that it was but too manifest that little or no Advantage had accrued to us from the Orders sent to their Ports, as the American Privateers still found their Way thither, and what was more conducted Prizes, which, if they were not sold in the Harbour were disposed of at some little Distance from it, and disposed of to the Subjects of France: This, Sir, happened very lately in the case of those two Ships which I mentioned to you last week. We now know, and indeed half Paris knows, that they have been sold, knows the Price given, and the Persons who bought them: They have been sold, Sir, to Messrs Berard and Montplaisir at L’Orient, and that too for 9,700 £ Sterling, which is not half their Value. (I had this Intelligence, My Lord, five or six Days ago, but for the sake of my Informer purposely avoided mentioning it, ’till it came to me from several Quarters.) M. de Vergennes assured me that this was new to him (it is very extraordinary that it should be so): In my Answer, I asserted the Truth of the Fact, and laid in a formal Claim for the Restitution of these Ships and Cargo’s protesting against the Sale, and all the Consequences of it. I expressly told him, that these Ships and Cargoes could be considered in no other Light, than that of English Property forcibly detained by the Subjects of France; put him in mind of the Orders given by this Court, which not only prohibit the Sale of Prizes, but make the Purchasers criminal; observed to him, how clearly Messrs Berard and Montplaisir are within these Orders and, how much they deserve to be punished, and ended with saying that the most natural Punishment was to oblige them to make immediate Restitution. He did not contravert this, but said it would be indispensably necessary that the Sale should be proved, and the Ships and Cargoes found. I insisted that it would be sufficient to prove the Sale and the Purchasers, and that they ought to be forced to make immediate Restitution. Tho’ I dwelt upon this, and enforced it by every Argument I could think of, yet I do not, My Lord, expect any real Benefit from these Applications, as it will be next to impossible to establish a Proof, that to such unfair, and partial Judges, shall appear sufficient. In the Course of my Conversation, I said a great deal to M. de Vergennes upon the Mischiefs that must result from their suffering their Orders to be eluded, and observed to him, how idle it would be to suppose a real Difference between the Sale of Prizes made in the Harbours of France, or at some little Distance from them, that such Evasions were unworthy of them, unworthy of us, that there was a Time when Things of this Nature might have been supposed to be unknown to both Nations, but now that Both had spoke out very explicitly, now that we had complained, and they had promised Redress, it was for their Honour, as well as ours, that the Evil should be effectually cured. He did not contravert this Principle, but made his usual Answer, that nothing can be more positive than the Orders France has given, nothing more sincere and friendly than her Intentions. I am [&c.]

Stormont
23 OCTOBER 1777


1. American Commissioners in France to Captain Henry Johnson, 25 July 1777. NDAR 9: 533-34.

October 23

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF ALL PORTS OF FRANCE

Marseilles, Oct. 23. The following is a copy of the letter written by the Minister of the Marine Department, and sent to all the ports of France.

"You could not, Gentlemen, be ignorant of the orders so often renewed by his Majesty at the sittings of the different Admiralties in his ports, not to permit the sale of any prizes made by foreign privateers, or to suffer the corsairs and their prizes to remain any longer in the ports than is absolutely necessary to procure them the provisions and assistance that they might want. This prohibition, which springs from a principle of faithfully observing a treaty once made, ought not to be eluded on any pretence whatever; and it is not without great displeasure, that his Majesty hears that many illegal methods have been made use of to evade the vigilance of his Officers, and to buy and sell the goods belonging to the above-mentioned prizes; and I am charged by the King again to give notice to the Chambers of Trade, and through them to the Merchants, that they shall not directly or indirectly buy any of the merchandizes which in any shape belong to the prizes brought into any of his ports, on pain of answering for it personally, and being obliged to return the goods or their value.

"I desire you will make these intentions of his Majesty known to the Merchants, and at the same time that the King will not permit the least evasion of his orders to go unpunished; and, I am persuaded, that the Merchants will shew the utmost alacrity to prove their submission to the King's pleasure. I am also to order you, that those who counteract these orders be rigourously proceeded against; and I am further to add, that as the ports of the kingdom are open for the trade of all nations, the Merchant ships from North America may be admitted with their cargoes, which they may dispose of, and take in return any merchandize which is permitted to be exported, except ammunition, &c. and his Majesty particularly warns all Merchants to avoid the introducing of the American prizes, under pretence of their being Merchantmen."


GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

Fontainbleau 23 Octre. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 17. de ce mois par laquelle vous m'informez que des deux frégates américaines le Raleigh et l'alfred l'une étoit entrée dans le Port le d. Jour 17. et l'autre devoit y être admiré le lendemain. Vous me faites part aussi
de ce qui vous est revenu sur l’avis que j’avais eu que les deux prises qui avaient mouillé sous Groix avaient vendu la totalité de leur Cargaison et je vois par le détail dans lequel vous entrez que ce Rapport ait quelque fondement. Je ne savois assés vous recommander de veiller, en ce qui vous concerne et de concert avec les Offts de l’amirauté, à qui j’en écris également, non seulement à ce qu’aucune prise ou Corsaire ne puisse être admis dans nos Ports, mais encore à ce qu’il ne se fasse aucun débarquement de ces Batimens sous quelque prétexte que ce Soit. Les volonté du Roi est très précise à ce Sujet et la moindre tolérance Seroit reprehensible.

Quant aux demandes que les américains font aux Négociants et dont vous m’avez adressé l’Etat, la Sortée d’aucun des articles qui le composent ne peut être prohibée étant tous dans la classe des objets ordinaires de Commerce. J’en excepte cependant les vieux Canons pour [lest?], parceque Sous prétexte de Canon de rebut on peut embarquer des Canons en état de servir et masquer de cette manier une expédition fraudulant. En général il n’y a que les Seules munitions de guerre dont la sortée doit être proscrite. L’exportation des autres objets qui entrent dans les Spéculations ordinaires du commerce ne peut Souffrir de difficulté, puisque le Commerce est libre, sauf cependant les risques que les négociants ont à courir et que nous ne pouvons garantir. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 23 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, your letter of the 17th of this month by which you informed me that the two American frigates, Raleigh and Alfred, the one having entered the port on the 17th and the other supposed to be admitted the following day. You also apprised me of that which was told you about the information that I had received to the effect that the two prizes which had moored at Groix had sold their entire cargoes, and I see by the detail into which you entered that this report had some foundations. I cannot urge you strongly enough to keep a close watch on that which concerns you, and, together with the Admiralty officers to whom I shall also write, not only so that no prize or privateer be allowed to enter our ports, but also so that there not be any debarkation from these ships under any pretext, whatsoever. The king’s wish on this subject is very precise, and the slightest tolerance would be reprehensible.

As to the requests that the Americans are making of the merchants and on which you addressed the list to me, the shipment of none of the articles which comprise it can be prohibited, being that they are all classed as ordinary objects of trade. I exempt from them, however, the old cannons, because under the pretext of rejected cannon, one might load serviceable cannon, and in this way hide a fraudulent shipment. In general it is solely these munitions of war whose shipment must be forbidden. The exporting of other objects which enter into ordinary commercial speculation should not be subject to obstacles, since trade is free, except, however, the risks that the merchants must run and which we cannot guarantee. I am [&c.]

de sartine

1. Jamaica, David Watt, master, and Anna Susannah, John Taylor, master.
Exmo. Sr.

De algún tiempo á esta parte habrá notado VE. con no poca admiracion suya la singularísima conducta que observan los Corsarios Americanos en nuestros Mares de Europa. Sus excesos aun dentro de los mismos Puertos de Francia son bien notorios, y han llegado á terminos de precisar á esa Corte á expedir las estrechas ordenes que sabemos, dando también lugar á que en España se hayan deschado otras iguales.

Su desorden se había reducido á los principios á abusar imprudentemente de la protección que hallaban en ambos Reynos, y á disponer su caso del modo que juzgaban mas perjudicial á los Vasallos de Inglaterra. Pero no satisfechos ya de este abuso han llevado la temeridad hasta apoderarse de varias embarcaciones francesas, con pretexto de conducir generos de fabrica Inglesa, á pertenecientes á Vasallos Britanicos, y mirándolas como presa lejitima dirixirlas á sus Colonias.

Desde luego nos persuadimos que el Ministerio de Versailles, gravemente ofendido de semejantes excesos, tomaría sus providencias y con los mismos Armadores Americanos á volver á los Puertos de ese Reyno, ó bien con los Diputados residentes ahí, para obtener la mas completa satisfaccion, de forma que no volvieren á suceder iguales casos.

¿Qual será nuestra sorpresa al ver que continua el mismo desorden y qual nuestra indignacion observando que los Cosarios Americanos se atrevien á apresar embarcacion cargada principalmente de cuenta de Comerciantes Españoles? Los papeles que acompañan instruirán á VE. de lo ocurrido cerca de la Costa de Galicia el dia 9. de Septiembre al Navio francés el fortune que navegaba de Londres á Cadiz eiva cargado con generos de lícito comercio, como vá dicho de cuenta de nuestros Nacionales. No se expresa el nobre del Cosario, pero provablemente habrá sido alguno de los que en aquellos dias entraron en los Puertos de la Coruña y Ferrol á experimentar muy buena acogida, y á recibir los auxilios que necesitaren; cuya circunstancia hace tanto mas odioso el hecho de que se trata.

Por decontado reciben los Vasallos del Rey un perjuicio notavilisimo una vez que la Presa se ha enviado a America; pues presciendo de los riesgos regulares de mar, puede ser apresada por algun Buque de la armada Britanica, ó distribuido allá mismo el valor de su carga antes que tengan noticias Veridicas de su nombre, vandera y demas circunstancias.

No me detendré á exponer quan indecoroso es á las Coronas de España y Francia tolerar semejantes excesos, y quan injusto sería dejar á sus respectivos Vasallos expuestos en tiempo de paz á unos chascos de igual naturaleza. Tampoco me explaré, como podria, sobre el incremento que tomarían estos excesos una vez tolerados, y sobre la consternacion general que habria si los Cosarios Americanos se convirtieren en piratas y á su exemplo lo practicaren igualmente los Armadores Ingleses como otros muchos de varias Naciones. Pero si manifestaré á VE. que ha chocado al Rey en sumo grado el lance del día 9. de Septiembre por recaer sobre los que ya sabimos, y por la circunstancia de haber sido á la vista de nuestros mismos Puertos, cuyo auxilio vienen diariamente á solicitar; y aunque en mi carta del No. 2° tengo insinuado que se iva á providenciar la remesa de algun socorro en dinero ó Letras á esos Diputados me acaba SM. de mandar que lo suspenda. Comprende el Rey que seria
muy impropio exercer tales actos de generosidad al mismo tiempo que se reciven unos agravios tan escandalosos, y antes de todo desea SM asegurarse de que sin la menor dilación se ha de restituir la presa referida con total resarcimiento de los perjuicios causados, y de que en lo sucesivo no volveran á verse lances iguales; pues así para obtener protección en nuestros Puertos los Cosarios Americanos se les ha de mirar como sugetos al actual Gobierno del Congreso, y en tratándose de sus tropelias particulares se han de disculpar como que no alcanza su autoridad sobre ellos, sería esta una contradición repugnante por mil caminos, y sobre todo incompatible con la seguridad de las Naciones.

Excuso entrar en otras muchas consideraciones obvias, y solo apuntaré, que harán bien los Diputados Americanos de reflexionar sobre los daños á que exponen su causa Nacional si llegan á disgustar á las Cortes de Expanía y Francia pues el re-sentimiento de estas podría trastornar todas las ideas del actual Gobierno de las Colo-nias. Y concluyo recomiendo á VE. hable seriamente sobre este asunto con el Sr. Conde de Vergennes y haya igualmente entender á los Diputados las graves causas que concurren para el justo enojo de SM. Dios gue. á VE. mío como deseo. Sr. Lorenzo 23. de Octro de 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca

P.D. Acavo de saber que el Cosario Hawke apresó la goleta la ventura sobre nuestra Costa de Bilban y por tal ha sido allí declarada mala presa.

Lo mismo ha sucedido en Sr. Sebastian con la presa la Elisabet que hizo el Americano Juan Bufinton.

[Translation]

Most excellent sir,

For some time at this place your excellency might have noted with no little won-der the most singular behavior that the American privateers observe in our Euro-pean seas. Their excesses even within the very ports of France are notorious and have arrived at the point of obliging that court to issue the strictest regulations that we know, giving rise also to the issuance of similar ones in Spain.

Their disorder has reduced itself to the principles of imprudently abusing the protection which they found in both realms, and in arranging their case in the way that they judged most prejudicial to the subjects of England. But still not satisfied with this abuse, they have had the temerity to seize several French vessels, on the pretext of their carrying goods of English manufacture, belonging to British subjects, and looking on them as legitimate prizes to send them to their colonies.

Since that time we are persuaded that the ministry at Versailles, gravely offended by similar excesses, will take measures with the same American privateersmen on their returning to the ports of that kingdom, or with the deputies living there, to ob-tain the completest satisfaction, in a manner that will stop the future occurrences of like kind.

What will be our surprise on seeing that same disorder continue and what our indignation on observing that the American privateers dare to seize vessels laden principally on the account of Spanish merchants? The accompanying papers will in-form your excellency of what happened near the coast of Galicia the 9th of Sep-tember to the French merchantman the Fortune, which was sailing from London to Cadiz, laden with commodities of licit commerce, as stated in statements by our na-
tionals. The name of the privateer was not stated, but it was probably the same as one of those that on one of those days entered the ports of Corunna and Ferrol, where they received a very warm welcome and received the assistance that they needed; which circumstance makes so much more odious the deed under discussion.

Of course the king's subjects suffer a most significant injury once the prize has been sent to America; and setting aside the ordinary risks of the sea, it could be captured by any ship of the British fleet, or the bulk of its cargo be distributed then and there before they take truthful note of its name, flag, and other identifying characteristics.

I shall not cease to expound how indecorous it is for the crowns of Spain and France to tolerate such excesses, and how unjust it would be to leave their respective subjects exposed in peacetime to tricks of like nature. Neither shall I expound, as I could, upon the increase that these excesses would take once tolerated, and on the general consternation there would be if the American privateers turned into pirates and whose example the English privateersmen as well as many others from several nations would likewise follow. But if I shall demonstrate to your excellency that the episode of September 9th has vexed the king to a high degree, by falling back on what we already knew, and by the circumstance of it having taken place in sight of our very ports, whose help they came daily to solicit; and although in my letter of the second I had suggested taking measures to send some aid in money or bills of exchange to those deputies, His Majesty concludes in commanding me that the aid be suspended. The king understands that it would be very improper to exercise such acts of generosity at the same time we are receiving such scandalous insults, and, above all, His Majesty desires to assure himself that, without the least procrastination, the prize referred to be restored with complete compensation for the damages caused, and that in the future similar episodes will not be repeated. Thus if, in order to obtain protection in our ports, the American privateers look on themselves as subjects of the current government, to the Congress, and in treating of their particular outrages they have excused themselves as if it has no authority over them, it would be a contradiction repugnant in a thousand ways, and above all incompatible with the security of nations.

I excuse myself from entering into many other obvious considerations and will only point out that the American deputies will do well to reflect on the damage to which they expose the cause of their nation if they arrive at the point of offending the courts of Spain and France, in as much as the resentment of these courts could overturn all the plans of the current government of the colonies. I conclude in recommending to your excellency to speak seriously about this matter with the Comte de Vergennes and as well to make the deputies understand the grave consequences that they incur because of the just anger of His Majesty. That God may keep you many years is my desire. San Lorenzo, 23 October 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca

P.S. I have just learned that the privateer Hawk seized the schooner Adventure on our coast of Bilbao and for that reason it has been declared an unlawful prize.

The same thing has happened at San Sebastian with the prize the Elizabeth, made by the American John Buffinton.

L, SpMAA, legajo 4072, expediente 201.
October 24

*THE LONDON PACKET; OR, NEW LLOYD'S EVENING POST* (LONDON),

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, TO FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1777**

Friday, October 24. London.

The *Dolphin*, Wentworth, from South Carolina, with rice, for Cadiz, is taken by the *Levant* frigate, and sent into Gibraltar; there is also sent into the same port the *Glover*, Harris, from St. Andera, for Marblehead, with blankets, &c. taken by the *Alarm* frigate.

**WILLIAM COOLEY AND W. STILES TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CUSTOMS**

Honble Sirs.

Cap° Watt late of the Ship *Jamaica* and Cap° Hooper of the *Nanny* both from Jamaica, and Cap° Marshall of the *Sally* from Dartmouth to Newfoundland, and Cap° Athens of a Schooner from New York with several other Passengers landed at this Port last night from Port L'Orient having been taken and carried in there by the *Raleigh* (a Frigate belonging to the Rebels) of 32 Guns under the Command of one Thompson. The two first mentioned Captains informed the Surveyor and Landwaiters, when they were examining their Baggage—"that before they left L'Orient the Cargoes of their Ships were discharging and intended to be Sold. That the *Raleigh*, and her Consort the *Alfred* of 22 Guns were landing their Gunpowder and Stores in the King's Arsenal in order that they may go into the Kings Dock—That there was a Frigate at L'Orient ready to be launched for the Rebels, that she was to be Commanded by an Irishman and manned by the French—This Frigate when ready in Conjunction with the *Raleigh and Alfred* were to Convey from L'Orient to America near Twenty Sail of Ships laden with Stores &c."—We think it Our Duty to Communicate this Information to your Honours, and are in haste to save Post, with great Respect, Your Honours Most faithful and Obedient Hble Servants

Custom House

Portsmouth

24th. Ocr° 1777.


1. In an accompanying letter of the same date to Edward Stanley, Cooley and Stiles recommended that Capt. Watt and Capt. Hooper, who were on their way to London, be examined for further particulars. Ibid., fol. 509.

**LACOSTE CASSENAVE & CO. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**

M. le Docteur Franklin Paris.


Mons°

Nos Amis M° Horniold & Clough ont chargé pour notre Compte et à notre consignation 19 Balles de Marchandizes sur le Navire françois la *Fortune* Capt Beltrand.
Kenguen expedie de Londres pour Cadiz, ainsi qu’apért du Connoissee et facture des dits effets et de la Lettre des dites Amis qui nous les aporté.—

Le susdt Navire ayant été pris dans sa Traversée par le Corsaire Americain le Civil Usage, nous sommes en souffrance par le manque de nos fondes, et par le defaut de l’assortiment qui nous etoit necessaires pour notre Commerce. Notre qualiti de françois justifiee par le Certificat cy joint du Consul de France a Cadiz, nous autorise a la demarche que nous faisons auprès de vous Mons' pour reclamer no dites Effets & les temoignages Publics de votre probiti nous font esperer que vous voudrez bien employer vos bons Offices auprès du Congrés pour que le Capteur nous dedomage. C’est la Grace que nous vous demandons, ainsi que celle de nous croire reconnoissons d’avance et tres parfaitemt Mons' &c &c

Lacoste Cassenave et C°

[Translation]

Our friends Mistres Horniold and Clough charged to our account and consigned to us 19 bales of merchandise on board the French merchantman the Fortune, Capt. Beltrand Kenguen, sent from London to Cadiz, as indicated by the bill of lading and invoice of the said goods and by the letter of the said friends who sent them to us.

The above-mentioned merchantman having been taken in its voyage by the American privateer the Civil Usage, we are injured by the lack of our funds, and by the lack of the assorted goods that we need for our trade. Our being French subjects, proved by the enclosed certificate from the French consul in Cadiz, authorizes the representation that we make to you to reclaim our said goods, and the public report of your honesty leads us to hope that you will willingly use your best influence with the Congress in order that the captor indemnify us. This is the favor that we ask of you, as well as that you believe us grateful in advance and very perfectly, sir, &c. &c.

Lacoste Cassenave et C°

(Copy)

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 45, pp. 283–84 (M247 roll no. 59). For a similar letter to Franklin from Pierre Deschamps, dated Cadiz, 14 Oct. 1777, see Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 69–71.

October 25

ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir, Sandwich at Spithead 25th Oct 1777.

Inclosed is a Paper containing some Intelligence I yesterday received from Mr Hooper, late Master of the Nancy West India Ship, and Mr Kennedy, a Passenger in her, who were taken by the Raleigh and Alfred two Rebel Privateers, with the Descriptions of the said Privateers, which I beg leave to lay before their Lordships.

I have given His Majesty’s Ships under sailing Orders, Descriptions of the above mentioned Rebel Privateers, and shall communicate the same to the other Ships under my Command before they proceed to Sea. I am [&c.]

ThoPy
25 OCTOBER 1777


[Enclosure]

Particulars of the Information given by Mr. Hooper, late Master of the Nancy West India Ship, and Mr. Kennedy a Passenger on board her, to Admiral Sir Thomas Pye 24th. October 1777.

Mr. Anthony Hooper Master of the Nancy West India Ship, and Mr. Kennedy a Passenger, having been taken the 1st Sept last in that Ship by the Raleigh and Alfred two Rebel Privateers, the former was put on board the Alfred and the latter on board the Raleigh, and was in her when she engaged His Majesty's Sloop the Druid. Mr. Kennedy says one Man was killed, and the 1st Lieutenant and a Boy wounded on board the Privateer.

They were carried into Port L'Orient and on the 11th Inst sailed from thence with Seventy other Prisoners in a French Brig for England.

The Ann Susannah, laden with 500 Hogsheads of Sugar, John Taylor Master and the Jamaica, a Ship of three Decks (both taken by the Raleigh) left L'Orient the same Day, said to be bound to some Port in Spain, but are supposed to have gone back again to Port L'Orient, so soon as the French Brig which carried the Prisoners was out of sight. The Seventy Prisoners intended to have attempted retaking the two Jamaica Ships, had they not been escorted out of the Harbour by Boats manned and Armed with French Officers and Men. 1

Descriptions of the two Rebel Privateers

The Raleigh, Thomas Thompson Master, carries 36 Guns and 200 Men. 2

116 feet keel, 36 feet Beam small Quarter Galleries and a yankey Head with a feather in his Cap, a Sabre in his right Hand: is designed for Sir Walter Raleigh the greatest part of her Stern and Head Painted white. her Ports are very large.

On her Main Deck, Twenty 12 and Six 9 Pounders
On her Forecastle, Twenty 9 Pounders Swivels on her Forecastle.
In each Top with a Chest of Arms
On Her Taffrel Two Cohorns

Runs her two stern Chases out of the Cabin Windows

Her Sails are cut like an English Man of War's except her Top gallant sails which are more like a Merchant Ship's

Whole Mizen Yard. short top gallant Mast heads very large main topmast Stay sail, Studding sails and Driver. All her yards very Square This Ship sails very fast before the wind.

The Alfred, Elisha Hinman Master. carries 20 Guns and 160 Men.

A Merchant Built Ship very lofty. her head is much like the Raleigh

On her main Deck. Twenty 9 Pounders
Swivels on her Fore Castle.
Four Cohorns in each Top with a Chest of Arms

This Ship's yards are not square, her Sails are the same as when in the Merchant Service. Taunt Masts, two Top gallant masts, with long Royal Masts and sets a flying Mizen
Top gallantsail, her Studding sails are very large. Waist Cloths black with white borders as in the Tops. her breast work on the quarter Deck is is about 5½ feet which the Master said should be cut down in France.

She can run out four Stern Chases. 2 in the Cabin, and 2 on the Quarter Deck. This Ship sails poorly particularly on a wind.

They both have a Top and Poop Lanthorn. The Raleigh is now cleaning at L'Orient and the Alfred is cleaning opposite Port Louis.

The Raleigh's Powder was taken out by the King's powder boat, and put into the King's Store. her Guns are landed on St Michael's Island. A main Mast was making for her in the King's Yard, if her own would not do—on the 10th Sept it was sprung, but well fished again.3 These Ships were well found with every thing, and were in no distress—they only wanted to clean their Bottoms.

Two thirds of the Crews of the above Rebel Privateers consist of English, Irish and Scotch. In their Ensigns are thirteen stripes, and where the Union formerly was, is a blue field with thirteen white Stars, these Colours are only carried by the Continental Ships, which have Commissions from the Congress.—

D, UkLPR, Adm. 1/955, 191-92.

1. In the margin, in Stephens's hand: "See last Page, & Copy within 1." Stephens marked the enclosure from the beginning to this point with brackets, indicating the portion to be copied for Lord Weymouth's information.

2. In the margin: "N.B. The Master of the Raleigh is an Englishman but married in America. he was several years Master of a Ship which traded from London to St Vincent—her two Lieutenants are Irish Men."

3. Stephens bracketed this paragraph to be copied for Lord Weymouth's information.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, OCT. 25."

Arrived at Catwater the Betsy schooner, John Galle, late Master, from Nantz, bound to North Carolina, with salt, bale goods, gunpowder, and arms; a prize taken by his Majesty's ship Centaur. This vessel carried a cargo of rice and indigo to Nantz, and was taking back a cargo in return. By this vessel we learn that the river of Nantz swarms with American vessels.

London Chronicle, 30 Oct.–1 Nov. 1777.

WILLIAM MCCREERY TO JOHN ADAMS

Sir

Bordeaux 10 October 1777

I did myself the Honour to write to you from Nantz the 29th ulto and at the same time forwarded Two News papers for you; I mentiond the Scarcity of Frigates in England but that they were fitting out Sixteen Gun Sloops, most of which I have since Heard are Sheathing with Copper, so that you may Expect them on the coast of America this winter, they have lately fitted out Sloops which mount Ten 4 pounders & 60 or 70 Men—one of which has made a prize of the Lexington Captn Johnson, after a Hot Engagement of about Four hours. He had seven killed & Eleven wounded amongst the former were two or three of his officers—He had but forty Eight men,
& they were such a Motly Crew, that people are astonishd at his Having made so Gallant a resistance—

A Twenty four Gun Ship belonging to Coll Langden of N:E sent in a prize loaded with Fish a few Days ago, but as she hoisted the E Colours with the union down to Shew that She was a prize, she was Stopped below by a French Frigate Stationd there to prevent these things to Search our Vessels for their Seamen which they dont allow us to have now, Had they Hoisted either American or French Colours, there would not have been the least hindrance, The vessel is sent Bilboa by Messrs Delaps to whom She was consigned—

The Carolinians have been peculiarly unlucky of late in the vessels which they Sent to Europe. Four out of 5 which got into the Bay were taken, & I Saw a Letter from Cadiz yesterday which mentions two vessels from Carolinas having gone in there and that the Masters immediately waited on the E. Consul & took the oath of allegiance to the King of England: they were the Hawk Capt Follow & the Diana Capt Ingersall. It also mentions a report of two privateers being taken and carried into Gibraltar—I much fear we shall loose most of our Men by these cursed little privateers—Whatever prisoners we take in Europe are put ashore & returned immediatly to England—but ours when taken are carryed there & put into close prison where they are by all accots used most cruelly—

An Insurance office has been lately established here & I am told it is a very good one—The premium to & from America is thirty 3/4 C

I think the Congress would be much better servd from this port in many things, than at Nantes—for instance in Soldiers cloathing for as Montauban & where the Cloathing comes cheapest is much nearer to this port than nantes, and the Carriage is nearly all by water, whereas what goes by Nantes is first Sent several Hundred Miles by land to Paris from thence part by Land & part by water to Nantes, There must certainly be a very great difference in the expence, your agent here (if you had one) could have them immediatly from the Manufactures & get them made up at the Same place on very good terms— Shirts Stockings & Shoes come on as good terms to this port as any other, Hatts come better from Nantes—

I believe you will agree with me that an agent for Congress ought to be in the first place, a punctual Man with a good Capital of his own, be in good Credit, have the best connections abroad & at home & have an inclination to do every Service in his power to America—Such a Man there is in Bordeaux I mean Mr Delap who continues agreeable to His Fathers will the Firm of S & J H. Delap From the Same cause he remains Single in Trade and has been obliged to refuse very lately Several offers of partnership, in particular one with an agent here of yours now at Nantez which I believe has occasioned a miff—

Should Congress see cause to Employ an agent here you may depend, there is no House so fit for the purpose, and as I have in all the Letters which I have had the Honour to write you, given my own Sentiments & opinion very freely I will now just mention what I think Congress may very well do—In the first place let Faithfull active Men be imploy’d in Virginia and Maryland, (for Tobaco at present is the best article you can send to Europe) to purchase & load vessels, and when ready to Sail forward by Several different conveyances Bills of Lading to your agents here with orders to insure the whole,—At the Same time let directions be given about the returns which may be got ready immediately—If the vessel arrives safe Mr Delap will advance
as near the amount of what the Cargo is likely to bring & not detain the vessel for the Sale of it—Should Several thousand Hog⁴ arrive at the Same time—his Credit is so extensive that he could immediately Ship for the whole, if the vessels are lost he recovers the insurance agreable to orders—

I believe our publick credit has sufferd much in Europe for want of punctuality—I have had very unfavourable accotts of the French Gentlemen in Nantes who were concernd with Mr T Morris¹ as to the Latter I have been an Eye witness to his incapability of Serving the publick his Friends or himself—Mr Ross I am informd is a first rate Merchant & bears here an Excellent Character He is by every act [account] very capable & very worthy—

Cap' Ashburne in a Brigg from Cinespuct [Sinepuxent] is arrived here this morning with a 100⁴ Hhds of Tob'o She is own'd in Philad⁴

I would be exceedingly obliged to you to inform me How your publick magazines & furnished and what articles are most wanted as I Should encourage Speculation as much as possible & give most encouragement to Ship what you stand most in need of—I should be glad to have your opinion of what consequent our Trade to france may be when a peace is concluded, if I thought it would be considerable hereafter I would Settle in Bordeaux if otherways in Nantes, Yet there so many Americans Setling at Nantes that I am advised to Settle in this place I must determine Soon, & Shall take the liberty to advise you of it, and beg your interest with your Mercantile Friends to the Northward—I am [&c.]

W. M. Creery

Dear Sir Bordeaux octbr 25

Since writing the above which I found no opty [opportunity] of forwarding the prize with fish has got into Bilboa & the vessel which took her has got into this place She is the portsmouth from portsm⁴ commanded by capt Hart & mounts 24 Guns She was Stop'd below by the Frigate, but Mr Delap procured permission for her to Stay 3 Days that She might refit when the time expired She was orderd out in 24 hours & the Carpenters not being able to finish in that time, Mr Delap was obliged to apply to the Admiralty once more & with great difficulty obtaind 3 days more permission Hence you may perceive the Difficulty there is with Such vessels at this port, & that it all proceeds from the fear that this Court has of England—

Let me assure you of one thing, that if a war Should chance to break out in Europe it will not happen through affection to America, all that is aimd at here, is to keep the flames of war from dieing, I mention this only to yourself, It is not necessary to let it be publickly known in America—However I have the happiness to assure you of what I little expected, the people of Holland begin in reality to think justly of America & of England also, the former they are begining to trust—The credit of England begins to Shake & a little good News from America would Effect what the weakness timidity or Jealousy of princes refuses—it would gain us credit with individuals—The Merchants of Holland are petitioning the States for Convoys to protect their Trade, 3 of the provinces have voted Six Ships of War to go to St Eustatia & it is Supposed the others will acceed—letters from Germany mention that it is very difficult to obtain Recruits for the English Service in America—
I beg you will be So good as to Let hear from you. I have not been able to procure the Books I wanted for you, all I can now Send you is an Irish Magazine for July, I am [&c.]

W. Creery

I have determined to Settle in this place.


1. Pliarne, Penet & Co.

October 26 (Sunday)

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

26th [Oct] Sunday foul w\* this Day the People in the Itchey ward Detected in a plan Laid to Elope, by a pass made thr\* the Drean, thr\* which the Most of us Expected to pass but are Disappointed the Guard Com\*d. Six to y\* B.h. [black hole].

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU LE MARQUIS DE MONTBAS

A M Le M\* de Montbas
Ens\* de V\* Command\* La Corvette du Roi
L'Etourdie à Bordeaux.

Fontainebleau Le 26 8\*bre 1777.

J'ai reçu, M, les Différentes Lettres que vous m'avez écrites dans le courant de ce Mois, pour me rendre compte de ce qui se passe dans la Riviere de Bordeaux, relativement aux Bâtimens Anglo-américains; et je ne puis qu'approuver en général la conduite que vous avez tenue à leur égard dans les diverses circonstances.

J'ai appris avec plaisir que la prise Le Mercury, Cap\* jean Still,\* a appareillé aussitôt qu'elle a pu se procurer les secours qui lui étoient nécessaires: vous avez bien fait de laisser remonter la Rivière au N\* Le Duc de Chesuel: Les marchands anglais n'ont jamais de passeports; mais, seulement une police et des Connoissemens. Il en est de même des Bâtimens insurgens et vous ne devez faire aucune difficulté de laisser remonter ceux qui auront un chargement en marchandises: La prohibition ne regarde que les Corsaires; Le Commerce doit être libre. J'approve que vous ayez procuré à ce Bâtiment les facilités qui ont dépendu de vous, et les Secours dont il avait besoin pour assurer son mouillage.

En général vous pouvez admettre dans le Port tout Bâtiment qui a une Cargaison; mais tout Bâtiment Anglo-américain, armé seulement en guerre, soit qu'il ait une Commission du Congrès, soit qu'il n'en ait pas, doit être réputé Corsaire, et ne peut Séjourner dans le Port au delà du temps nécessaire pour se procurer les Secours de Subsistance dont il peut avoir besoin; et réparer les avaries qui le mettroient en danger si on le forçoit à reprendre la Mer avant que de s'être radoubé.

Je manque aux Officiers de l'amirauté et à M Le Moyne\* de tenir la main à ce que le Corsaire américain Le Portsmouth redescende la Riviere aussitôt qu'il aura été
réparé, & vous veillerez à ce qu’il ne reste dans la Rade que le temps que pourroit exiger l’état de la Marée ou la contrariété des Vents. Je suis [&c.]

[Translation]

To Monsieur Le Marquis de Montbas
Enseigne de Vaisseau Commanding the King’s Corvette
L’Etourdie at Bordeaux

Fontainebleau 26 October 1777

I have received, Monsieur, the various letters which you have written to me in this current month in order to render an accounting of what is transpiring in the River of Bordeaux relative to the American ships, and I can do no less than to approve in general the conduct that you have maintained in their regard under the diverse circumstances.

I have learned with pleasure that the prize the Mercury, Captain John Still,1 has gotten under way immediately as soon as she was able to procure the assistance she needed: you have done well to allow the merchant ship the Duke of Chesuel to go up the river. The English merchants do not ever have passports but only a policy and bills of lading. It is the same with the insurgent ships and you should not present any difficulty in allowing those that are laded with merchandise to go up. The prohibition only applies to privateers: Commerce must be free. I approve of your having procured for this ship the facilities which depend on you as well as the assistance of which she has need to assure her anchorage.

In general, you may admit within the port every ship that has a cargo; but every American ship fitted out only for war, whether she has a commission from Congress or does not have one, must be considered a privateer and not be allowed to remain in the port any longer than to procure the relief of subsistence of which she has need and to repair damages that might otherwise expose her to danger if one forced her to return to sea before being refitted.

I command the officers of the admiralty and Monsieur Le Moyne2 to make sure that the American privateer the Portsmouth returns down the river as soon as she has been repaired, and you to watch that she does not remain in the roadstead any longer than the state of the tide and contrary winds require.

I am [&c.]

1. See Journal of French Navy Corvette Etourdie, Marquis de Montbas, Enseigne de Vaiseau, under dates 1, 6, and 8 Oct., above.
2. Commissaire Ordonateur de la Marine, or pay commissioner of the navy, at Bordeaux.

CAPTAIN ELISHA HINMAN TO ELLIS GRAY

Dear Sir

Port L’Orient October 26th. 1777.

The 22d. of August I sailed from Portsmouth Harbour in New England, in Company with Captain Thompson of the Raleigh Frigate, in our way here we took a Schooner,1 from New York, bound to Nova Scotia, which we burnt—We also took a Snow2 from S’t Vincent’s, laden with Sugar, Coffee, She we ordered for America, likewise a Brig3 from England bound for Halifax, laden with Salt and some Cordage, ordered her like-
wise for America, both of which we hope are arrived safe in some American port. On
the 30th of September, in the Channel of England, we took two large Ships, from
Jamaica for London, which we convoyed to this port, and have sold them. We arrived
here the 6th of October, we are cleaning our Ships and refitting, and shall sail first on
a Cruize, and then proceed for America. I hope to be compleatly Manned here, which
was not the case when we left America. At Portsmouth I let Captain Thompson have
20 of my Men, in order to enable him to proceed to Sea, who was at least 70 Men Short.

I assure you, Sir, it is impossible for me to give you a particular Account of Amer-
icans affairs, with France and Spain—but will give you my own opinion from the ob-
servations I have made here, viz. The French are really friends at Hart to the Amer-
icans in the present Controversy, but rather seem to decline a War at present, altho'
large armaments are fitting and getting in readiness both by Sea and Land.—They
will give America every assistance in their Power, but not publicly and are deter-
mined that a final Separation of America from Great Britain shall take place, even
at the Expence of a War. Spain may be said to be equally disposed as France. Both
Captain Thompson and myself are treated very gentelly, by People of the first Char-
acters here. We have had the honor to pay our Respects to the Duke de Durass and
the Dutchess de Mazarine, by whom we were received kindly, and shewed every mark
of Friendship. They did us great Honour at a public Entertainment, both by drink-
ing our Healths and wishing us Success. We also had a similarity of Friendship shewn
us from the Spanish Embassador, who passed through this Town a few days past, in
short I am convinced they are as determined as before mentioned.

Dear Sir, you will receive by Captain Thompson 4 pounds of best Tea, and Sundry
Letters, which beg your care in the delivery—likewise Two Pounds of Tea for Mr.
Gray and two pounds of Tea to be sent to Mr. Hinman—please to except of my best
wishes for you, Spouse and Family—I am [&c.]

N.B. My Respects to Mr. Dolbier & Family and particularly to Mrs. Grissell.

A true Copy Sworn before me this 2d: April 1778

Robert Walker

at St George's in Grenada.

Macartney


Docketed: "Copy of a draft of a Letter from Elisha Hinman, to Ellis Gray Esq' at Boston in New England,
found on board the Rebel armed Ship, Alfred, commanded by said Elisha Hinman, taken off Barbados on
the 9 March 1778 by the Ariadne & Ceres. The Draft is not Signed but was acknowledged by the said Hin-
man before me to be the Duplicate of a Letter written by him to the said Gray. M." Notation: "In Lord
Macartney's (N° 7) of 10th April 1778 (3)."

1. Name unknown, Capt. Athens, master.
2. Nanny, Anthony Hooper, master.
4. Anna Susannah, John Taylor, master, and Jamaica, David Watt, master.

October 27

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

Fontau. 27 8bre 1777.

Je reçois, Monsieur, la lettre par laquelle vous me rendez compte de la suite
des dispositions des fes le Raleigh et l'alfred pour leur Carène et leur radoub. Je vous
recommande de nouveau de tenir la main à ce qu’elles soient promptement reparées et qu’elles mettent aussitôt à la voile. J’approuve que vous ayez fait délivrer les différents articles que l’on vous a demandés. Je concours également que vous fassiez remettre les deux ancre dont on a besoin, afin qu’il n’y ait aucun prétexte de retard. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine
veillés avec soin a ce qu’il ne soit embarqué sur ces deux batimens aucune munitions de guerre de quelque espece que ce soit.

[Translation]
Fontainebleau, 27 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, the letter by which you reported to me the progress of the arrangements of the frigates Raleigh and Alfred for their careening and caulking. I again recommend that you be certain that they be repaired promptly and that they set sail immediately afterwards. I am authorizing that you deliver the different articles that have been asked of you. I also agree that you may forward the two anchors they need so that there may be no pretext for delay. I am, Sir, [&c.]

de sartine
Watch carefully that no ammunition of any kind be taken on board of these two vessels.

L, FrLAL, series 1, E1 80, fol. 66. Addressed at foot: “M. Gonet.”

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]
No. 59. Escurial, 27th October, 1777.

My Lord,

... M. Florida blanca has acquainted me, that the Vessel, which was said to have been taken at Bilbao,1 and which I mentioned in mine, No. 56.2 had not been allowed to be kept by the Privateer who took it, but had been released upon my Application. I enclose to your Lordship a List of Prizes taken by Sir Thomas Rich, and Captain Mann, and carried into Gibraltar on the 13th. Ins1...3

The Rebel Privateers, Raleigh, of thirty two Guns, commanded by Thomas Tomp- son, and, the Alfred, of twenty two Guns, commanded by J. Henman,4 have sent a Prize into Coruña, the Brig Sally, Edward Marshall, Master, of Bristol, bound from Dartmouth to Newfoundland with Salt. ... I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham.


1. Schooner Adventure, Captain Gorrequer. See Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct. 1777, above.
4. Elisha Hinman.
Honble Arthur Lee Esq.
My Dear sir

Madrid 27th. Oct’77

Under 16th. Inst I had the pleasure to write you my last, since which continuing without your favours have to inform you that the late uncommon behaviour of some of your privateers towards the French vessels, & Spanish property has much offended the nation, & altho’ you may probably have satisfied those complaints ’ere now, I think it wou’d not be amiss to lodge an order in the several ports for such commanders of arm’d vessels as shou’d putt in that they not meddle with either of those two nations.

Since my said last I have been inform’d of the plan I am to follow about remitting goods, so that as soon as I hear of the sum & that I may begin upon it you may depend on my uttmost expedition.

By advises from Nantz I hear two of your frigates 1 are safely arriv’d at L’orien & with good news about the army at Saratoga. if so I hope you will inform me without loss of time, as besides it being of service towards you I am impatient to hear of your success, may the Almighty grant it according to the wish of your Real Frd. [&c.]

October 28

NEW-LLOYD’S LIST (LONDON), TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1777

The Two Friends, M’Gregor, from Cadiz to New-York, was taken in Lat. 40, Longit. 61, by the Glaister Privateer of 16 Guns, John Colson Commander 1

The Lovely Peggy, Fitzgerald, from Waterford to N. foundland, was taken the 7th of Sept. by the Independent Privateer, Captain Young, and sent to America; the Capt. and Crew were landed at Nants by the Privateer.

The Adventure, ———, that was taken off Bilboa, and carried into that Port, by the Americans, is released, and the Captain of the Privateer 2 ordered to pay all Charges.

The Nancy, Payne, from Malaga to Dublin, was taken by the Americans, 3 but re­taken by the Alarm M. W. . . .

The John, Merton, from Limerick to Bourdeaux, is taken by the Hector Man of War, and sent into Portsmouth.

The Charm. Betsey, ———, 4 from Charles Town, with Rice, is taken by his Majesty’s Ship Mars, and sent into Portsmouth.

1. Massachusetts privateer brigantine Gloucester, John Coulston, commander.
2. Massachusetts privateer schooner Hawke, Jeremiah Hibbert, commander.
Minuted on a twelve stivers Stamp
Copy

On this 28th day of October 1777, Before me Adam Schadee, Notary Publick, Sworn and admitted, residing in the City of Rotterdam, and Witnesses aforesaid, personally appeared, Capt. William Bray, late master of the sloop Called the Chester, being of Competent age, and did attest in behalf of whom it may Concern, and to Serve and avail as occasion may require; that he the said deponent with the said sloop, in the bay of Honduras being laden with a Cargo of Beefhides, fustick, Logwood, Pimento and sundry small articles, sailed out of said bay to sea on the 26th of April of this year 1777, bound to this port of Rotterdam.

That in prosecution of his said intended Voyage on the 28th of May following off the Havana, he was brought too by a Letter of Marque ship Called the Union, Commanded by Capt. Hamilton, and belonging to London, from Jamaica bound to NewYork, who having overhauled his the deponents papers, discharged him, and supplied him with a Cask of Water and some Sugar, and that he Deponent kept Company with her through the Gulf of Florida,—and parted with her on the 3d day of June in the Latitude of 29 deg. 25 mins. North, and in Longitude 77 deg. 43 mins. West from London.

That on the 13th of said month of June he was Obliged to put into the Island of Bermudas, to take on board some provisions and Water, and sailed from thence on the next day on his intended Voyage; That soon after, and even whilst he had the Bermudas Pilot on board, he was brought too on the South west End of the said Island of Bermudas by two American Privateers, lying at an anchor there, being two Brigantines, the one Called the Fair American, mounting twenty Guns and about fifty men, the other the Experiment, mounting twelve Guns and about forty men, Commanded by Charles and Francis Morgans Brothers, both belonging to Charlestown in South Carolina, who took the Pilot out of his said Sloop, and ordered him to bring too between them both, which being done, they kept the Said Sloop betwixt them till the 17th when they took him Deponent and his whole Ships Company (except his mate) being Eight in number, out of the said sloop, and placed him deponent and seven of his men on board of the Fair American Privateer, and the Eighth man on board of the Experiment, and kept onely the Mate of the said sloop, being a Dutchman, and Called Michiel Steenblank, on board of her; that directly after they put the prize-master on board of the said sloop, mann'd her; and sent her up to Charlestown aforesaid, notwithstanding he deponent argued very much against it, and showed them a document, by which it was plainly proved, that both the sloop and her Cargo were Dutch property, and belonged and were Consigned to Mr Anthony Ameloo, merchant at Rotterdam, which document they sent in the sloop to Charlestown aforesaid.

That thereupon the two Privateers with him deponent and the beforementioned Eight men of his Ship's Company on board, steered for St. Eustatia, where they arrived on the fifth or sixth day of the month of July last past, and would not allow him deponent or any one of his Ship's Company to go on shore, (except ones on the 14th or 15th, when he deponent was allowed to go on shore to take a walk with the first and Second Lieutenant of the Fair American Privateer, by whom he was guarded all the time,) but kept them all on board of the privateers till the 18th of said month of
July at night, at least one hour after Sunset, when the Privateers weighed Anchor and made Sail, and after making three or four tacks, brought a shoreboat too, which was plying there, and put him deponent and three of his Ship's Company, viz: his Boatswain, a Portuguese and two of his Seamen, one being an Englishman and the other an Irishman, in the boat, and sent them on shore, and kept one of his the deponent's seamen against his inclination on board of the Privateers the *fair American*, Charles Morgan, the Commander of said Privateer telling him "you are a Dutchman, and too valuable a young Lad to part with you, and you may as well fight for the Americans as for the English" and the remainder of his deponent's ship's Company (being three Irishmen and one Rotterdammer, Called Hermanus Hubregts) having voluntarily Entered on board of the Privateers.

That at about Eight o Clock that night, he deponent and his said three men Came on Shore at S'Eustatia, where he deponent staid till the twentieth, when he Sailed from thence in the Passage boat to the Island of S'Christopher's, where he arrived the same day, and from whence he took his departure on the first of August last past in an English Ship, Called the *Venus*, John Smith Commander, of and for London, in a Large fleet of English ships under Convoy of four English men of war, and arrived in London, some time this month of October, and on the twenty seventh in this City. And Lastly he Deponent did attest, that Peter Theodore van Teylingen, Esqr bought the said sloop *Chester* upwards of fifteen months ago in Black River on the Musquito Coast, and he deponent sailed in her in his service ever since, till she was taken, and that in the beginning of this year one thousand seven hundred seventy seven, a proper proof of the Said Sloop and her said Cargo, being Dutch property, and belonging to the beforementioned Mr Anthony Ameloo as aforesaid, hath been made, and Sworn to in the bay of Honduras, before an English Judge in Said bay, and also that the said sloop *Chester*, from the time of her departure out of said bay, till the time of her being taken as aforesaid, never hoisted any other but Dutch Colours, and had Dutch Colours hoisted, at the time of her being seized by said Privateers. Wherefore he this deponent in name of himself and his ship's Company, and also in name of the said M' Anthony Ameloo, and all others anyways Concerned in the said sloop *Chester* and her Cargo, did and doth hereby solemnly protest against the said Charles and Francis Morgan, and their Ship's Companies, and all others Concerned, for all Losses, damages, detriments, Costs, Charges and expenses, alreadly had, suffered and sustained, and, yet to be had suffered and sustained, on account of the seizure and detention of the said Sloop and her Cargo, to be recovered in time and place Convenient. Proffering to make Solemn Oath to the Contents hereof, if thereto required.¹

Thus done and protested in Rotterdam aforesaid in the presence of Abraham Sevenbergen and Rynart Frier, Witnesses the minute hereof is duly signed, quod attestor (Signed) LS Adam Schadee 1777. Notº Pubº & Translator.

Jurat

In Court of the Gentlemen Commissioners of the Maritime Laws of the City of Rotterdam, appeared Capt'n William Bray late Master of the sloop Called the *Chester*, deponent herein mentioned, who made Solemn Oath on the Holy Evangelists of Allmighty God, by us to him Lawfully administred, after having said affidavit Clear and distinctly read to him, by Adam Schadee, Notary Publick and Sworn English Translator at this City, that all the Contents of said affidavit, are in all points just and
true, and that he deponent did persist therein. So help him God. Done at Rotterdam this 29th day of October 1777.

as Secretary
(Signed) A. J. Vn. Ravesteijn

This is a true Copy of the Original Affidavit Protest and Jurat, attested by me Notary Publick and Sworn English Translator at the City of Rotterdam, this 30th day of October 1777

Adam Schadde
1777. Not# Pub# & Translator

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 45, pp. 109-12 (M247 roll no. 59). Notation at top of first page: "Van Berkel." The copyist ran the text together, indicating paragraph breaks with a symbol. This copy, as well as other supporting documentation, came to the American Commissioners in France covered by two letters dated 30 Oct. from those interested in the sloop and its cargo, asking redress: Anthony Ameloo, Franco and Adrianus Dubbeldemuts, and Pieter Willemens to the American Commissioners, and Franco and Adrianus Dubbeldemuts to the American Commissioners. Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 25: 129-24. For the commissioners' reply to the Dubbeldemuts, 10 Nov. 1777, see ibid., 147-48.

1. The sloop Chester was condemned as good prize to the Experiment and Fair American privateers, in South Carolina Admiralty Court on 14 July 1777. See copy of the decree in DNA, PCC, item 45, pp. 241-47 (M247 roll no. 59) and in DNA, Records of the Court of Appeals in Cases of Capture, 2 Dallas 41. Found on board the sloop and presented as evidence in the case was a letter from Peter Theodore van Teylingen, dated St. George's Key, 26 Apr. 1777, which instructed Bray to hoist British colors and show his English ship's papers if he encountered a British ship of war; if he had any doubt whether the warship was American or British, he was to hoist a Dutch jack and state that the vessel belonged to "Mr. Anthony Ameloo in Rotterdam, as also her loading, For which purpose I have sold them to him so that it may be safely declared upon Oath that it is his property." DNA, Records of the Court of Appeals in Cases of Capture, 2 Dallas 41. Efforts of the Dutch merchants through diplomatic channels to have the decision reversed failed finally in 1787, when the United States Court of Appeals heard arguments as to whether an appeal should be allowed. The court refused the appeal on the grounds that the procedural irregularities of not having the master give evidence and not presenting documents on the sloop's sale to Ameloo had not prevented substantial justice. The court determined that, in any case, the Chester should have been condemned: Although van Teylingen was Dutch by birth, his permanent residence as a merchant in British territory made his property subject to being treated as British; the transfer of ownership to Ameloo "appears to have been intended merely to deceive and cover under the name of Friend, property which ought to be considered as that of an Enemy." Ibid.; see also Henry J. Bourguignon, The First Federal Court: The Federal Appellate Prize Court of the American Revolution, 1775-1787 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1977), pp. 293-94.

---

Gabriel de Sartine to Marquis de Bouillé

A M Le M de Bouillé
Commandé G'nl à La Martinique
Fontainebleau Le 28. 8bre. 1777.

J'ai reçu, M les Lettres que vous m'avez p. lh de m'écrire le 16. aoët N° 67 et 68. Je répons aux art° de ces deux Lettres qui concernent les Bâtimens en Station aux iles du vent.

Je vois que vous vous proposiez de concert avec M Le Commandé de Dampierre de passer La Renommée à St. Domingue à la fin du mois d'aoët et qu'après le départ de cette frégate il a du vous rester l'Amphitrite, La Blanche et la Déligente. Vous m'observez qu'il ne faudroit plus que deux Corvettes pour que ces forces fussent suffisantes.

D'après votre observation, je fais partir la Corvette L'Etoile de Montbas Ens. de Vau; et comme des 3 frég°s. qui escortent les Convois
To Monsieur Marquis de Bouillé
Commanding General at Martinique.

Fontainebleau, 28 Oct. 1777.

I have received, Monsieur, the letters which you have had the honor to write to me on August 16th, No. 67 and No. 68. I am responding to the paragraphs in those two letters which have to do with the ships of the line on station in the windward islands.

I see that you planned to arrange with Monsieur the Commander de Dampierre to have the Renomméesent to Saint Domingue at the end of the month of August and that, after the departure of this frigate, he was supposed to leave you the Amphitrite, the Blanche, and the Diligente. You made the observation to me that no more than two corvettes would be necessary in order to make these forces suffice.

Following your observation, I have arranged for the departure of the corvette L'Etourdie, commanded by Monsieur the Marquis de Montbas, Enseigne de Vaisseau; and as of the three frigates that escort the convoys of troops one is destined to remain permanently on station at Martinique, it will take the place of the second corvette that you are requesting. Thus, the forces now stationed in the windward islands will consist of one ship of the line and nine frigates or corvettes.

I am arranging to send a supplement of provisions for the Prothée and the Amphitrite, and I hope that this letter will arrive rather quickly so that Monsieur de Dampierre might not have departed yet. As for the Amphitrite, the order carried in my letter of the 9th of July prohibits Monsieur de Dampierre from allowing any frigate or corvette to depart until the one which is to relieve it arrives. I must count on the fact that the Amphitrite will not have departed.

I have learned with pleasure that the commerce is a great deal less troubled, and I count on the fact that the forces that you will have will better assure its tranquility.

I have the honor of being [&c.]

Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France

Honble Gentlemen (N° 83) Nantes Octr 28. 1777.

The present serves to inform you that Mr de Sartine has written to the Commissary here relative to the Lion, in which he forbids that any munitions of war of
any kind be embark’d or that any pretended Clearances be made. I have not nor can I appear in this Business, but I have desired Mr Peltier to assure the Commissary that no munitions of War shall be put on board except what immediately relates to the Ship; this as we have other Cargo enough will not injure us except as to Ballast, which we shall want & which I must otherways procure, but the prohibition of supplying the Americans with the necessarys of supporting the War is like being themselves our Enemies; a Soldier could fight even naked with materials, but without the means of defence, his Cloaths signify nothing to the public. I shall conform to the orders given and try to get the Vessell away as soon as I can, as to orders about not taking out false clearances, we must do as well as we can. I inclose a Note from Mr Peltier on the Subject. (I have advice of 40 hdds of Cloaths being shipped and 40 more on the Road, on these latter are charges to the am° of 2191 . . . 11. Sous to Bordeaux only which I suppose will be drawn on me for. The Charges on the Transportation of the Cloaths surpassing Expectation and must make them come dearer than was expected.) The Magazine now becomes an object of great Expence, near 40 men to pay weekly consumes money fast, and as this nor other Disbursments were provided for in the Credit you gave me, I apprehend that sum will be appropriated before all my Business is finished, of this however I shall inform you in time. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jon3 Williams J


1. Frigate Lyon, which would become Continental Navy frigate Deane.

October 29

THE LONDON PACKET; OR, NEW LLOYD’S EVENING POST (LONDON),
MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1777

Tuesday, October 28. London.

The Endeavour, Mellish, from London to Villavisiosa, in ballast, was taken the 25th ult. two leagues off the said port, by the Success privateer of 8 carriage guns and ten swivels,1 who gave the master his cloaths, and the boat to carry him and his men on shore.

1. Massachusetts privateer schooner Success, John Fletcher, commander.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GUERNSEY, OCT. 29.”

“The success of the Revenge privateer, of our neighbouring isle, has stimulated some mercantile folks here to fit out one also; she is but small, and intended only against the American merchantmen, or to retake English vessels. She mounts 12 guns six pounders, and carries 80 men.”

London Chronicle, 13–15 Nov. 1777.
SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Capt. Thompson

Paris 29 Octr 1777

Sir: Ye of the 24 I rec'd with respect to your seamen who entered with Capt. Nicholson it is right the Public should pay their Board, but those who after their waiting have taken their passage with you ought to be considered in a different Light, & as you will have the advantage of their Service, I must think that it lies with you to pay their billeting, as to those who are gone to America without discharging their Expenses & without entering on board any of the Continental Vessels, I can only say that as they might have entered on board some of those Vessels employed by Congress but declined I do not see the Justice of Charging the Congress with their Expenses—I will however lay your Letter before the Commissioners, who must jointly determine the affair & in the mean time assure you that it will give me pleasure to render you every Service in my power & that I am &c

S.D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 157

Fontainebleau. October. 29th. 1777

My Lord

I inclose a duplicate of my Letter by Mondays Post. I may now venture to assure your Lordship that this very important Affair is upon the point of being concluded, and I hope to the satisfaction of the Proprietors.

M de Vergennes has just told me that an Order was dispatched to Nantes on Monday last, directing the proper Officer who if I remember right is the Procureur Fiscal to deliver the two Ships and their Cargoes aux reclamateurs Anglois.

The Confiscation of these Ships to the French Kings use does certainly appear a singular prelude to this Restitution but M de Vergennes in my last Saturdays Conversation with Him upon the subject, assured me that it was the only possible way of cutting the Knot, and getting round of various Formalities that must have occasioned great Delay. I know, from another Quarter, that the Admiralty of Nantes proposed this Method, which was adopted chiefly I believe with this View, to keep quite clear of the general Question of the Legality of Prizes made by the Americans.

M de Vergennes, from whom I am this Moment returned, spoke in the politest Terms of the Pleasure it gave Him, to see this Business terminated to our Satisfaction, and added, that He wished that every discussion between the two Courts might always have a similar issue.

I must do M de Maurepas the Justice to say, that He has exerted Himself upon this occasion: Without His interposition the affair would probably have taken a different Turn, or would at least have been drawn out to great Length, as M de Sartines had contrived to throw various Obstacles in the Way, which M de Maurepas removed at once by speaking peremptorily in the King his Masters Name. I am [&c.]

Stormont
October 30

CAPTAIN J. CHANDEAU’S STATEMENT REGARDING THE PHILIPPE

[Before 30 Oct. 1777]

Nous soussignés Certifions, officiers majors et marins et Passagers du N° Le Philippe, Capt° Chandeau, appartenant a M° Baux frères et Neveux, parti du fort Dauphin le 14. aoust 1777. faisant route pour Bordeaux, Ce jour 23. aoust meme année par les 31. Degres 31. minutes de Longitude Nord et par les 73. Degres 22. m. de Long. du meridien de Paris sous toutes voiles de hors, cinglant au plus prés du vent a la faveur du vent d'E.N.E. a 10. heures du matin avons eu connoissance d'une voile au vent a nous, a 11. heures réconnu que c'étoit une Goellette qui chassoit sur nous, toutes voiles déhors, a midy et demi étant a portée du Canon elle a hissé pavillon français. j'ay répondu par le mien, et aussitot qu'elle l'a eu reconnu, elle a amené Le Sien et hissé un pavillon blanc avec une double croix rouge. Cette feinte ne m'a point trouvée.

Plus a 11. heures du matin avons eu connoissance d'une voile au vent a nous, a 11. heures réconnu que c'étoit une Goellette qui chassoit sur nous, toutes voiles déhors, a midy et demi étant a portée du Canon elle a hissé pavillon français. j'ay répondu par le mien, et aussitot qu'elle l'a eu reconnu, elle a amené Le Sien et hissé un pavillon blanc avec une double croix rouge. Cette feinte ne m'a point trouvée. Elle a fait ce que m'avoir fait la fregate La Wenchelsea de Londres portant 22. canons, qui m'a visité au travers au travers de la petite Cayque. Elle m'avoir mis pavillon français avant le Sien. Cette goellette a assuré son pavillon d'un Coup de Canon, et a tiré très précipitamment trois autres Coups de Canon. j'ay fait Carguer mes basses voiles; a peine ai je eu fini Cette manoeuvre, elle a fait une autre décharge de Six autres Coups de Canons a boulets qui m'ont passé dans les manoeuvres. j'ay fait mettre vent dessus, vent dedans, et a fait aussitot une autre décharge de Coups de Canons, et m'a crié de mettre mon Canot à l'Eau et de leur envoyer tout de suite a bord, tirant toujours de distance en distance des Coups de Canons. un abord aussi impertinent m'a donné tout a craindre; je l'aurois réprimé. Si je l'avoirs pût; mais la poudre qui étoit la principale chose me manquoit, je n'en avois qu'environ ving livres. Cette quantité n'étoit pas suffisante pour me défendre et m'engager à un Combat. j'ay donc été obligé de mettre mon Canot à la mer, dans lequel j'ay mis 4. hommes et le Patron et un officier à qui j'ay remis mon passeport. Arrivés a leur bord ils se sont saisis de l' Equipage du Canot, et les ont mis a fond de Calle, Sans vouloir rien écouter, ni meme avoir égard au Passeport. ils m'ont renvoyé mon Canot armé de leur Equipage, qui arrivés à mon Bord m'ont dit que j'allois à la Nouvelle Angleterre, qu'il falloit que je me rendisse a leur bord pour parler a leur Capitaine, ou bien qu'ils alloient faire feu sur nous et nous Couler a fonds, et en meme tems ont fait une recherche si nous n'avions point de munitions de guerre, et se sont emparé du peu de poudre que j'avoirs et ont visité mes canons, et ont mis le feu à un que j'avoirs de chargé a poudre. Incertain sur le party que j'avois à prendre me pressant toujours d'aller à bord, je me suis consulté à qui il étoit sensé que je le fisse. Voyant, mais trop tard que j'avoirs affaire à des Pirates gens obstinés, devoués au Crime et a la Barbarie, dont il y avoir tout a craindre, ménasant a tout propes mon Equipage les armes à la main, je me suis rendu à leur bord. Le Cap-
itaine m'a fait passer derrière en me disant que j'étois de bonne prise. je luy ay demandé si la france étoit en guerre avec L'Angleterre: il m'a repondu que non, mais qu'il avoit ordres de L'amiral de luy envoyer à la Nouvelle York tous les navires qu'il trouveroit dans ces parages, ajoutant que nous étions la cinquième prise qu'il faisoit. C'étoit ainsi qu'il en avoit usé avec les autres. voilà tout ce que j'ai pu Sortir et entendre d'Eux. ils ont renvoyé mon canot à bord, et ont fait mettre ma Chaloupe à la mer pour la remplir de marchandises de mon bord et la garder a l'arrière de leur bord. Voilà ce qui étoit leur premier projet. Le Canot ne discontinuoit de faire des voyages chargé du pillage qu'ils faisoient, comme fusils, Epées et toutes Espèces de papiers, un de mes Canon et provisions de Bouche; Comme Volailles, vins, Sucre, Caffé, or et argent, et effets qu'ils ont trouvés dans ma malle, après avoir boulversé toutes celles des passagers: mais la mienne a fixé leur attention ou il y avoit dedans pour quatorze ou quinze mille livres en effets, Bijoux, or et argent monnoyés de france et de L'amerique, que j'avois de divers sous connoissemens et a moy appartenant, Comme on verra par le détail ci après, que je reclame pour avoir été pris dans ma dite malle en présence des soussignés. Contents de ce dernier pillage, ils ont changé leur projet. Le Capitaine m'a dit qu'il m'alloit renvoyer à mon Bord, et que je pourrois m'en aller en france, n'étant pas assez de monde pour Conduire Cette prise, me disant cela m'arrachant ma montre dans ma poche, malgré la precaution que j'avois eu de ne pas la laisser appercevoir, je me suis rendu à mon bord a 6. heures du soir. je Les ay trouvés occupés à enclôir mes trois Canons, ayant long-tems balancé de les jeter à la mer. Cela fini, ils se sont rendus à leur bord avec mon Canot, et me l'ont renvoyé avec mon Equipage qu'ils avoient tenu à bord tout ce tems là. j'ay fait en présence des Soussignés la vérification de ma malle, j'ay trouvé qu'il m'avoit été volé la somme et effets suivants

Scâvoir

trois cens piastres Gourdes et dix sept Louis d'or de france sous Connoissance pour compte et risque de M. Garat, a l'adresse de Mre. Bernard, Martin et Courrejeolle

Dix Louis d'or de france, dix sept piastres gourdes, quatre vingt Gourdins, vingt livres huit sols argent de france, sous connoissance pour Compte et risque de M. Hurvoy, à l'adresse de Mre. Baux freres et nouveaux, et une médaille d'argent

Deux cens soixante et douze livres argent de france, et Vingt quatre piastres gourdes chargées sous connoissance par M. Peyre, à l'adresse de M. Richard

Soixante gourdes et quatre doubles Escaliers pour Compte et risque de M. Perrens, chargées sous Connoissance par M. Castera

a feu jean L'Eglise charpentier cy devant sur le navire, conformément à son Inventaire deux cens dix neuf livres argent de l'amerique, et vingt sept Livres argent de france, une paire de Boucle et un bouton d'argent

Appartenant au S. Chandeau Capitaine du d. navire douze Portugaises, dont cinq en or et sept en argent, et cent ving livres argent de france

Une montre d'or garnie en Jargon et une paire de Boucles à Brillants
Montant à la Somme de six mille cinq cents soixante cinq livres dix sept sols que forrnent toutes les Espèces monnoyées que j’avois dans ma dite malle, plus une Bague de diamans fins, appartenante à M. Durand, qu’il m’avoit donnée pour luy faire remonter, luy ay fourni une réconnoissance. Nous avons dressé le present verbal pour servir et valoir Comme de raison. fait et redigé Le jour, mois et an susdit. Signée j. Chandeau &* 

Observation
La Goelette étoit d’environ 45. pieds de quille, 10. hommes d’Equipage, peinte en noir et Couret blanc, portant un Pavois bleu qui luy servoit de Bastingage, partie de La Bermude depuis 3. jours, à ce que m’a rapporté mon Patron qui avoit resté a bord, et qui l’avoit appris d’un matelot de L’Equipage.

[Translation]
We, the undersigned, senior officers, seamen, and passengers of the ship Philippe, Captain Chandeau, belonging to Messrs. Baux Frères and Neveux, certify that we sailed from Fort Dauphin on 14 August 1777, making for Bordeaux. On that day 23 August, same year, at 31 degrees 31 minutes north latitude and 73 degrees 22 minutes longitude of the Paris meridian, with all sails set, sailing close to the wind from the E.N.E., at 10 o’clock in the morning, we sighted a sail to our windward; at 11 o’clock we identified it to be a schooner bearing down on us with all sails set. At a half after noon, coming within gun-shot, she hoisted the French flag; I answered by hoisting mine, and as soon as she identified it, she hauled down hers and hoisted a white flag with a double red cross. This ruse did not surprise me. She did what had been done to me by the frigate Winchelsea out of London and carrying 22 guns, who inspected me off Little Caicos. She had shown a French flag before showing her own. The schooner asserted her colors by firing a gun, then very quickly fired three more shots. I had my lower sails furled; hardly had I completed that maneuver than she fired six round-shots that passed through the rigging. I had the sails backed and filled; the schooner immediately fired another volley of shots and called to me to put my boat in the water and to send it immediately to his ship, while continuing to fire his guns at intervals. Such an insolent approach gave me every reason to be concerned. I would have overpowered him, had 1 been able, but powder was the main thing I was lacking. I only had some twenty pounds of it. This quantity was insufficient to defend myself and to engage in a fight. I was, therefore, forced to put my boat in the water and send it immediately to his ship, while continuing to fire his guns at intervals. Such an insolent approach gave me every reason to be concerned. I would have overpowered him, had 1 been able, but powder was the main thing I was lacking. I only had some twenty pounds of it. This quantity was insufficient to defend myself and to engage in a fight. I was, therefore, forced to put my boat in the water and send it immediately to his ship, while continuing to fire his guns at intervals. Such an insolent approach gave me every reason to be concerned.
went to their ship. The captain had me go aft while telling me that I was a good prize. I asked him whether France was at war with England; he answered no, but he had the admiral's orders to send to him in New York any ships found in the area, and added that we were the fifth prize he had taken and that was how he had dealt with the others. That was all I could get out of them or to understand about them. They sent my boat back to my ship and had my longboat put in the water so as to load it with goods from my ship and to keep it astern of their ship. That was their first scheme. The boat continued to make trips loaded with goods they had pillaged, such as rifles, swords, all sorts of papers, one of my guns, and provisions such as fowl, wine, sugar, coffee, gold and silver, and personal belongings they found in my trunk, after turning upside down all those belonging to the passengers. Mine, however, caught their attention. It contained items worth some fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds, gems, French and American gold and silver coins, which I held under consignment from various persons or as belonging to me, as one will see by the detailed list below, which I claim as having been taken from my trunk in the presence of the undersigned. Satisfied with this final robbery, they changed their plans. The captain told me he would send me back to my ship and I could go on to France, since there were not enough men to sail this prize. He was telling me that while snatching my watch from my pocket, despite the care I had taken not to let him see it. I went back to my ship at 6 o'clock in the evening. I found them busy spiking my three guns, having planned long before to throw them overboard. That done, they then returned to their ship with my boat, sending it back with my crew whom they had held, all that time, on board. In the presence of the undersigned men I checked the contents of my trunk and found that the following sum and items had been stolen from me:

To wit

Three hundred gourde piasters and seventeen gold Louis from France on consignment for Mr. Garat's account and risk in care of Messieurs Bernard, Martin and Courrejeolle

Ten gourde from France, seventeen gourde piasters, eighty gourdins, twenty livres eight sol in silver coins from France on consignment for Mr. Hurvoy's account and risk, in care of Messieurs Baux Brothers and Nephews, and a silver medal

Two hundred seventy-nine livres in silver coins from France and eighty gourde piasters on consignment by Mr. Peyre, in care of Mr. Richard

Sixty gourdes and four double escaliers from Mr. Perrens's account and risk on consignment by Mr. Castera

Belonging to the late Jean L'Eglise, formerly carpenter on this ship and according to the inventory of his personal effects: two hundred nineteen pounds in silver coins from America, twenty-seven pounds in silver coins from France, a pair of buckles and a silver button

Belonging to Sieur Chandeau, captain of the aforesaid ship, twelve Portuguese coins, five of which were gold and twelve silver, and one hundred twenty pounds in silver coins from France

One gold watch set with a zircon and a pair of buckles set with brilliants
Amounting to the sum of six thousand five hundred sixty-five pounds seventeen sols, which represented the value of all the coins I had in my aforesaid trunk, plus a ring set with fine diamonds belonging to M. Durand, which he had given to me to have reset for him, and for which I gave him a receipt. We have drawn up the present statement to be used as thought proper. Done and written on this day, month, and year stated. Signed: J. Chandeau, etc.

Comment
The schooner was about 45 feet long at the keel, had a 10-man crew, was painted black and white, had a blue bulwark that served as the ship’s rail, and was 3 days out of Bermuda, according to what I had been told by my owner who had stayed on board and who had learned it from a sailor in the crew.


Paul Wentworth to William Eden


Port News.

About the later End of Sept', the Packett called the Independence, Commanded by Young & mounting 12 Carriag Guns arrived, at Nantes, with a Prize she had taken on the Passage: which he sold to M. Gourlade at L’orient for £23000—The new mode Practiced in these Cases, is as follows. The ship appears, (no doubt to Prove to the Purchasers that there is one, as well as the Condition of the Cargo) & leaves the Port again within the 24 hours—She is followed by Coasting Lighters furnished with Passports, & Her Cargo is reshipped on board of them—After which (the marks being altered & other like precautions taken) they go into any port on the Coasts & Enter freely having proper Coast Clearances.—

It is very probable that the Jamaica Ships lately claimed at Nantes, will be detained—ultimately—for the Benefit of the Captors. The process will be allowed to go on, but as slowly as possible, till the Proofs of the property & the port she Cleared from are Legally admitted; then the Farmers General will claim Her as a forfeiture incurred by the false Entry, & devolving to them in right of their Compact &c. This claim will no doubt be followed by an adjudication, the King cannot interfere, & the Farmers General may give away their property to the american Commissioners, or any one else.
She mounts 24 Six pounders, & is well Manned.

of no use in the W. Indies.

Bound to Portsmouth NHamp:

He was aid de Camp to the King of Prussia, & Adjutant Q.M.G. in Silesia—He was recommended by Pr. Ferdinand to C: Vergennes &c.

the Comm's Agent.

Governor to the Comm's & an artfull Man I dare say—all this disinterestedness & Zeal is mere sham; for Gourlade His Partner &c. has just drawn on Mayne & Graham for £2500— & says as an apology for the liberty with out leave, that a sudden Case of great advantage was the Cause, & they were in the moment unprovided.—

Nephew to Dr. Franklin, & M. Williams Downing Street.

with 500 Hhds Sug^

The ship, said to have been detained & unloaded at Marseilles, at Lord Stormonts demand—was again Reloaded with the same Articles before mentioned—Her Name Changed, the Command given to Lundai, late Bougainvilles Lieutenant, & who had just been appointed Captain of the Port of Brest, & by order from Court, allowed to take on board 8000 fusils 25000th Sulpher, Saltpetre &c, for the french Islands—But sailed the 25 last month, bound directly to Portsmouth New Hampshire. On board Her, went Passengers The Baron Steuben, often mentioned; and M. Francy well known, as Brother to M. Morand, & Secretary to Beaumarchais.—

On the 7 Inst: The Alfred Privateer, 30 Guns, Cap: Hinman, and the Polly Raleigh—32 Guns, Cap: Thompson, arrived at L'orient with two of the last Jamaica Fleet, Carrying 780 Hhds Sugar & 250 Puncheons of Rum—the Seamen are sent on board the Packet, Cap: Young laying at Nantes—And the Ships & Cargoes (reserving 50 Puncheons of Rum, their Guns, the Cabin stores, unbent Sails &c) they sold to Messrs Berard, Montplaisir, &c. at L'orient for £9700 Sts—The Ships lay under the Island of Grouaix, last Monday the 13. M' Gourlade, was to have had a share, but could not in Conscience agree to give so little, which occasioned the delay, & M. Chaumont, wrote a letter to the Purchasers to engage them, for the Honor & Interest of France, to make up the Price £13000 Sts. The Privateers had found Pretexts so specious that the Comm's of the Port, had allowed them to stay till they should be refitted, or till the Court should forbid it, & last monday the 13. Dispatches were sent to the Comm's at L'orient by Franklin & Deane.

Another of the Jama- Fleet was brought into Nantes, by the Privateer lately fitted out there by M. Williams the Agent to the Comm's, instead, & with the Crew of the Surprise Cap: Nicholson converted into a Packet & sailed the last month for America. The Prize was not sold the 11. Inst—as the Adventurers in the Privateer (the Comm's, M. Monttheiu, Chaumont, Williams &c) Hoped to have Interest enough to Procure
the Comm° had been twice before refused the large Cannon—and the fieldpieces were not ready till lately.—
It is worthy remark here, that Chaumont is in Treaty with F & D. for 150 Cannon now at Barcelona &c, in Spain of 24 18 12 & 6 Pounders.

When He left Dunkirk, His vessel mounted 14 Carriage & 22 swivel Guns, having 106 Seamen 66 of which were Frenchmen, Entered—with an obligation to return in three months to Dunkirk.

1. M. Carmichael is going passenger in this Ship.

2 & 3. passports & take the benifit of Purchasers in the Case before stated.

3. M. Beaumarchais returned the 10 Inst. to Paris from Dunkirk, where he had been to Ship about 66 Brass Cannon of 32 24 18 & 12 Pounders—and about 60 fieldpieces.

4. I believe they will be put on board one of the 4 dutch ships lately mentioned—if not Carried Coastwise to the Hippopotame at Rochefort. M. Beaumarchais is set out, or going on a Coasting tour to Havre, Rochefort & Marseilles, to expedite Considerable supplies to Congress—He has become so cautious of late, as to Communicate only with D° Fr: who tells M. Deane that M. B. only drops generals to him—that in Regard to the Dunkirk business, He pressed him hard, but could only hear of about 66 of the Guns lately refused &c &c. and that the supplies would be ready soon, but specifick lists could not be given till they were gone & the Accounts Collected—that they have the less reason to seem anxious or insist on more accurate Communications, as the part managed by Beaumarchais, has failled least, & He has never hinted to them any terms or proposals of payment, for all he has done.

Cunningham has again sailed from Ferrol on a Cruize—after selling His Prizes—he says for half price—and refitting His ship the Revenge—He procured Papers from a Merch't there (which were intended for another ship belonging to Spain) to Cover the Black Prince—a Prize—laden with Wine, Fruit & Oyl which he sent to Bayonne.

Besides the Hippopotame—which is to carry 14000 fusils besides other warlike stores for Congress—There are the following getting ready—
A ship of 60 Guns at Rochefort, and an Indiaman pierced for 60 Guns, at L'orient, belonging to M. Chaumont, Holker, Sabatti, &c. to be loaded with Merchandize—The Lyon a Frigate of 36 Guns belonging to the Commissioners & fitting out at Nantes by M. Williams in the Name of M. Pelletier de . . . . . . .

M. Chaumont is sending 10 Vessels loaded with Salt, besides several Vessels with Cloathing & other Merchandize—
M. Monthieu & Associates—6 or 8 very Valuable Cargoes.
M. Buat of St. Maloes & associates—The Count de Vaux; The Viscomte Narbonne Pelet; &c are also sending four Cargoes.
M. Jauge of Bourdeaux & His Associates—10 Cargoes.
Mess. Basmarin of Bourdeaux several Cargoes . . . . .

D, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fols. 291-94. In Paul Wentworth's handwriting. Endorsed: "Mr. Luptons Papers of Intelligence from March 20th 1777 to Octr 30th 1777 containing his Correspondence from Paris.—& also some Letters from Ld. Stormont which accompanied them.—Extracts of these Informations were regularly sent as receivd to L's Weymouth.—to the Post Office—& to L's Sandwich.—"; and "N 2/Port Intelligence."

1. Clarendon, Thomas Cowell, master, and Hanover Plantq Thomas Luney, master.
2. Flamand, formerly Heureux, Pierre Landais, master.
3. Anna Susannah, John Taylor, master, and Jamaica, David Watt, master.
5. There is no evidence that Continental Navy cutter Dolphin, Capt. Francis Brown, brought a prize into Nantes. Wentworth may have mistaken for a prize to the Dolphin a Jamaicaman brought in by South Carolina letter of marque brig Bellona, Capt. Cross.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN ROBERT LAMBERT, R.N.

By &c.

Whereas we intend the Ship you command, accompanied with the Ships & Sloops named in the Margin, I shall proceed to the West Indies with such Trade bound thither, as shall arrive at Spithead, when the Wind shall have been fair for bringing Ships from the Downes for the space of 48. hours after the receipt hereof; You are, therefore, hereby required and directed to take the said Ships & Sloops under your command (their Commanders being directed to obey your Orders) & such Trade as shall be assembled at the time abovemention'd under your convoy; and, putting to Sea with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather, proceed with them towards the places of their destination, And, having seen such as may be bound to Barbadoes in safety to that Island, you are to dispatch the Aurora & Deal Castle to Tobago & Grenada with such as may be bound thither; directing their commandiers, after they have seen them in safety to the respective places of their destination, to cruize about those Islands (the former off Tobago the latter off Grenada) for the protection of the Trade of His Maj's Subjects, & to use their best endeavours to take, or destroy Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America; continuing on that Service until they shall be relieved by other Cruizers from Vice Adm't Young or the Commander in Chief for the time being of His Maj's Ships at Barbadoes the Leeward Islands &c. with whom they are to correspond by all convenient opportunities, following his Orders for their further proceedings; And to whom you are to cause the inclosed Packet to be delivered, or safely conveyed, by the first opportunity which may present itself after your arrival within the Limits of his Station.

Having dispatched the Aurora & Deal Castles above directed you are, in the Ship you command accompanied by the two Sloops, to proceed towards Antigua with the Trade bound to that & the neighbouring Islands, And, having seen those bound to
Antigua, in safety thither, & the others as far as your way & theirs may lie together, make the best of your way to Jamaica with such as may be bound to that Island and the Florida's; directing the Commander of the Hound, when you reach the East end of that Island, to see the Trade bound to the North side of it, in safety to the Ports of their destination, and then to follow you to Port Royal, where, upon your arrival, you are to put yourself under the command of Vice Adm' Gayton, or the Commanding Officer for the time being of His Maj's Ships & Vessels at that Island; And, delivering to him the inclosed Packet, follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

You are to be very attentive to the Ships and Vessels which proceed under your convoy &c. (same as to Capt' Moore of the Exeter.) 2 Given &c. the 30th October 1777.

Sandwich
J Buller

By &c. P.S.

Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Vice Admiral James Young

By &c.

Whereas Capt' Lambert Com'm of His Maj's Ship Niger (accompanied by the Ships & Sloops named in the Margin) 1 is directed to convoy the Trade bound from thence to the West Indies; proceeding himself, with the Ship he commands and the Sloops to Jamaica; and, when he gets off Barbadoes to detach the Aurora and Deal Castle to Tobago & Grenada, with Orders to their Commanders to cruise afterwards (the former off Tobago & Grenada) for the protection of the Trade of His Maj's Subjects, and to take, or destroy, Privatiers or other Ships & Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America; continuation upon that Service 'til you shall send other Cruizers to relieve them; corresponding with you, by all opportunities, and following your Orders for their further proceedings.

And whereas we have received a Memorial from several of the Proprietors & Merchants concerned in the former of those Islands, setting forth the defenceless state thereof, the mischief which has been done by the Rebel Privatiers abovemention'd, & their apprehensions of further insults, and it also appears, by Extracts of Letters from Lord M'Cartyne Gov' of Grenada, which have been communicated to Us by Lord George Germain, 2 that that Island is in a similar situation; You are, therefore, hereby required and directed, not to withdraw the said two Ships from those Islands until you shall find it proper to relieve them, and shall be enabled so to do, by other Frigates of your Squadron or 'til any other Service of a more pressing nature shall render it necessary, in which case you are to take care to send them back, or replace them by others, the moment such more pressing Service will admit thereof. Given &c. the 30. of October 1777.

Sandwich
J Buller

By &c. P.S.
Dear Sir

Yours of the 25th. Inst. 1 came duly to hand & note the Contents, w'th. does not A little surprise me. Inclosed you have the Original Copy of the Letter of advice sent You for the Drawing those bills from S'. Malo, for the Disburs's of the sloop Dolphin, I do assure you, I shou'd not have drawn on you, had I not have rec'd Capt Wickes's Orders for so doing, if the letter of advice did not come to hand, it is not my fault, as it was Delivered to M' Desegray to put under cover to M' Beaugeard at Paris, and as to the sum drawn for, I am now to request the fav'r of you that you will immediately give Orders to M' Williams or Some other Person to examine and receive my acc's for the Disburs's of that Vessell, my Dear Sir, you may depend I have been cautious & Carefull, & have been always ready to render an Acc. of what I have done with the Money that has been taken up or drawn for by me, at half an Hours notice, & you may depend I have not applied 20 G. to my own use since I left Paris,—I am told the Deane goes on well, I dare not look at her my self, I have only seen her once since she was launched, This Frigate goes by the Name of the Lyon at pres't but my Commission is filled up for the Deane, this matter I shall Settle on my going on board her, she is the Same Dimentions and carrys the same Mettal as the Dillaware & Effingham Frigates & I make no doubt [but] is equal to either of those ships in every respect, dear Sir if I dont write often enought it is because I wou'd not be thought trou-blesome when I have nothing of moment to Communicate I am Dear Sir [&c.]

Sam Nicholson

P.S. Mr. Jona. Williams has got the Acc's of Disburs's at S'. Malo, if you choose to have it, send me word & I will send you mine


1. Deane asked Nicholson on what account the latter had drawn a bill for 4,703.18 livres, payable to Desegray, Beaugeard, fils & Co., "as you have not yet given me advice of your drawing," Deane Papers 2: 203.

October 31

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN ROBERT DIGBY, R.N.

[Admiralty, 31 Oct. 1777]

By &c.

Whereas we have receiv'd Intelligence to be depended on, (a Copy of which you will receive in this, in addition to the Intelligence transmitted in our Order of the
18th of last Month) that several French Ships have sailed; and that others are soon intended to sail from different Ports in France, having on board Cargoes of Warlike Stores, and other Supplies for the use of the Rebels in N. America: All which Ships it is reported from good Authority are to be convoy’d off the Coast of France by Ships of War belonging to that Nation; And whereas it is of the utmost importance to His Maj’s Service that the aforesaid Ships should be intercepted. We do therefore hereby require and direct you to use your utmost diligence in the Ship you command (directing the several Captains under you to do the like) in looking out for the said ships, and in case of falling in with, to examine them, notwithstanding any remonstrance from the Officer commanding the Convoy to the contrary; And being satisfied the Ships you so examine are those pointed out to be employ’d as above described, to seize and bring them into One of His Maj’s Ports; taking care the several Articles on board are effectually secured from loss or embezzlement: and sending our Secretary a minute Account of your proceedings.

In complying with these Orders, you are to conduct yourself in respect to the Officers commanding the Convoy (the same being to be enjoin’d to the Captains under [incomplete]

Earl of Sandwich to Captain Robert Digby, R.N.

Private. Admiralty, October 31st 1777.

Dear Sir—The instructions which accompany this letter are of a very delicate nature, and therefore I am particularly happy that they are entrusted to a person of your discretion. You will be aware that bringing in a French ship upon suspicions that appear not well grounded afterwards may draw us into a war, which in our present circumstances ought by all means to be avoided; but the intercepting these large supplies that are intended for the rebels is of so much consequence that some risk must be run for so important an object. However, I have entire dependence on you not to involve us in difficulties with France unless you are convinced you are upon good grounds.

I give you these private hints as a friend, and because I think it right you should be apprised of our ideas upon this delicate business. I am [&c.]

Sandwich


New-Lloyd’s List (London), Friday, October 31, 1777

The Fanny, Wood, from Spain and Falmouth for Quebec, that was taken by the True Blue Privateer, is retaken by the Mermaid M. W. and carried into Halifax.
1. "James Spence mate of the Brigantine *Fanny* being duly sworn deposeth, that the said Brigantine was Bound on a Voyage from Falmouth in England to Quebec, loaded with Wines, that on or about the 8th of July last they fell in with a Rebel Privateer Schooner of 10 Carriage Guns, call'd the *True Blue*, that the Rebels Boarded & took Possession of said Brig being in the Latitude 45° N. Long. 33. That the Rebels took out the master John Wood, & all the hands except the Depont & a Boy, & also took out all the Papers except the Register & Bill of Sale of the Vessel, which are in the Attorney Generls. Hands, that they put on Board said Brig 7 men and a Prize Master & stood to the Westward for Marblehead, that on the 29th of August last being near the Seal Islands in this Province they fell in with his Majestys Ship of War the *Mermaid*, James Hawker Esq' Commander who retook the said Brig *Fanny* & sent her Safe into this Port of Halifax, that when the *Mermaid* took possession of the Brig the Rebels made their escape in the Boat & the Boy with them." American Vessels Captured by the British during the Revolution and War of 1812: Records of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Halifax, Nova Scotia (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1911), p. 29.

**DESEGRET BEAUGERARD JR. & CO. TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON**

The Sloop *Dolphin* Capt S. Nicholson for Charges & other Disbursements since her Departure—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Desegre Beaugeard Jr. &amp; Co. Dc</td>
<td>£259.17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mr. Neven for Tallow as per bill</td>
<td>29.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mr. V. Chenard, Griendais &amp; Le Page for faggts</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Marten for brooms &amp;c</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To us Desegray &amp; Co. for a plank</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mr. Touche for his Voyage from here to Nantes &amp; back by land &amp; several disburs</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To postage &amp; inquiries abt 8 men run away from sd. vessel</td>
<td>5.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our commission at 4 per cent including advance of money &amp; discount of bills of exchange</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£259.17.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We certify the above account of the sloop *Dolphin*, amounting to £259.17.0—

S: Malo the 31st Octr 1777—

Desegray Beaugeard Jr. & Co.

Copy, Cthi, Silas Deane Papers. Enclosed in Nicholson to the American Commissioners at Paris, 9 Novr 1777, in which Nicholson informed the Commissioners that he had drawn on them for the additional amount accounted for here, expended for pilotage and other small bills. Ibid.

**November 1**

**THOMAS ERKINE TO LORD SUFFOLK**

No. 10 

Gothenburg 1st Novr 1777—

My Lord,

I have now to Inform your Lordship that Capt. Woodhouse is now about clear to sail from Marstrand under Swedish Colours, his masters Name I. Tangren—the vessel under the same description as already given—the cargo consisting of Salt, Linnens &c to the Extent of circa £3000—

The two Schooners are also about clear to sail chiefly loaded with Teas & I suspect some Powder,—
[T]here was lately Exported from hence to Marstrand in name of the Merchant who is agent for these Ships 60 Casks of Gun-Powder—I gave in a memorial to the Governor concerning it & desiring that he would forbid it being shipped on board of these Americans—which he accordingly did—nevertheless I am well convinced that not only that parcell, but also another much larger, is either intended for the Ships now at Marstrand, or another that is dayly expected—all this I have communicated to M: Doerfeld at Stockholm[.] I have found out that the Agent here Henry Greig receives Letters almost evry other post from D: Franklin at Paris—I am [&c.]

Thom' Erskine

L, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot of first page: "R' Honbl Earl of Suffolk." Notation in left margin: "Extract sent to the Admiralty."

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEMYOUTH

My Lord.

Corunna 1st Nov: 1777.

I humbly beg leave to acquaint Your Lordship of Cunninghams Return from his second Cruize having taken and brought in here the Brig Two Brothers bound from New foundland to Bilboa with Codfish.

I have used my utmost Endeavors My Lord to prevent as much as possible any Evasions of the Orders that have been issued respecting American Privateers & their Prizes, in doing which I have been often obliged to represent the Captain General's Conduct and Partiality towards them to My Lord Grantham. His Excellency has had a Conference thereupon with Count Floridablanca which has produced a Letter from this Minister to the General, who has charged me with being the Occasion of it in Terms which give me just Cause to apprehend I shall soon or late feel the Effects of his Resentment. Again therefore I most humbly intreat Your Lordship in your great Goodness will be pleased as soon as a Vacancy will admit of it to remove me to another Consulship or some other Employment, the Emoluments and situation of which may in some Measure compensate for what I endure in this.

Every Thing is perfectly quiet in this Neighbourhood. I have the honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp


November 3

CAPTAIN JOHN ELPHINSTON, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS

(Copy)

Egmonts Intelligence Torbay Road Nov: 3. 1777.

John Woods of the Oderion of 90 Tons from Newfoundland to St: Andero was taken the 6: Okt: about 7 Leagues to the NW of Cape Ortagul by the Hawke Schooner of 10 Guns & 10 Swivels put the Crew on board a Spanish Brig, and were carried to Bilboa, when he left Bilboa the Hawke & Success Schooners were cleaning & wou'd
be ready for Sea in 5 or 6 Days an American Letter of Marque was ready for Sea & waited only for a Bar & bound to America—

He also says that a Ship called the Romney, Terry Master, carries 12 Guns besides Swivels, & had English, French, Spanish & American Colours, had French & Spanish Masters on board, says they were going on a Wale Fishery & was taking in a Cargo of Merchandize, the said John Woods came a Passenger in a Brig from Bilboa bound to Topsham, & put into this Road in a Gale of Wind.

Jn° Elphinston


November 4

THE LONDON CHRONICLE, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, TO MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1777

London.

The snow Rebecca, Capt. Blackburn, a letter of marque, fitted out by some merchants at Waterford in Ireland, was taken by the Congress cutter, mounting 12 guns, on the 29th of September, after an obstinate engagement of five glasses, and carried into port L'Orient.

DECLARATION OF PHILIP AMY, MASTER OF THE BRIG ELIZABETH

This is to Certify that on the last day of September at 6 o’Clock in the afternoon, being on the Coast of Spain, one Mile from Mount S° Anthony where I took a Pilot for Bilboa; The Morning ensuing at 5 o’Clock distant about two Miles from Shore, I was boarded by the True American privateer mounted with 12 Guns commanded by John Buffington who immediately took possession of my Vessel ordered myself & Crew on board of his privateer, where we was kept thirty six hours, but it blowing strong from the N.W. obliged him to put in Castro (the said Privateer left Bilboa at 2 o’Clock the same Morning) At my arrival at Castro I sent an express to Messrs. Gardoqui & Sons of Bilboa who had for several Years before transacted my owners business in that port, desiring them to have the Privateer arrested, I receiv’d an Answer the 3rd day of October that if I could have a Certificate of the Pilot, proving that I was taken within Gun Shot I could have the said Privateer arrested; but in the same hour Buffington received a Letter from Bilboa ordering him to leave Castro immediately which was effected in the night. I repaired as soon as I could to Bilboa with my Crew and where I made a Certificate proving that I was taken within two Miles of the Coast, & obtained one of the same assertion from my Pilot. On the 13th of the same Month Messrs Gardoqui’s informed me that my Vessel was at Secouá [Secoua] in France; on the 15th I went Post & arrived there the 19th but after enquiry found that my Vessel had left the place the 16th but the Americans had unloaded the Cargo which Consisted of 2200 Q° of Cod Fish & sold it to M° Du fourcq of Bayonne in france, at Fifteen Livers $ quintal. Sixteen hundred Quintals where sent by the said Du fourcq to St° Sebastien, where I have had them arrested; and the law suit to be tried.
I went to Bayonne in order to speak myself to Mr. Du fourcq; & this is what he told me concerning my Vessel. "I have remitted to your Correspondents Messrs Gar-douqui & Sons 26,000 livers, French curry for John Buffington's Account part of the amount of the Cargo I purchased from him." He further said, that the Messrs Gar-douquis had sent several expresses ordering the Officer of Buffington who was Master in my Vessel to go to sea without delay for fear of my meeting him there.

When Mr. Du fourcq hear'd that I have arrested the 1600 hund'd Q" of Fish at St. Sebastien he told me he had remaining 330 Q" but could not send them there for fear of meeting the same Fate. I returned to St. Sebastien & gave a full power to Mr. Birmingham a Correspondant of my owner Mr. Peter Mallet of Jersey.

Jersey 4th. Novr. 1777.

[Signature]


JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honble Gentlemen

(Nº 84) Nantes Novr 4. 1777.—

As it was absolutely necessary to have Ballast for the Ship and neither the Flints or Copper arrived nor any appearance of their arriving (except about 30,000 w' of the latter) for some time I have bought 40,000 w' of Bar Lead at 23½ P cwt and about 30 Ton of Salt. I have in doing this been as saving as I possibly could, and even now shall be obliged to fill in the ground Tier of Casks with as much sand & small Stones as I possibly can, for so large a Ship must have at least 150 Tons dead weight in her Hold to enable her to carry sail, especially in such blowing weather as she will probably have on our Coast. I should have been happy to have purchased three times as much Lead, as it is a usefull article with us, and will Ballast the Ship without taking up any Room, but I dare not make so great a Consumption in our Funds without orders. If the Copper or Flints had arrived this purchase would have been unnecessary, that is if we could ship the Flints without their being considered munitions of War.

The first Gabar consisting of water Casks filled, Lead, what Copper we have and other articles to go in her Bottom will be loaded to day and the Ship by the Time these Things get down will be ready to take in.

I have about 5000 Suits of my Cloths pack'd & packing, the Remainder will soon be ready, but whether quite time for the Lion or not will not be material, as I have already more Cargo than sufficient for that Ship.—If you are willing to continue the making of Cloaths here after my 10,000 shall be finished, I beg to know now, as I will so take my measures for Cloth & other materials that the work will go on with Facility and dispatch, I have now near 100 hands that when I finish will be again dispersed unless I continue their employ. I am [&c.]

Jon Williams J.

P.S. A Circumstance is much talked of here that is supposed to be an omen of war, it is the recall of the Newfoundland Fishery. One Vessell is arrived with a small quantity only on board & reports that she quitted the Banks by express orders, a Frigate being there with the Kings commands that all the Vessells whether loaded or not
should immediately return home. The Post from Bordeaux to day advises the arival of a Vessell from Eddington N Carolina, the Captain of which reports that Gen' Howe & the Fleet had not got more than half up the Bay, and had never attempted to land.—The acco adds that Gen Prescott is exchanged for Gen Lee.

1. The Lyon, subsequently Continental Navy frigate Deane.
2. Gabare, a lighter for transferring cargo.

November 5

LEFRAS AND LE MESURIER TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Extract of a Letter from Messrs.
Lefras & Le Mesurier; dated at
Walbrook 5th. Novr 1777, to Mr.
Stephens

Walbrook 5th. Novr 1777

We take the Liberty to inclose you a Letter from our Correspondents Messrs Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena of Bilboa (the first of whom is Vice English Consul at that port) by which you will find that a great number of American Privatiers infest that Coast, waiting for the Newfoundland Ships, and that there are three of them that Rendezvous in the said Port of Bilboa, and go out by turns to relieve one another, by which means very few English Vessels escape being taken; Captn Gorrequer of the Schooner Adventure of Jersey (mentioned in the aforesaid Letter) was taken at an Anchor near the Bar of Bilboa as he was going in, and carry'd into the said Port by one of these Privatiers, but as he was taken when under the Protection of the Forts, he was by order of the Commissary of Marines released.

By a Letter we have from the said Captain of the 18th. Ult he was ready to sail for Jersey and had fallen down that River, on which the Privatiers in that Port had armed one of their Boats, and sent it out [in] order to take Gorrequer when he came without the Barr of Bilboa, which had obliged him to come to and Anchor again, and there he was detained.


1. An extract of the letter is in Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Mesurier, 18 Oct. 1777, ibid., fol. 295. The extract contains no additional information.
[Extract]

Secret

No 160

Fontainebleau November 5th, 1777

My Lord

I went yesterday Morning to M de Maurepas.... I then My Lord went over all the essential Pieces of Intelligence transmitted to me in the Papers marked A and E, which I had arranged and digested in my Head before I went to His Excellency. I spoke shortly, but strongly, and He did not interrupt me except once, to say that He knew one of the ships I had mentioned to be building in Holland, according to a new construction imagined by Mr Boux, was for the Service of the King his Master, that there might be two, but that He knew only of one, mounting four and thirty twenty four Pounders. I asked Him if He was absolutely certain that that ship was for the use of the French Navy, and would not be employed in the service of the Rebels. He replied that he could safely answer for that. When I had finished my Narration, which I made as rapid as possible knowing his incurable aversion to Details—He answered in short broken sentences, that they never intended to stop all commerce with the americans; that if Merchant Vessels engaged in that branch of Trade, it was a Leur Risques et Perils; that they ought not indeed to carry Arms and Ammunition, that that was expressly prohibited, but as to every thing else Government could not interfere, could not pretend de donner des Entraves au Commerce.

I observed to Him what a difference there was between selling Merchandize to the Americans who came to purchase it in France, and sending out ships to North America, to which according to universally known established, and uncontroverted Rule they could have no Right to Trade at all. Without pretending Sir to say what we shall or shall not do, I will ask you a plain Question If you knew for certain that forty or fifty English Merchantmen were going to Martinico or S'. Domingo, with false Lettres de Mer, to conceal their real Destination, would you with a certainty of such an Intention suffer it to be carried into Execution. He was embarrassed, and could not say they would suffer it. The present case is much stronger than the imaginary one I have put to you, these ships are not only designed for North America, to which they have no Right to go, designed to carry every species of succour to the Rebels of a Nation of which France calls herself the Friend, but they are to unite into Fleets, and be escorted by a large Convoy consisting of French and American Ships of War. I should mispend your Time Sir, I should wrong the opinion I have of your Judgment, if I stopped to make Remarks upon such Projects as these, your Eye must go at once to the Consequences without being guided by me. You are Still in Time to prevent the Execution of these Projects, but you have not a Moment to lose. You are perhaps the only Man breathing who can effectually Stop them, and if your Intentions are as pacific as I love to think they are, you will Stop them.

His Answers were short, and not very Satisfactory. He only said that he had never heard before of a Fleet assembling at Bilboa, that He did not know how to credit the existence of such a Project, qu'il s'informeroit plus particulierement et verroir ce qu'il y aurait a faire He renewed the Professions of his Pacific Intentions. .... I am [&c.]

Stormont
1. Stormont completed the letter by expressing his conviction that the French government intended to do everything it could short of war to aid the rebels and that Great Britain must establish a limit beyond which it would not permit France to go.

**LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH**

[Extract]

**No. 161**

Most Secret  
Fontainebleau November 5th. 1777

My Lord

With M de Vergennes whom I went to immediately from M de Maurepas I took a very firm and serious but quite dispassionate Tone. . . . M de Vergennes heard me Attentively and without Interruption till I came to speak of the ships building at Amsterdam: He then said, that he could answer no Questions on that subject, that we could not expect them to say what ships they were or were not building in foreign Ports that our inquiring into that was a sort of Inquisition; On this subject My Lord we had a good deal of Discussion, I told Him that we did not interfere with their building ships in foreign Ports for the service of the french Navy that that was not at all the Point in Question, that my Information was precise, and I had stated it so to His EXCY, that these were ships building in appearance for France, ordered and perhaps paid by Her, but designed really for the service of the Rebels. . . .

After a good deal of hesitation, He admitted that He knew of one ship building at Amsterdam pour le service du Roi, that it was a sort of Experiment, but that the ship was by no means as far advanced as my Information supposed.

When I mentioned Monsieur le Comte de Vaux as concerned in fitting out ships for North America, He expressed great surprize, and asked what Cte de Vaux I meant, as my Information did not enable me to answer that Question positively; I told Him that I supposed it was the one generally known here, but that I would not attempt to fix an Imputation upon a Gentleman of Rank and Fashion, without direct positive Proof; that if I had mentioned to his Excellency the Names of many of the Persons interested in this Enterprize, it was only to give Him every Light in my Power. I added which is true, that I had sometimes found my Intelligence erroneous as to Names, but right as to Facts, that Facts were what I attended to, that who fitted out these ships was immaterial, the essential Point was that they were fitting out in France, and going to carry ammunition and various Merchandize to the Rebels of great Britain.

When I spoke of the ship l'heureux, and mentioned Baron Steuben, formerly aide de camp to the King of Prussia, I added that that Name was not unknown to his Excellency and looked Him full in the Face. He answered with great composure, and seeming frankness, that He knew of no such Person; He likewise assured me that He had never heard of Lieut' Lundi. To these positive assertions I could make no reply, without hazarding personal altercation which I wish to avoid.

When I came to the Inteligence I had received from my Court, I told His Excellency that He would find it in two Papers, which I gave Him to read, and which were those marked B, and, C. He read them, and when He came to the Deposition relating to the Powder and Stores, being taken out of the two Privateers; He said that
that was always done, when ships were repaired. I observed to Him that they had been deposited dans L'Arsenal du Roi, which was surely a mark of favour, and friendship and added, that the most exceptionable Part of all was the repairing the Ships, and repairing them in the Kings Dock; Notwithstanding all the Solemn Promises made us to the Contrary, He gave his usual frivolous Answer, that the ships were in Distress, and that the assistance granted them was only upon a Principle of common Humanity. . . . 1 I am [&c.]

Stormont


1. Stormont went on to inform Vergennes that he knew who M. de Chaumont is "and whom he sees," and to discuss, as he had with Maurepas earlier in the day, intelligence he had of a large convoy of French merchantmen that was intended to rendezvous at Bilbao from where it was to sail in convoy with supplies for the rebels in North America.


"Gentlemen, I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that yesterday the restitution of the English ships and cargoes, taken by the American privateers and brought into this port, took place, when they were given up accordingly." 1

London Chronicle, 15-18 Nov. 1777.

1. Jamaicamen Clarendon and Hanover Planter, taken by Massachusetts privateers Fanny and General Mercer.

November 6

Philip Stephens to Vice Admiral Lord Shuldham and Admiral Sir Thomas Pye

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 6 Novr 1777.

Several Frenchmen taken in American Vessels, who are Prisoners on board His Majesty's Ships at Plymouth, 1 having been examined by the Civil Magistrates, & there not being found sufficient Evidence to ground the Commitment of them to Prison, were remanded back to the said Ships; My Lords Commiss 1 of the Admty acquainted Lord Weymouth, one of His Majesty's Secretaries of State therewith, and desired to receive the Kings directions concerning the said Prisoners; And his Lordships having in return signified his Majesty's pleasure that the said Frenchmen be set at Liberty after they shall have signed a Declaration that they will not bear Arms in the American Service, against His Maj 1 s Government, during the present Rebellion, And that it is His Majesty's further Pleasure that all Foreigners, in like situation, whenever the Civil Magistrates do not consider they have sufficient Grounds for legally committing them, be hereafter set at Liberty under the same Conditions, unless some particular Circumstances may render it adviseable to make further Enquiries about them; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to give Orders in the Cases aforementioned, accordingly. I am &c 1

PS.
LB, UkLPR, Adm. 2/556, 157–58. Addressed at foot: "Vice Admiral Lord Shuldham at Plymouth Admiral Sir Thomas Pye Portsmouth." Notation in the margin: "Several Frenchmen taken in American Vessels, to be set at liberty: Also all Foreigners, who may be hereafter taken in such Vessels for whose Commitment to Prison there are not sufficient Grounds found by the Civil Magistrates—to be set at Liberty."

1. "Portsmouth" is indicated to be substituted for "Plymouth" in the letter to be sent to Admiral Pye.

**WILLIAM Lee TO CAPTAIN JOHN Young**

Captn John Young Nantes

Sir

This moment was left at the Gate by I don't know whom, ye Letter of the 29th. ulto. just 8 daies after its date, the person by whom you sent it cou'd not have taken a great deal of pains to find me, as he might very easily have done it.—I think I left with Mr. Robinson a copy of the sales of your vessel; the half nett proceeds whereof, that belong to you & your people was ten thousand three Hundred & thirty nine Liv-ers, of wch I paid Mr. Robinson two thousand Livers & you rec'd 1200 Livers here with 240 Livers of me in Nantes. until I am informed the am't of your expences on the Journey up here wch is to be charged to the committee, I can't tell what is still coming to you; but that you may not be in want of money I now send you an order on Messrs Piarne Penet & Co. for five thousand Livers the receit of wch you will please to acknowledge, & if you will send me here three duplicate receits of the whole of your expenses on the Journey up here; I will return you the receits you gave Mr. Grand for the £1200 you rec'd. in consequence of my order on him, & the receits you gave me for the £240. In Nantes with an order on Messrs Piarne Penet & Co. for the Ballance due you on Acc of the Vessel & sold by me. you will loose no time in preparing your Vessel for Sea, as I believe in a few daies the commissioners will be ready with their dispatches I before informed you & Mr. Robinson also, that Mr. Schwighausur had orders to supply your disbursements on Acc of the Vessel & to provide what loading you could take in, such as Blankets or Arms, or Ammunition to him therefore I presume you have applied on these subjects, I beg you will leave with him or Mr. Morris, duplicate authenticated accounts of all your disbursements for the Vessel & [let] Mr. Schwighausur know in time what loading you can take in that he may provide accordingly.

LB, ViHi, William Lee Papers.

**JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE _ETOURDIE_**

**MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU**

[Gironde] du jeudy 6ème [novembre]

quoique le commis ne soit pas de retour le lieutenant en pied et un officier sont parti pour bourdeaux pour travailler a larmement. le meme jour le batiment la ste anne commande par charles lineau anglais est venu nous demander du secours contre le _portsmouth_ qui est mouillie aupres de nous ainsie que contre une goelette insurgente qui est au meme mouillage cette goelette se nomme l'hirondelle. nous luy avons dit a langlois de sortir, et nous avons declare aux insurgents qu'ils ne partiroient que vingt quartre heurs apres.
EUROPEAN THEATER

[Translation]

Gironde River Thursday 6th [November]

Although the clerk has not returned, the lieutenant on duty and an officer have left for Bordeaux in order to work at the equipping of the vessel. The same day the merchantman the Saint Ann, commanded by Englishman Charles Linsee came to us requesting assistance against the Portsmouth, which is anchored near us, as well as against an insurgent schooner that is in the same anchorage. That schooner is called the Swallow. We told the Englishman to go out, and we declared to the insurgents that they were to leave only after twenty-four hours.

D, FrPNA, Marine B 147, fol. 287.

November 7

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VISCOUNT BARRINGTON


I have received & communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admty your Letter of the 29th: of last Month, on the Subject of furnishing an additional Guard for the Security of the Prisoners confined in the Prison at Forton, & expressing your Lordships hopes that as the Kings Service for the reasons you have mentioned will not admit of a larger Guard being furnished for that Service by the Land Forces, they will be able to find some proper mode of securing the Prisoners either by an additional Guard to be supplied from the Marines who are from time to time station'd at Portsmouth; or such other Means as their Lordships shall think effectual; In return thereto I have it in command to acquaint your Lordship that my Lords, in the proposition they had the honor to submit to His Majesty respecting the establishment of Prisons for securing Persons charged with the Crime of High Treason, or Piracy, expressly mention that, for effectually preventing their Escape, and keeping them in Order, a Military Guard from His Majesty's Land Forces should be constantly mounted; And I am further to observe that the Marines are so far from being in such numbers as to be able to spare any for that Service, that there are not now at Quarters sufficient to compleat the Complements of His Majesty's Ships which are in Port & in want of them, I have the honor to be &c.

PS.


GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L’ORIENT

Fontain 7. 9bre. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 29, 8bre: par laquelle vous m'informez que les frégates américaines le Raleigh et l'Alfred continuer à travailler à leur Carène et a leur radoub. Signifiez aux Capitaines de ces Batimens que l'intention du Roy est absolu-
ment que leurs Batimens restent le moins de temps possible dans ses Ports et qu’ainsi ils aient à se dépêcher de se mettre promptement en état de reprendre la mer.  

Quant aux deux prises faites par ces frégates le S. Berard 3 méritorit surement d’être puni s’il étoit prouvé que c’est par son fait qu’a eu lieu la levée clandestine des matelots françois qui les ont conduit dans la Riviere de Crach. Je vois d’aillleurs par une Lettre que m’écrit le S. de Lespinay qu’il s’est mis dans le cas d’être condamné à une amende relativement à la contravention à l’ordre dans laquelle est tombé le Capitaine du Navire le Baltimore 4 pour être parti sans avoir fait aucune déclaration à l’Amirauté. Enjoignez lui d’être plus circonspect à l’avenir sinon je ne pourrai me dispenser de rendre compte de sa conduite au Roi.

Quant aux matelots françois qui n’étoient pas encore de retour lorsque vous m’avez écrit, entendez vous avec les officiers de l’Amirauté de Vannes pour les faire débarquer et pour faire éloigner sur le champ de nos Côtes les prises dont il s’agit. 5 Je vous recommande de nouveau de donner la plus grande attention à ce que nos matelots ne prennent pas parti sur les Batimens américains et à empêcher les enrèlements clandestins: vous savez combien cet objet est important. 6 Je Suis [&c.]
de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 7 November 1777  

I have received, Sir, your letter of 29 October by which you informed me that the American frigates Raleigh and Alfred are continuing the work of their careening and caulking. Point out to the captains of these ships that it is absolutely the king’s wish that their ships remain the least possible time in his ports, and that they take steps to hasten and promptly put themselves in readiness to sail again. 1

As to the two prizes taken by these two frigates, Monsieur Berard 3 surely would merit being punished if it were proven that it was by his act that there was a clandestine enlistment of French sailors who brought them into the Crach river. Moreover, I see by a letter which Monsieur Lespinay wrote to me that he was placed in the circumstances of being condemned to paying a fine as a result of a contravention of a regulation into which fell the captain of the Baltimore 4 for having left without having made any declaration to the Admiralty. Enjoin him to be more circumspect in the future; otherwise I will not be able to excuse myself from giving account of his conduct to the king.

As to the French sailors who have not returned since you wrote me, come to an understanding with the Admiralty officers of Vannes in order to make them debark and to remove immediately from our shores the prizes in question. 5 I again recommend that you pay the closest attention so that our sailors have no dealings on the American ships and to prohibit clandestine enlistments; you are aware of how important this subject is. 6 I am [&c.]
de sartine

2. Anna Susanna, and Jamaica.
3. Béard was a member of the firm of Béard, Frères & Co., merchants at L’Orient.
5. Interlined here in a different hand: “avec défenses d’y reparaitre”; “with prohibitions to return there.”
6. This paragraph is bracketed, with the notation: “Extrait à M de L’Epinay procurer du Roy à l’amirauté de Vannes, le 12, 9e 1777”; “Extract to M. de L’Epinay, King’s attorney at the Admiralty of Vannes, 12 Nov. 1777.”
A Fontainebleau le 7 Novembre 1777

...Je me suis reservé Monsieur de vous instruire de la resolution que le Roy prendroit en consequénce de la demande de secours de la part des Americains. S. M. s'est determinée à leur faire payer dans le courant de l'année prochaine une somme de trois millions de nos livres en quartre termes egaux. Je ne repeterai pas ici les conditions attachées à cette liberalité: elles se trouvent deja énoncées dans la correspondance respective.

Autant les Deputés Americains se montrent reconnoissants de ce nouvel temoignage de la bienfaisance du Roy, autant sont ils consternés de l'avis que je leurs ai donné quils ont encouru l'indignation de sa Majesté Catholique. Vous aurez sans doute entendu parler Monsieur de la prise qu'a fait un de leurs corsaires du Navire françois le Fortune qui alloit de Londres A Cadis bien qu’il a envoyé en Amerique; La plus grande partie de sa cargaison etant pour le compte des marchands Espagnols. Le Roy Catholique sensible à leurs justes plaintes pretend non seulement la reparation de cette insolence qui est tres en regle, mais meme vouloir suspendre ses bienfaits jusqu'à se que la satisfaction soit assurée.

C'est du moins ce que d'infixe d'une lettre de Monsieur le Comte Floridablanca du vingt trois Septembre [Octobre] 1 à Monsieur d'Aranda qui m'a été communiquée. Si les Deputés Americains deferent au conseil que je leur ai fait donner ils ne tarderont pas à faire toutes les soumissions convenables pour flechir le ressentiment du Roy Catholique et ils ne perdront pas un seul instant à prendre les messures les plus sures pour faire reparer le dommage causé aux sujets espagls. Ils ont un si grand interêt à ne pas mecontenter les deux Puissances et à ne pas se priver de leur protection qu'on peut croire que leur [zele] 2 ne sera ni equivoke, ni infructueux; mais comme les effets n'en peuvent etre ni prompts ni même bien prochains, il seroit bien à desirer que le Ministere d'Espagne, considérant que ce qui est arrivé est la faute d'un simple particulier, n'en rendit point responsable la generalité de la Nation et ne lui re-tranchât pas des à present des secours dont le besoin est imminent.

C'est ceque Je vous prie Monsieur Vouloir bien representer avec vôtre sagesse ordinaire à Monsieur le Comte de Florideblanche.

Vous sentires de vous mème que c'est matiere à converser et non occasion d'offices....

[Translation] Fontainebleau 7th November 1777.

...I have been waiting for an opportunity, sir, to communicate to you the king's decision consequent on the request of the Americans for help. His Majesty has decided to have paid to them, during the course of the next year, a sum of three millions of our livres in four equal instalments. I shall not repeat here the conditions attached to this liberalty; they are already set forth in the respective correspondence.

However much the American Deputies shew their gratitude for this fresh mark of the king's kindness, they are equally dismayed at the information which I gave them that they have incurred the indignation of His Catholic Majesty. You have doubtless heard mentioned, Sir, the capture made by one of their privateers of the French vessel le Fortune, which was going from London to Cadiz, and which was, nevertheless, sent to America. The greater portion of the cargo being on account of Spanish
merchants, the Catholic King, alive to their just complaints, claims not only reparation for this insolence, which is quite according to rule, but also means to suspend his benefits until satisfaction is given.

This, at least, is what I infer from a letter from Conde de Floridablanca of the twentieth-third September [October] to M. d'Aranda,¹ which has been communicated to me. If the American Deputies defer to the advice which I have caused to be given them, they will not delay in making all suitable submission to soften the resentment of the Catholic King, and they will not lose a single instant in taking the surest measures to make good the harm done to Spanish subjects. It is so greatly to their interest not to displease the two powers, nor to deprive themselves of their protection, that we may believe that their [zeal] ² will be neither equivocal nor fruitless; but as the effects of it can be neither soon nor even very near, it would be desirable that the Spanish Ministry, considering that what has happened is the fault of a single person, should not make the whole of the nation responsible for it, nor withhold from them henceforth the aid of which they are in pressing need.

This, Sir, is what I beg you to be good enough to represent, with your usual wisdom, to Conde de Floridablanca.

You will quite understand that it is a matter to be settled in conversation, and not in an official manner.

Copy, SpMAH, Estado, legajo 3884, expediente 3, doc. 339. Translations, with alterations, from Stevens's Facsimiles, vol. 19, no. 1737, which was of the draft in FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Espagne, vol. 587, fols. 37–38. The portion extracted here was originally in a numerical cipher. Among other matters discussed, this letter reports with skepticism Lord Stormont's claim to have certain information "that several French merchant vessels fitted out for war and trade are to join at Bilbao some Spanish vessels, similarly equipped, and from there to go in company, under convoy of some American privateers, direct to America."

2. The word zeal was in the draft, but not in the deciphered text.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 69. Corunna 7th November 1777.

My Lord.

I humbly beg leave to refer to my last Letter of the first Instant.

Being informed the next day that Cunningham was going to take in a fresh Supply of Stores and Ammunition from his Prizes, I presented a Petition to the Captain General that he would be pleased in compliance with His Catholick Majesty's Orders to command him to leave this Port seeing he had been allowed Time more than sufficient to provide himself with Provisions and necessaries. the Answer I received and which I sent to My Lord Grantham was that Cunningham had no Design to take any thing from his Prizes, that he came here merely by Stress of Weather, and should depart as soon as it cleared up. In order to prevent any Doubt that might be affected concerning the Weather, as soon as it proved fair I applied to the King's Pilot to certify it, with Intent to inclose his Certificate in a fresh Application to the General, when I heard to my great Surprise that Cunningham had quite unrigged his vessel, and under Pretext of its having received some Damage had obtained Permission to repair and refit it. I immediately waited on the General and requested the Favor of him to acquaint me with his Reasons for granting such Permission after the Answer
he had been pleased to give me to the memorial I presented him the Day before, he
replied that Cunningham's vessel was not in Condition to put to Sea, that it could
not be his Catholic Majesty's Intention to refuse Assistance to People in Distress, that
the new mast he received from the Inspector of the Packets on his first Arrival here
was too large for the winter Season, but that as soon as it was lessened, and he was
provided with the necessaries he wanted he would immediately order him to depart.
however there can be no Doubt other Excuses will be found, and Cunningham be
permitted to remain here as long as he pleases, I am extremely sorry I have not been
able to succeed, for some of His Majesty's ships are now actually of this Harbour,
which is the real Cause of Cunningham's putting in here.

This Pirate has also represented to the General that his Prize the Two Brothers
containing four thousand Quintals of Fish is so much out of Repair that the Cargoe
must perish if not landed, and this is done in order to sell it which it would be im-
possible to hinder if it is once brought on Shore. I presented another memorial to
the General yesterday to acquaint him that Cunningham had another Prize in this
Harbour empty, and fit to receive the Cargoe, and that if it was true the Two Brothers
was really in the Condition it was represented to be the Cargoe might be put on board
that vessel, since he well knew it would be difficult, if not altogether impossible to
prevent the Sale of it if landed, This morning I received his Answer that he had sent
Cunningham's Representation to Court, and should not determine in the Affair un-
till he received an Answer. It is true My Lord that he has sent it to Court, but with a
Representation of his own that the Country is very much in want of this Article and
would receive great Relief from this Cargoe, which however is not true. I have the
 Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

Weymouth.” Docketed: “Coruña 7 Novr 1777/Consul Katenkamp/(N 69)/R. 11 Dece.”

1. Probably the ship Brothers, Nicholas Kelly, taken on 25 Sept. 1777. See Herman Katencamp to Lord
Weymouth, 8 Oct. 1777, above.

November 8

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CHESTER, NOV. 8.”

“This day I received a letter from Captain White, dated St. George's, Grenada,
Sept. 18, advising of his safe arrival there in the brig Charles, having left Capt. Rogers
of the Hero at Barbadoes. In their passage to the West Indies they fell in with a priva-
teer of 20 six pounders, which attacked the Hero Packet, Rogers, who engaged the pri-
vaeeer for three glasses, and beat her off. At the beginning of the action Capt. Rogers
was wounded in two places, notwithstanding which he stood the quarter-deck all the
time; his first Mate, the Supercargo, and four of his seamen, were also wounded; one
of whom received five musket shot in different parts of his body. The Hero must have
been taken if the Captain and his crew had not fought with the most resolute intren-
pidity. Soon after which, the two brigs, the Hero and the Charles, fell in with another
privateer, which they obliged to sheer off, after each had poured a broadside into her.”
Dr Sir

I wrote you by Peltier & somewhat in haste since wch, yr of the 4th is arrived I am sorry that any thing should be put into the Lyon as ballast that will not be useful in America. Pray purchase salt or Flints or Lead or some thing for the purpose that is wanted in America; as to the Funds we must contrive to supply them. I pray that she may be equipped as soon as possible & also the Dolphin may Carry some of the Articles & sail under the Convoy of the Lyon. The Mercury & Marquis de Chaylote can take all and more than what you will have left & I presume you will not find difficulty in agreeing for the freight Tonn. M Tonton proposed 120 Livr Tonn out. I think he will abate a little but I had rather give that Sum than not have the goods sent in them. Those two Ships, the Lyon & one or two more of equal Force ready to go at the same time may resist any single ship here or on the Coast of America. The Cloths are of the first & capital importance & therefore must at all Events be dispatched. with respect to the Cloths furnished by Montieu, if they will not Compare with the Patterns given they cannot be taken on the Terms agreed for and as to those which you find absolutely too Small, they cannot be sent on any terms on our Acc. Indeed I apprehend you will meet with difficulty—I know not how it can be adjusted better considering the necessity there is for all the Supplies possible than for Montieu to ship them on his own Acc. I have not spoke particularly with him as he is sick & as from yr it does not appear that you had finished the examination of them. M Ross will go for Nantes next week & by him shall forward the particular instructions for Capt. Nicholson &c. My Brother is returned & will take the Brig. I desire may be loaded with Salt as no other article of any Consequence will be sent in her I have not seen Ross since the rec of yrS. I am sorry that Williams as well as we should be disappointed by this misunderstanding but hope you will be able to procure another person equally able to Conduct the Brig, & that she may go with Capt. Nicholson & the others & I shall send down the orders for the Capt. leaving a Blank for his Name which you will fill up properly. As to the making any more Cloths in france nothing can as yet be determined. My private Opinion however is that it is better to send out the Cloth in Bales I have no patience with Mercier & wish heartily we were rid of a fellow who appears to be a perfect trifler & therefore desire he may be held close to his ag or be wholly off. I am &c.

S. D.

P.S. respecting the Dolphin I wish she may be the last that you do any thing with as to the Loading as I have since my last by Peltier had some thoughts of sending her another way You may have her ready to take in & you know she may be loaded in a few Hours. early next week I will write you my final determination.

8 NOVEMBER 1777

Par 1. Capt. Samuel Williams, of Philadelphia, who had been made prisoner when his ship Commerce was captured on 9 July, escaped from England and arrived in Paris in late August. The reference here is to negotiations concerning his conducting a brig to America for Simeon Deane. Captain Anthony Parrey, R.N., to Philip Stephens, 9 July, 1777, NDAR: 475; Silas Deane to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 27 Aug., and 29 Oct. 1777, Deane Papers, 2: 115-16, 204.
SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG

Capt. Young

Sir By ye 3rd of the 4th I learn you will be ready soon for sea. What is necessary to be sent you from hence will be forwarded in the Course of next week I hope you will be ready to set sail immediately after the receipt thereof, & I shall write more particularly by the same Conveyance. I am &c.

S. D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE ETOURDIE,
MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU

[Gironde] du samedy 8me [novembre]
il ne nous est rien venu de bordeaux. les insurgent1 sont parti ce matin ils ont salué le pavillon de cinq vives le roy nous en avons rendu trois.

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Thursday 8th [November]
There is nothing come for us from Bordeaux. The insurgents1 left this morning. They saluted the flag with five shouts of “Long live the king,” we rendered them three.

D, FrPNA, Marine B4 147, fol. 287.

VENTURA GOMEZ DE LA TORRE AND BARRENA TO DEGRUCHY AND FIOTT


“IT is with the greatest concern that we must advise You that the Nancy & Mary, Thomas Aubin master, coming to us from Newfoundland with about 2,000 Quintals fish, & some oil, was taken the 28 ulto by the American Privateer the Neptune Cap: Nathaniel Swasey in the latitude 44.15. north, longitude 12 d. West: the prize was sent into Santoña, and the Cap: and crew, as also Mr: LeGeyt the agent were sent ashore in one of our Spanish Boats, Six Miles East of this place, they are now here, and I have made them enter a protest which we shall transmit You next post, that You may be able to settle with the Underwriters, wishing heartily our worthy friend Mr: Fiott may be fully covered.” “We are sorry to see the Newfoundland Trade so much exposed, that it is with great difficulty any Vessell coming to this place can avoid falling into the hands of American privateers that infest our Coast, but their force is [so] inconsiderable that a few of Your cutters would soon destroy them. We refer You to our next & Remain &c. &c.”

London 4 December 1777. The above is a true Extract of the Letter received by us.

DeGruchy & Fiott

November 10

PAUL WENTWORTH TO THE EARL OF SUFFOLK

My Lord

I Received this afternoon a Letter from Mr. Edwards dated the 31 Oct. & sent by a private Hand—who writes on the Letter He hopes to return to P—this week, & dates it from Miss Simpkins Essex Street Strand No. 42—where trusty Messengers have frequently lodged—Deane had been twice to Fontainbleau for the answer from Spain, & returned to P—to wait another week. They suspect amusement. The Court of France have bought the Ships Building at Amsteln by Boux for Deane and Franklin—and are going to Build many Frigates on the same Plan—Eight are already on the Stocks to Carry 32–24 Pdr. Brass Cannon on one Deck. M. Sartine has given Boux all his confidence. Beaumarchais writes from Rochefort that His ship of the Line (the Hippopotame) will sail in three weeks with Arms, Artillery, Cloathing, Tents & ammunition. Ks of Prussia's agent had proposed a secret meeting, but Ald: Lee has taken Possession of the Business, so nothing can be done. Ar: Lee has taken a House & a Mistress—Izard is disgusted at the distance they observe towards him—Carmichael getting ready to go to America—Hinson came to England and displeased D & E.—They are told some mony may be borrowed in Holland, and are engraving Notes to be passed for the Sums received. You have heard of many armed vessels fitting & gone to America—Many more than you have heard of & some of great force are going; the particulars of which you shall know soon. This is all that is worth any notice—Except his own affairs, which he has lately pressed with unremitted attention: I have the Honor to recommend His plea to Your Lordships consideration, and that of being [&c.]

Poland Street [London].

P. Wentworth.

10 Nov: 1777.

---

DEPOSITION OF EDWARD SYMONDS

Town & County of Poole

This day appear'd before me, John Bird Esq: Mayor & one of His Majestys justices of the Peace for the said Town & County, Edward Simmonds late Master of the Brig William & Polly, who on his Oath declares that on his Passage from Newfoundland to Bilboa, in Spain laden with dry'd Cod Fish, the said Brig was taken by an American Privateer call'd the Success of 8 Guns; & that he & his crew were by the said Privateer made Prisoners, & carried to the Port of Bilboa where he had his liberty, but the said Brig remains still sequester'd, that he arrived at Bilboa aforesaid the 2nd. Octr 1777 & left it the 24th of the same Month.
That during his stay there the Brigantine *Mercury* whereof John Pearce was late Master (& which he has been inform’d was the Property of Messrs. John & Young Green of the said Town of Poole) was brought into the aforesaid Port of Bilboa as a Prize captur’d by some American Privateer, & that he has some reason to think & verily believes that the Property of said Vessel & Cargo was alter’d by the aforesaid Capture; as he saw not Captn. John Pearce or any of his Crew on board her, & he further saith, that the Cargo of the Brig *Mercury* was discharg’d there, and also saith that he Knew the said Brigantine to be the *Mercury* aforesaid, having seen her several times at Poole, & he is convinced it was the same Vessel, she having formerly been a Snow & the Tack holes still remain in her Gunwale, & the Name of the Vessel which was wrote in her stern is eraz’d, save & except the Capital Letter M. which he plainly discern’d.

Edw’d Symonds

Sworn before me John Bird Mayor
This 10th day of November 1777

---

**Jacques Gruel and Company to Colonel William Aylett**

Sir, 

Nantz 10th. November 1777—

Conformably to our precedent Letters 1 which We have the honour to confirm by this one, We have the pleasure to inform you, that We have Shipped by the French Vessel le *Chavigry*,—Capt. Mr. Etienne Fourneau, under the mark VIR, to be delivered to Messieurs Fourneau merchants at the Cape François, the goods mentioned in the Envoice here inclosed 2 . . . Viz—

Forty Chests which contains altogether Thousand new guns, with their Bayonets and Rammers (these are exactly the Same as those which are used now by the French infantry)—One Chest which contains 500 gun’s locks: Twenty three Bales which contain altogether 161 Pieces of Tent cloth:—One Box in which are inclosed 200 Pounds of white thread: Two hundred and Twenty Seven pieces Etamines 3 Viz 71 pieces blues, 78 whites, and 78 Red. Ten Bales which contain altogether 500 dozens of wollen Stockings: Six chest & One caske which contain 3000 common hats: Eleven casks of Brimstone, and Ten Barils of tin in leafs, the whole amounting with the Charges, Freight and the Insurance from Nantz to Cape François, as per Envoice, to Seventy Seven thousand and thirteen livres, twelve Sols, and two deniers, of which Sum you will be Kind to credit us—

We have directed the above Said goods to the consignment of the house of commerce of Mr. Gruel, Mr. Fourneau & Cie merchants at the CapeFrançois, with order to deliver them to the care of Mr. Rauleigh Colston, or to the Agent of the State of Virginia, at the said Cape François, and—if in case none of these gentlemen are there to reclaim the said goods, We recommand expressly Mr. Fourneau & Cie to keep them by at your disposition, or else for them to Ship them according to the Orders they should receive from you.—So by this our dispositions are entirely exact according to what We had the honour to write you, by our last, on account of our Sending you this goods—
According to your Orders by your letter of the 25 of April last, We have insured the said goods shiped on board le Chavigny bound to the Cape François, the prime cost amounting to Seventy thousand livres, insurance to two and one quarter per Cent. Absolutely we could not procure the Insurance for any of your harbours, as you mentioned to us.

We had had the pleasure to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr John King when he was in this Town, & that of Dealing with him for the furniture of sundry merchandizes for the State of Virginia. We are now pretty much busy at the fitting out of a French Vessel, in which We Shall Ship a parcel of merchandizes, that We agreed with you for. We expect the Vessel will be ready to Sail, at about 20 or 30 days, and we Shall by happy to hear of his safe arrival, and in mean time that of the goods to their proper destination, and more So to your own Satisfaction

We are daily expecting the arrival of some Vessels that you mentioned to us. We think this time of the year will be of a great Service to them: We wish it to be so, especially on account of your proper Interest We have the honour to be &c

(Signed) J Gruel & Co

(A Translation)


2. Not printed.
3. Here there is a mark, “+”, referring to a comment in the margin, “+ A Sort of light French Stuff for colours.”

November 12

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAINS

SAMUEL BARRINGTON, R.N., AND GEORGE VANDEPUT, R.N.

You are hereby required and directed, to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed & cruize, on the Meridian of Cape Finisterre, between the Latitudes of 46° 00' & 47° 00'. North, for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty’s Subjects, and diligently to look out for, & to use your best endeavours to take, or destroy, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue, upon the above mention’d Station & Service, for the space of one Month after you get between those Latitudes; and then make the best of your way back to Plymouth Sound & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c. the 12th Nov 1777.

Sandwich
H. Penton
H Palliser

Hble Captn Barrington, P of Wales, Plym.
Vandeput, Asia, Plym... 44° 00'. & 45° 11'.

to Spithead

By &c. P.S.

LB, UkLPR, Adm. 2/103, 413.
LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO, R.N.

Having ordered the Stores of the Ship you command to be completed to a proper proportion for Channel Service and her Provisions for four Months with all Species except Beer of which she is to have as much as she can conveniently stow & to be supplied with a proportion of Spirits for one Month in lieu of the remainder, you are hereby required and directed to use the utmost dispatch (so far as the same may depend upon you) in getting on board such an additional quantity of Stores & Provisions as may be necessary for those purposes; & then put to Sea, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather, & proceed & cruise, from five to twenty Leagues North from Cape Finisterre, for the protection of the Trade of His Maj's Subjects & diligently to look out for, and to use your best endeavour to take, or destroy, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue upon the abovemention'd Station & Service for the Space of one Month after you make Cape Finisterre, & then make the best of your way to Spithead, & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c 12 Nov't 1777.

Sandwich
H. Penton

Capt'n Varlo, Bedford, Plymouth
By &c. P.S.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 413–14.

JAMES BABSON TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mr' Beniaman Francklen Esq'

Sir

This Days post from Nantes brought me the Disagable a Counts of the Sea prisers tacking by me & Cap' Kendrick to be Condemned to yours [use] of the King France I Cannot Se on what grounes or authoruity thay have for So Doing, as I had agood Commision for tacking of Saiad Shipes, I Neiver thought of their Doing aney thing futher then oarding them out again & Sir I Cant help thincking if the Coart of France New how fair I am Now Distressed thay would Realive me at this time Sir I Left Nantes as Mr' Williams thought it bettor that I should be out of the way I Contin-ued Crausing Till the Second of this month my Stores being almost out was oblige to Cum to this port I have Now Fortey Eight Seamen besides offersors Down with the Small pox & No frind Nor a farthing to Supply my Self with Stores to proced on aNother Crause when my peple have Recvard their Sicknell, the ship thay have Tack-ing from me has ben my Last Dependance to fit my Versell for a Nother Crause But Sir with oute Sum Releaf must must lay up my Versell It is Not In my power to Right the gent' oaners of my Versell the affair as I No Not on what foundashon thay have for tacking the Ships from us & Sir must beg you would favour me with a line & am Sir your Obt & Verey Humble Sarvent

James Babson
November 13

MARQUIS D’OSSUN TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

N° 126.

Monsieur,

à L’Escurial Le 13. 9\textsuperscript{e} 1777.

J’ai reçu la lettre que vous m’avez fait l’honneur de m’écrire le 31. du mois dernier N° 67.

J’avais prévu, Monsieur, que la réponse de M. Le C\textsuperscript{e} de Floride Blanche Sur les Secours pécuniaires à donner par l’Espagne aux Américains ne vous paroitrois pas conséquente aux principes établis dans Sa reponse, même Sur l’intérêt majeur que la france et l’Espagne ont à ce que les Colonies Angloises demeurent indépendantes, ou au moins que leur guerre contre la Métropole Se prolonge assez, pour affoiblir et user les forces des deux atheletes. En effet ce n’est pas le cas de Se borner à donner des Secours médiocres et de grandes esperances; Les considerations exposées dans votre depeche le demontrent.\textsuperscript{1}

Quelques Chefs font aller toute la machine, S’ils Se croyent abandonnés, S’ils Sont Secourus trop foiblement, ils peuvent Se discourager, l’entousiasme de la re-volte et de l’indépendance S’affoiblir dans les peuples qu’ils conduisent, et ces peup-les qui Souffrent de toutes les façons, peuvent leur forcer la main pour un accom-modement, il faut des armes, des vetemens, des munitions, pour faire la guerre et c’est dans ce moment qu’on doit fournir aux americains les moyens d’assurer ces ob-jects, afin qu’ils puissent Soutenir les efforts redoublés de l’angleterre la campagne prochaine.

Lorsque Votre expedition, Monsieur, du 3 de ce mois me parvint, je n’attachai Sans Succès à fixer le Roi Catholique et Son ministre à ce point principal et à les en-gager de donner comme la france 3 millions de livres, le plusôt qu’il Seroit possi-ble ou au moins à déterminer l’époque des payemens de cette Somme, afin que les députés du congres, pussent trouver du crédit pour les choses indispensables ment necessaires à leurs commettans.\textsuperscript{2}

Je n’ai pas communiqué votre lettre à M. le Comte de floride blanche, je lui ai Seulement dit que Sa M\textsuperscript{e} ne S’ettoit pas encore décidée d’après le memoire de la Cour d’Espagne, et que vous m’aviez mandé que vous ne manqueriez de m’in-struire de la resolution du Roi, aussitôt qu’il en auroit pris une. J’ai insisté par voye d’insinuation auprès de ce ministre Sur les raisons qui doivent engager la france et encore plus l’Espagne à Secourir promptement et Suffisament les Insurgens; Je n’ai pas gagné du terrain dans ce premier entretien; M le Comte de floride blanche a persisté dans l’opinion qu’il falloît les aider, et que trois millions de livres de la part
de l'Espagne ne Seroient pas une Somme trop considérable, mais qu'il falloït leur donner ces Secours peu à peu, en nourrissant leurs esperances; Il m'a dit que Sa M° Cath° etoit irritée de ce qu'un de leurs Corsaires avoit enlevé dernièrement un vaisseau françois venant de Londres à Cadix, chargé de marchandises angloises appartenantes à des Espagnols, et que ce monarque avoit fait Suspendre la remise aux députés du Congrès d'une Somme qu'il avoit ordonné qu'on leur fit toucher; Que les Corsaires Anglo americains avoient pris deux autres Bâtiments Espagnols et que le Roi Catholique vouloit Savor à quoi S'en tenir vis à vis des Colonies revoltées, et ce que pouvoient et diroient leurs députés Sur les excès dont il est question. J'ai représenté à M. le Comte de floride blanche que la france devoit être plus irritée que l'Espagne, à cause de la violence et de l'insulte faite à Son pavillon, mais qu'une Puissance quelconque quoique bien intentionnée ne pouvoit pas empêcher qu'un de Ses Corsaires commit des excès, Que ce qu'elle pouvoit et devoir faire, etoit de le châtier et de reparer le dommage; Qu'il ne falloit pas pour un pareil grief perdre de vue la convenance et la nécessité de donner des Secours prompts aux Colonies angloises. Ce Ministre est convenu du principe, mais il a ajouté que Sa M° Cath° avoit voulu faire connoitre Son ressentiment aux Députés du Congres, et qu'elle n'en etois pas moins disposée dans le fonds à leur faire administrer des Secours.5

Je continuerai, Monsieur, à m'entretenir Sur cette matière avec M. le Comte de floride blanche dans le Sens que vous m'avez prescrit; Je l'ai assuré, Selon vos ordres, que nous etions parfaitement d'accord avec lui Sur les mesures de circumspection et de prudence qu'il a recommandées, et que quoique la france fasse des avances aux americains, elle veillera à ce qu'ïls ne puissent pas en abuser et la compromettre, et avec la condition de discontinuer Ses liberalités, du moment où il y aura lieu à une négociation pour la paix entre les Colonies et leur metropole.6

Je vous ai annoncé, Monsieur, dans ma derniere lettre datée de Madrid que j'aurois l'honneur de vous informer d'une confidence que S. M. Cath° a daigné me faire relativement au Portugal; Ce monarque m'a dit qu'il avoit parlé à la Reine Sa Soeur de la convenance réciproque qu'il y avoit à former une alliance entre le Portugal, l'Espagne et la france, Que cette princesse S'y etoit montrée disposée, et qu'elle l'avoit assuré que la Reine Sa fille et le Roi Son gendre feroient ce qu'elle voudroit à cet égard.7 J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c.]

[Translation]

N° 126.


I have received the letter which you did me the honour to write to me on the 31st ultimo, No. 67.

I had foreseen, Sir, that the reply of Count de Florida Blanca concerning the pecuniary aid to be given by Spain to the Americans would not appear to you to be consistent with the principles laid down in his reply, especially regarding the great importance to France and Spain that the English Colonies should remain independent, or at least that their war against the mother-country should continue long enough to weaken and wear out the strength of the two combatants. Indeed, it is not the time to limit oneself to giving only moderate aid and great hopes; this is proved by the considerations set forth in your despatch.1
A few leaders make the whole machine work; if they think themselves abandoned, if they receive too little support, they may be discouraged, the enthusiasm of revolt and independence may grow weak in the people they lead, and these people, who are suffering in every way, may force them to come to an agreement. Arms, clothing and munitions are wanted for the war, and this is the moment to furnish the Americans with the means of securing these things, in order that they may be able to bear the redoubled efforts of England in the next campaign.

When your despatch, Sir, of the 3rd instant reached me, I endeavoured unsuccessfully to bring the Catholic King and his Minister to a decision on the principal point, and to induce them to give, like France, three million livres as soon as possible, or at least to fix the period for the payment of this sum, in order that the Deputies from Congress might find credit for the things which are indispensably necessary to their constituents.

I did not communicate your letter to Count de Florida Blanca, I merely told him that His Majesty had not yet decided, in accordance with the memorandum of the Court of Spain, and that you had told me that you would not fail to inform me of the King's decision, as soon as he had come to one. I insisted, by means of insinuation with that Minister, on the reasons which should induce France, and still more Spain, to promptly and sufficiently help the insurgents. I did not gain ground in this first conversation; Count de Florida Blanca persisted in the opinion that it was necessary to help them, and that three million livres from Spain would not be too large a sum, but that this help should be given them little by little, while feeding their hopes. He told me that His Catholic Majesty was irritated because one of their privateers had recently carried off a French vessel going from London to Cadiz, laden with English goods belonging to some Spaniards, and that that monarch had caused the payment of a sum of money, which he had ordered to be given to the Deputies of Congress, to be suspended; that the Anglo-American privateers had captured two other Spanish vessels, and that the Catholic King wished to know on what terms he was with the revolted Colonies, and what their Deputies could do and would say regarding the excesses in question. I represented to Count de Florida Blanca that France ought to be more irritated than Spain, because of the violence and insult done to her flag; but that no Power, however well-intentioned, could prevent one of its privateers committing excesses; that what it could and ought to do was to punish it and make good the damage; that we must not, for such a grievance, lose sight of the desirability and necessity of giving prompt aid to the English Colonies. That Minister agreed with the principle, but added that His Catholic Majesty had wished to make his resentment known to the Deputies from Congress, and that he was none the less disposed at bottom to cause aid to be given them.

I shall continue, Sir, to converse on this matter with Count de Florida Blanca in the terms you have prescribed to me; I have assured him, according to your orders, that we were perfectly in accord with him regarding the measures of circumspection and prudence which he recommended; and that, although France is making advances to the Americans, she will see that they do not abuse them and compromise her, making it a condition to discontinue her liberalities, the moment a negotiation for peace takes place between the Colonies and their mother-country.

I announced to you, Sir, in my last letter dated from Madrid, that I should have the honour of informing you of a secret which His Catholic Majesty has deigned to
confide to me relative to Portugal; this monarch told me that he had spoken to the Queen his sister of the mutual convenience there would be in forming an alliance between Portugal, Spain and France; that that Princess had shewn herself disposed to it, and that she had assured him that the Queen her daughter and the King her son-in-law would do as she wished in this respect. I have the honour to be [etc.]

Ossun.

November 14

WILLIAM MCCREERY TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen [Bordeaux, ca. 14 Nov. 1777] 1

A Prize 2 having been lately made between the Mouth of this River, & the Light-house call’d Cordouan, by an American Privateer, and a Letter of Marque, which has occasion’d much talk at this place, much censure to me, as part owner of the latter, and many Letters to the English ambassador; the purport of which I understand, is, that I, as an owner shou’d be made responsible for, Said Prize. I humbly crave the Liberty to relate to you, in as few words as I can express it, the real State of the case.

I arrived at this place on the 3rd of September last in the above mention’d Letter of Marque call’d the Swallow, John Marten Master, Navigated by himself, his Mate, and Eight foremast Men. From that time to the latter end of October the vessel was detain’d by repairs, and by my going to Paris and afterwards collecting such Goods as I wanted for American consumption. On the 30th Ultmo I gave him his Sailing Orders and his being deep loaded with valuable Goods, only Eight Men, some of whom
were sick I was sensible that if he cruized for the enemys Ships, he must inevitably loose the Vessel, their Ships being at present chiefly Arm'd, & certainly better Man-n'd than he is. I therefore gave him express orders to proceed immediatly for America, and avoid speaking any Vessel on the passage. He left this place the 1st. Ins' and by various accidents was detain'd in the River untill the 11th when he wrote me by the Pilot who carried him out, that Six of his Eight Men had contracted disorders at Bordeaux which then renderd them allmost incapable of doing Ships Duty, & that he was going out in Company with Capt'n Hart, who promised to conduct him 700 Leagues to the Westward.

By what Capt'n Hawkins (late Master of the Prize) His People, & the Pilot, have said, it appears to me, that they fell in with this Vessel about nine or Ten Leagues from the Land, and gave her chase, that when she got near the Land, Captain Hart, obliged Captain Martain to take a Number of his People on board the Swallow, and follow her amongst the Shoals, which he very imprudently did in the first place breaking his orders, and, exposing the Vessel & Cargo to very great danger in a place where he had no acquaintance of the Channel.

Tho' it must appear quite plane to every impartial Man, that I am not in the least censurable in this affair, I understand that great pains have been taken to make me appear quite culpable—espescially to the English Ambassador at Paris, who, no doubt, will, or has, made application to the Minister, and he, perhaps, to render some satisfaction, may give orders for my imprisonment: I have therefore, most humbly to entreat, that shou'd such a procedure take place, you will be so good as to interpose on my behalf, & urge these reasons for my enlargement.

Exclusive of any bad consequences that may arise to me from this disagreeable affair—It gives me much concern that any of our Vessels shou'd attempt making a Prize, so near to any French Port, as it is in reality breaking the Neutrality of that Port, & may eventually prove the loss of its trade to us.—All that I can offer in their excuse, is—that they had a pressident from the Enemy in the instance of the three Carolina ships—and I believe did not know the regulation in regard to the distance that Captures might be made. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

Will McCreery

P.S. The Portsmouth Cap: Hart was Arm'd with 22 Carreage Guns 14 Swivells & 110 Men. The Swallow of about 25 Tons had Four Small Hawitzer Mounted as Swivells, & as many Swivells.—


1. The editors of the Papers of Benjamin Franklin assign this date since the episode the letter discusses was known at Bordeaux this day. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 155–57.

2. Brig Emperor of Germany, Robert Hawkins, master.

ETIENNE-HONORÉ DUPLESSIS DE MONGELAS TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Extrait d’une lettre écrite a M. de Sartine par M. de Mongelas Consul général à Cadix le 14. 9bre. 1777.

Sur le compte que j’avois rendu a M. le M'^ D’Ossun, de l’enleveMENTS du Brig-antin le Pompie, de Nantes, conduit à Gibraltar par la fregate de guerre anglaise L’entreprise, S. Exe vient de me faire savoir par M. Boyetet 1 que je devois faire reclamer
ce Batiment, sa cargaison, son Equipage, ses passagers. je vais former cette reclama-

tion, la fonder sur les raisons les plus propres a detruire l’arrêtement de ce navire.

Je ferai valoir que le vaisseau étant françois, son équipage de même, ses expeditions
en règle pour une colonie françoise, les anglois n’ont eu aucun droit de L’arrêter,
d’autant qu’il n’étot point hors de route, et qu’il ne portoit aucun effet de contre-
bande, seule et unique circonstance qui pouvoit les autoriser a L’arrêter. J’ajouterai
que le pavillon doit sauver les marchandises hors le cas de contrebande, que quoique
les anglois ayant annoncé qu’ils prendroient les effets appartenants a des americains
sous pavillon neutre, cette declaration arbitraire ne peut detruire les capitulations
formelles des traités; que nous ne connoissons que ceux cy; que la declaration qu’a
fait le passager americain, qu’il itoit proprietaire du navire et de la cargaison n’anec-
tit point la force de ce motif; et que la france ne connoit de vrai proprietaire que
cei qui conste par les expeditions. Voila Mgr les raisons que je vais rassembler, et
envoyer au Captn Legrand afin que de concert avec M. Albert il puisse fonder sa
reclamation au tribunal de L’amirauté, j’enjoindray a M. Albert de me remettre une
copie authentique de cette reclamation, et que M. Boyetet me dit de vous envoyer,
Mgr Lorsqu’elle me parviene mais surtout je vais bien recommander a M. Albert de
veiller a la sureté de L’Equipage de ce Batiment.

[Translation]

Extract from a letter written to de Sartine by de Mongelas, Consul General at Cadiz,
dated 14 November 1777

In regards to the report I had made to the Marquis d’Ossun, about the seizure
of the brigantine Pompee, out of Nantes, and escorted to Gibraltar by the English
frigate Enterprise, His Excellency has just informed me through M. Boyetet ¹ that I am
to issue a demand for the return of this ship, its cargo, its crew, and its passengers. I
shall draw up this demand, justifying it with pertinent reasons so as to overturn the
seizure of this ship. I shall emphasize the point that since the vessel is French, its crew
likewise, its shipping papers appropriate for a French colony, the English had no
right to seize it, especially since it was not off course, and was carrying no contra-
band, the unique circumstance that might justify their seizing the ship. I shall add
that the flag must serve as a safeguard for merchandise, except for contraband; that
although the English had given notice that they would take effects belonging to Amer-
icans sailing under a neutral flag, this arbitrary statement cannot cancel out the for-
mal terms of treaties; that we recognize only the latter; that the statement made by
the American passenger, that he was the owner of the ship and of its cargo, does not
destroy the force of this argument; and that France recognizes as the real owner only
the one who is verified by the ship’s papers. Those are the reasons, my Lord, that I
must put together and send to Captain Legrand so that he, in concert with M. Al-
bert, can justify his demand to the Admiralty Court. I shall direct M. Albert to send
a certified copy of the demand, which M. Boyetet has told me to send to you, my
Lord, when it reaches me. Above all, however, I shall certainly recommend to M. Al-
bert that he see to the safety of the ship’s crew.

avec la lettre de ce Minst du 15 Xbre. 1777.”; and “14. 9bre. 1777.”

¹. French chargé des affaires de la Marine et du commerce at Madrid.
November 15

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO LIEUTENANT WILLIAM HILLS, R.N.

Whereas we have received information that several Privatiers, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America, are cruizing between Cape Pinas & Bilboa in order to intercept the Newfoundland Ships & other Trade of His Majesty's Subjects bound that way (which Privatiers are of very inconsiderable force), And that there is, in that Port, a Ship, call'd the Rambler, laden with a large quantity of Rigging Harpoons & other Goods bound, as it is said, to Hudson's Straits to whale, & Trade with the Esquimaux Indians, & furnished with English, French, Spanish and American Papers & Colours, as more particularly mentioned in the inclosed Extract of the said Intelligence; you are hereby required & directed to put to Sea, in the Cutter you command, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & Cruize, between the abovementioned Cape & Cape Machacaca [Machichaco], for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects & to use your best endeavours to take or destroy the abovementioned, or any other, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned, which you may be able to come up with

You are to continue, upon the above Station (to which we shall also send the Minerva or some other Frigate) for the space of one Month, after your arrival thereupon; and then make the best of your way back to England; Repairing into Plymouth Sound, where you are to remain until you receive further order; and sending us an account of your arrival & proceedings

You are to keep a good look out for the abovementioned Ship the Rambler, if she should put to Sea; and, in case you shall be convinced that she belongs to any of the Colonies abovementioned, to use your best endeavours to seize her & bring her into Port. Given &c

15th Nov 1777

Sandwich

Lieut Hills—Sprightly—Cutt Downes

H Penton

By &c PS By Express at 9 PM

H Palliser


PHILIP STEPHENS TO WILLIAM EDEN

S

My Lords Commrs. of the Admty having received a Letter from Mr J: Lewis, Deputy Town Clerk of Bristol, acquainting them by direction of the Mayor of that City, that the Levant a Merchant Ship of that Port, having retaken a Vessel called the Dover which had been taken in her Voyage from Oporto to London by a Vessel called the Civil Usage of Newbury in New Hampshire, and that the Prize Master having delivered up to the Mayor John Trott and John Pearson, and they being charged on Oath with being part of the Crew of the Civil Usage at the time of taking the Dover, and with being on board her conducting her to some Port in America, the said Two Men are committed to the Goal of that City for the said Felony and Piracy;
I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith for Lord Suffolk's information; And am [&c.]

Php Stephens


SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Dear Sir

Paris Nov 15. 1777

I have only one moment to write you Pr this Post, M' Chaumont writes Mr Peltier which he will communicate to you, it is really surprizing how I should be so misunderstanded by Mr Peltier—but my Letter Pr Mr Ross shall explain it meantime I think with Mr Chaumont that the Lyon should be sold & then I hope no objection will be made to her being equipp'd as French Property

But I will also write you more particularly on this Subject, by Mr Ross who goes off tomorrow morning—Mean time I am [&c.] SD

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "M' Williams—"
Mr Williams—

Sir

Yours by Capt. Nicholson are before us. M't Deanes Lettres of yesterday proposed passing a Sale of the Lyon & sending her out as french Property, that is that she go down the River as commanded by the french Captain, and that Captain Nicholson instead of returning to Nantes go directly to meet her, at the mouth of the River & take the Command. Of the possibility as well as practicability of Such a measure you are the best judge—As to the freight on M't Montieu's ship we have no Objection to the price of 120 Livre@ ton, payable in Tobacco at the Current Price or payable in Europe on the return of the Vessel, but M't Peltier was mistaken in supposing that the prices of the Tobacco could be ascertained here and still more so in supposing that it could be fixed at 30 Livre@ quintal—as to the Destination Boston & other Eastern Port were mentioned on acc of their being most likely to be free from English Cruisers. M't Peltiers Objections have weight with them on acc of the returns, but it will not answer on any Terms to have the Vessels go South of Virginia the Ports of N. Carolina will not admit them. if therefore M't Peltier will agree for Virginia that Objection will be obviated, but we conceive that it would be better if possible to have more certain intelligence of the Operations of Gen't Howe before the final Orders are given—this Cannot detain us many Days, probably not beyond the next Post from England immediately after which we will write you further—But if M't Peltier is wholly off freighting on any Terms, you must endeavour to take up a proper Vessel for the goods, on the best Terms you can—M't Ross has a vessel for Sale at L'orient but cannot learn either her burthen or State, he will be able to inform you soon after his arrival at Nantes You can, if necessary, make the Sale of the Lyon to M't Chaumont who we prefer in this affair and let the expedition go on in his name, as you proposed in yours which indeed appears to be the only probable method left us. as to the Cutter you appear at this instant to have use for her at Nantes our final determination as to her may therefore be deferred a few days—Your Opinion respecting her is undoubtedly just. please to inform us what quantity of goods she will carry if fitted out as a packet, & what number of Seamen will be necessary for her—We shall write you as we find the situation of things here, and are [&c]

B. F.
S. D.

P.S. We say 110 Livre@ but if it cannot be had for that you may give 120 if no vessel can be had for Less, if M't Peltier insist on his Vessels going to Virginia the Lyon it is probable cannot accompany them the whole Voyage at Least we cannot at present engage farther than off the Coast of Europe, as we must prefer sending the Lyon Northward, unless the Situation of Affairs in America should appear to alter before her going out.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "M't Williams."

1. Williams to Benjamin Franklin, 11 Nov., in Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 151–52, and Williams to Silas Deane, 11 Nov., not found.

2. See the two letters of Deane to Williams of 15 Nov., above.

3. Arthur Lee's copy of this letter has "110," which, in light of the postscript, was probably what was intended here. ViU, Lee Family Papers.

William Hodge to Captain Gustavus Conyngham

Paris Nov'r 15th. 1777.

Dear Sir—

This is to request that you would prepare yourself for Sea, and wait till I arrive in Spain, or till you receive orders to proceed to Sea, I shall not be able to leave this for two weeks from this time. You will please not to mention to any one that you expect me,

Nothing else particular—from your friend & Hble Ser't

Wm Hodge

A Copy

Copy, ScHi, Henry Laurens Papers.

Arthur Lee to Joseph Garдоqui and Sons

Paris, November 15, 1777.

Gentlemen: I have learned from America that there was a difficulty on the arrival of the supplies sent to America through your house in knowing whether they were for Congress or for Mr. Gerry to whom they were consigned. Possibly you explained that to Mr. Gerry, and his absence might have occasioned the doubt. At all events you will have the goodness in future to write so clearly as to prevent any mistake of that kind.

When any prize made by any Continental armed vessel in the service of the United States is sent into Bilboa or the adjacent port, you have my authority to sell her to the best advantage, reserving half the proceeds for the Congress, at my disposal, as their representative in Spain. The other half is the property of the captain and the crew.

I beg you will inform me, by return of post, what interest you give for money put into your hands. They give here at the rate of six per cent., on condition that it be not drawn out of their hands under one month's notice. If your terms are as good, I should prefer depositing what I have with you. I have the honor to be, etc..

Arthur Lee.


Jacques-Donatien Le Ray de Chaumont to [Gabriel de Sartine?]


Monseigneur

J'ai été informé hier au Soir, que deux Batimens Américans, Le Portsmouth et l'Industrie, sortis depuis peu de jours, ayant eù permission de mettre dehors, après avoir été visité à Poülluc, et gardés deux jours, par la Frigate l'Etourdrie actuellement à ce moûillage, pour donner le Tems aux Batimens Anglois, qui étoient au bas de la Riviere de prendre le large; avoient arrêté dans la passe de grave, un Batiment venant Corck, chargé de Boeuf et de Beure pour le Compte de S' Galois, correspondant et
pourvoyeur des Régisseurs de la Marine. Je viens dans le moment d’entendre la Capitaine Anglois, et j’ai l’honneur de vous rendre le rapport qu’il fait.

Le 11. 9bro. 1777. Le Navire l’Empereur d’allemagne de Cork, Capitaine Robert Hawkins venant de Cork chargé de Boeuf et Beure, ayant un Pilote de Royan à bord, nommé Doussier, et etant par le Travers de Cordouan pour entrer en Riviere de Bordeaux, il a aperçu deux Bâtimens, qui étoient dans l’ouest de Cordouan à 3 a 4 lieues au large, Le Pilote lui ayant dit que c’étoit un Corsaire americain et un Goëlette marchande qui étoient sortis de la Riviere le même jour 11., Il força de Voile pour Entrer en Riviere; mais le Corsaire voyant qu’il ne pourroit pas l’atteindre, mis sa Chaloupe a la Mer, et Arma la petite Goëlette marchande qui étoit avec lui, qu’ils entrèrent dans la Riviere par la passe du Nord, et vinrent à sa rencontre à la passe de Grave, dans laquelle ils l’ont pris et mené au large à bord du Corsaire American, le Portsmouth, Capitaine Jean Hart, qui l’a renvoyé avec son Equipage dans la Chaloupe du Pilote qu’il avoit à bord, avec 30 freguins de Beurre qu’il lui a donnés, dont 10 pour un Passager qu’il avoit à son bord.

J’ai ecrie hier à M. de Montbas le Raport qui m’avoit été fait par le Sr. Galois, je l’instruirai aujourd’hui du détail que je viens, Monseigneur, de vous rendre. Je suis [&c.]

(Signé)

Translation

15 NOVEMBER 1777

My Lord

I was informed yesterday evening that two American ships, the Portsmouth and the Industry, which had departed a few days ago with permission to go outside after having been searched at Pauillac and kept two days by the frigate Etourdie, now at anchor here, in order to give time to English ships that were at the mouth of the river to get out to sea, had stopped in the Grave channel a ship coming from Cork loaded with beef and butter for the account of Sr. Galois, correspondent and purveyor to the Stewards of the Marine. I have just this moment interviewed the English captain and I have the honor to enclose his report.

The 11 November 1777 the ship Emperor of Germany of Cork, Captain Robert Hawkins, coming from Cork loaded with beef and butter, having on board a pilot from Royan by the name of Doussier and while just at Cordouan ready to enter the Bordeaux river, he saw two ships to the west of Cordouan 3 or 4 leagues toward the open sea. The pilot having told him it was an American privateer and a merchant schooner which had left the river the same day, the 11th, he crammed on sail to enter the river. But the privateer, seeing he could not make it, put his yawl overboard and manned the little merchant schooner which was with him. They entered the river by the north channel and came on him in the Grave channel in which they took him and carried him outside on board the American privateer, the Portsmouth, Captain John Hart, who sent him back with his crew in the yawl of the pilot whom he had on board, with 30 firkins of butter, of which 10 for a passenger whom he had on board.

I wrote yesterday to M. de Montbas sending him the report which had been made by Sr. Galois. I will send him today the details which I have just given you. I am [&c.]

(sign)}
November 16 (Sunday)

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Dear Sir

I have seen Mr Montieu since my last & the following are the Articles on which we agreed, Copy of what he promised to write Mr Peltier—Viz—

“Mr Williams shall have Liberty to Ship the Goods he wants to send to America either upon the Challotte or Mercury—

“Three Vessels shall sail in Company with the Frigate (meaning the Lyon[]) & shall go for Portsmouth Boston or Virginia, The freight shall be at One hundred twenty livres Pr Ton, payable in France as soon as News shall be received of the Arrival & delivery of the Goods

“The Vessels to be armed & equipped & every necessary at the Expense of Mr Montieu—NB The Vessels mount one 22 Cannon Six pounders the other 20 four Pounders, & manned in Proportion”

This obviates any disputes as to the payment of the freight in Tobacco & at the same time, as to the Destination of the Vessels; if the Marquis Challotair is the best Sailer you can prefer her, in the disposition of the Goods—

I think the freight is rather high, it is however lower than what has in general been offerd. The Vessels are armed & load with Military Stores, which are Circumstances that ought to influence the Price and as our former authorizd you to go to that Sum, & Montieu actually refusing to take less, I closed it & mention these Particulars that the present may not be consider’d as precedent in Cases different. As to the Frigate & the particular Orders I hope we shall be able to determine on both in a few Days. As it is impossible we can rest much longer in this State of uncertainty— I am [&c.]

SD—


"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE GOLD COAST, NOVEMBER 16."

“For these two months past we have had about 12 sail of ships, with slaves on board, sailed from this and the other ports of Africa, bound to the West Indies, eight of whom we have already had advice of being taken by the American privateers, and carried into either Guadaloupe, Martinico, or some other of the French ports; and our Governor has done all in his power to get them delivered up, but the messenger he sent has returned a few days ago, as he could get no answer.

“We now begin to feel the American war very severely, as provisions of all sorts are very scarce and very dear, having had no fresh supplies for several weeks; and if the war continues much longer, we shall not be able to carry on any trade, as the privateers are continually cruising about this place, and give a very sharp look out."

1. That is, the chief agent of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, at Cape Coast Castle.
MANIFESTS OF *Heureux, Amélia, and Maria Catherine*

[After 16 Nov. 1777, London]

Vrai Chargement du Navire *L'Heureux* Capitne Landais a Marseille—Sçavoir
50 Milliers du Souffre raffiné
48 Pièces de Cannon de Bronze a la Suedoise, de 4 livres de Balle avec leurs affects & avantrains—
20 Mortiers de Bronze avec leurs affects.
20 Mille Boulets de 4 livres
3 Mille Granades
3 Mille Bombes
14500 Outils a Pioniers
8300 Outils tranchants aportis.
269 Outils a Mineurs
150000 Pierre a fusils
25000 Livres de plomb en Balle
2000 Liv: pesant de Mèche
6000 fusils avec leurs Bayonnettes.
1000 fusils d'officiers avec leurs Bayonnettes
500 pairs de pistolets garnis en Cuivre

The *Heureux* was afterwards called the *Flamand*, & passed the streights of Gibraltar the 1st October last.

Sent in the *Amelia* by the way of the W Indies—
19 Brass 4th Calibre field Cannon with Carriages
4 D. without Carriages
6561 Cannon Balls
288 Bombs
200 Barrels powder 100th each.
120 Barrs of Lead
A Quantity of intrenching & Mining tools.

Arrived at Martinico, & reshipped to the Continent of America.

Sent by the Brig *Maria & Catharina*, which sailed from Dunkirk the 12 July for Martinico—
34 Brass 4 pounders with their Carriages.
16872 Cannon Balls
2700 Hand Grenades
Arrived safe at Martinico early in Sept: & Mr Bingham was preparing to dispatch them to Congress.

Sent likewise lately from Dunkirk to be reshipped on the Western Coast of France for Congress
66 large Brass Cannon from 32 to 12 pdr.s. with Carriages &c &c—
36 Brass 4 pounders—fieldpieces—

[Translation of the French portion]
True Lading of the Ship *L'Heureux*, Captain Landais, at Marseille—As follows
50 thousand weight of refined sulphur
48 cannon of Bronze of the Swedish style, of 4 pound balls, with their equipment
and carriages—
20 bronze mortars with their equipment
20 thousand 4-pound balls
3 thousand grenades
3 thousand bombs
14,500 pioner's implements
8,300 entrenching tools
269 miner's tools
150,000 musket shot
25,000 pounds of lead in ball
2,000 pound weight of match
6,000 muskets with their bayonets
1,000 officers' muskets with their bayonets
500 pairs of pistols, trimmed in copper.

Copy, Stevens's Facsimiles, vol. 3, no. 306. The manifests were included in an intelligence report from Paul Wentworth to Lord Suffolk. Wentworth had the manifests by way of "M' Ed—ds," i.e., Edward Bancroft.

November 18

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM DUDINGSTON, R.N.

By &c.

You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed in her without a moments loss of time to Kingroad (Bristol) where you are to remain until you receive further Order; holding yourself in readiness to sail at a moments notice, And, in case you shall receive any information that can be depended upon of any Privatiers belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of N° America being in any part of the Bristol, or S° George's, Channel, you are immediately to proceed in quest of them; taking care to return to Kingroad when you shall have taken, destroyed or driven them away, or shall be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there, & to send to our Secretary an Account of your arrival & proceedings.

Upon the receipt of any such intelligence as is beforemention'd you are to send an Account thereof by the Post to the Officers employed on the Service of raising Men for His Majesty's Fleet at the Ports against their Names express'd on the other side hereof1 with a request that they will communicate the same to the Commanders of any other of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels which may be in the neighbourhood of those Ports respectively to the end that such Commanders may likewise proceed in quest of the said Privatiers & use their best endeavours to take or destroy them, and you are to send a like Account at the same time to the Commanding Officer, for the time being of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels at Plymouth. Given &c. the 18th Novr 1777.
Sandwich
H. Penton
H. Palliser
18 NOVEMBER 1777

By &c. P.S.

Capt. Worth at Liverpool
" Botterell— Whitehaven
" Drummond— Greenock
" Kearney— Cork
" M'Cleverty— Waterford
" Leary— Dublin
Lieu't Dobbs— Belfast.


1. See the list at the end of this letter, where it appears in the letter book.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM

No. 30
St. James's 18th. November 1777

Excellency Lord Grantham  Sir

I have received Your Excellency's Dispatch No 59 and have laid it before the King.

You inform me that the Brig Sally has been sent as a prize into Coruña by the rebel Privateers the Raleigh and Alfred, and Your Excellency makes no observation on this circumstance. I am commanded by His Majesty to acquaint You that He cannot doubt You have taken this opportunity of renewing your representations to M. de Florida Blanca, & strongly urging the necessity of restoring this Vessel to the Owners. The northern ports of Spain have yielded for some time a constant protection to the American Privateers, and their prizes have been sold by the collusion of the Spanish Officers. I have therefore in command from His Majesty direct Your Excellency to renew your representations on this subject, and to endeavour to obtain the earliest information of every Vessel that is carried into any of the Ports of Spain, and claim them for the benefit of the Owners with all the earnestness that so important a point requires. I am &c.

Weymouth

L, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 314. Addressed: "18 Nov 1777/To His Excellency/Lord Grantham/No 30."

THE LONDON CHRONICLE, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1777

London.

The Two Brothers, Elson, from Newfoundland to Oporto, was taken the 23d ult. on the coast of Portugal, by the Revenge privateer, Capt. Cunningham, who ordered seven of the crew to be put in irons, and threatened to keep them confined, unless they would enter on board the privateer.

The George, Capt. Baker, and the Dolphin, Capt. Postbury,1 were both taken by the rebels on the banks of Newfoundland.

1. Both vessels were taken by Massachusetts privateer schooner Speedwell, Philemon Haskel. See Libels Filed in the Massachusetts Maritime Court in the Middle District, 9 and 30 Oct. 1777, above.
Halifax, December 23.

The following is the copy of a letter found on board a brigantine bound from Newfoundland to Bilboa. She had been taken by an armed vessel from New-England, mounting 24 guns, called the *Portsmouth*; and was retaken upon this coast, on her way to Piscataqua, by an armed vessel fitted out from this port by Sir George Collier, commanding the King's ships on this station, and brought in here last Saturday.

*Ship Portsmouth*, Lat. 27. 40. N. Long. 16. W. November 18, 1777.

SIR,

I take this opportunity per Mr. Pearce, to acquaint you, that I left the river of Bourdeaux the 11th instant, in company with Capt. Martin of the schooner *Swallow* of and for Maryland; we soon after fell in with, and took the brig *Emperor of Germany*, from Cork to Bourdeaux, laden with beef and butter; and as the ports of France are shut against American prizes, and she being leaky, ordered her to St. Andrio in Spain, and when sold, the money from the net sales to be remitted to Messrs. S. and J. H. Delap at Bourdeaux, and have likewise wrote them to draw for the same. N. B. As Martin was in company and has a commission, he claim'd one quarter part, and put on board her the same number of men that I did. On the 13th instant I fell in with this brig the *George* from Newfoundland to Bilboa, which I have ordered to Piscataqua. I now propose cruizing between the Island of Madeira and the West-Indies, as the ship is not fit to cruize on the coast of Europe at this season of the year, and the ports of France being shut against us, should have too great a distance to send prizes to America: I have wrote you by three opportunities before this, in all of which I acquainted you with my ill success in my last cruize, having taken but one vessel, the brig *Mercury* from Newfoundland to Barcelona, with 3000 quintals of fish, which I ordered to Bourdeaux, but on her arrival there, she was not allowed to tarry; Mr. Delap therefore sent her to Bilboa, where she was selling her cargo when I left Bourdeaux; I also acquainted you in former letters of the difficulties I met with to procure the liberty to go up the river to clean the ship, and procure stores, &c. after my arrival and as soon as the ship was righted and ballast on board again, I was ordered out of the river, and strictly forbid taking on board any warlike stores or French seamen, and a frigate is kept at the river's mouth for the purpose of over-halling all outward bound vessels. I am surprized the many people who have gone from France to America, have represented the French as being friendly inclined to us, for I am fully assured it is only where they are immediately benefited: as to a war between France and Great-Britain I see no prospect for my own part, and Mr. Delap assured me he saw none, but on the contrary, France is much afraid of Great-Britain, and are apt to think the breach between Great-Britain and the Colonies will be made up this winter, I have had it hinted to me by the first people in Bourdeaux; I can add nothing more at present, but hope our present cruize may be successful, which has been my greatest uneasiness heretofore, as a man's character of late days seems to depend and be determined by his good or ill success. From, Sir, your most obedient, and very humble servant to command,

JOHN HART.

To the Hon. John Langdon, Esq; Portsmouth, New-Hampshire.

(A COPY)
The Quebec Gazette, or La Gazette de Quebec, 26 Mar. 1778. The letter was also published, with slight differences, in the Newport Gazette of 19 Mar. 1778.

1. The Newport Gazette has "lat. 37.49 N. long 16. W.," placing the ship off of the Canary Islands rather than off Portugal.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

EXIMO. S. OE.

Mui S•e mio. El papel de V.E. de 18 del corno' trata de tres Presas enviadas al Ferrol y a la Coruña por los Armadores Americanos y del abuso que de nuestros Puertos hace el llamado Cunningham, sobre qué ha dado sus quesas el Consul Inglés al Comand• General de Galicia.

En uno y otro punto estan dadas las ordenes generales, que ofreci, claras y decisivas y se repiten cada dia los encargos para su puntual observancia. Conforme a ellas se ha verificado en muchos casos la ejecucion y aun la declaracion de mala Presa de algun Bastimento y efectos. Seria justo que los que inflaman a V.E. con noticias de contravenciones le repriesen la observancia que han tenido las ordenes dadas en otros muchos casos.

Sobre las Presas de q• me habla V.E. hai procesos y justificaciones pendientes, relativas a si pueden navegar ó nó y si la carga se pierde. Sin otras justificaciones iguales ó mayores no se puede resolver aqui con seguridad lo que sea justo. Por esta razon he dicho a V.E. que se habia mandado a los comandantes y Gobernadores oir en justicia a los Interesados con apelaciones al consejo de guerra que es el Tribunal propio de estas materias conforme a nuestros Tratados. Por este correo se repiten las mismas ordenes y V.E. podra prevenir a quien corresponda el medio que tiene de obtener justicia.

Lo mismo digo del que se llama abuso de los Puertos: pues para convencer a una Persona, tan graduada como un Comand•, de colusion con los armadores ó sus factores se requieren pruebas formales. Con ellas crea V.E. que el Rei sabe hacerse obdecir, y q• por un efecto de su justicia y de su probidad no faltará sanas [?] a lo que por mi medio se ha dado a entender a V.E: asegurandole que deseo y procuro cultivar la buena correspondencia que reina entre nuestras cortes y servir a V.E. en lo que me mandare. Nro S• la vida de V.E. m•. a• c• d• S• Lor• el R• 18 de Nov• de 1777 [&c.]

El Conde de Floridablanca

P.D. Estan dadas las ordenes sobre el punto del comvoi, que se recela pueda unirse en Bilbao; aunque tengo por incierta la especie, yacida de algun espíritu inquieto, o bullicioso.

Translation

Most Excellent Sir.

Your Excellency's Office of the 18th Instant treats of three Prises sent to Ferrol & to the Coruña by American Privateers, & of the Abuse which Cunningham makes of our Ports, upon which Subject the English Consul has made his Complaints to the Commandant General of Galicia.

Upon both these points, the clear & positive orders which I offered, are given, & daily charges are made for their observance. Agreeably to these they have in many
cases been executed & even some declarations been made of the Illegality of the Captures of some Vessels & Effects.

It would be fair if the Persons who excite your Excellency with Accounts of breaches of these orders, would likewise inform you of the Instances in which they have been observed.

With regard to the Prizes of which your Excellency speaks to me, there are proceedings & Enquiries going forward, as to their sailing or not, & as to the State of their Cargoes. It is impossible to decide here without such Documents what is just. For this reason I acquainted your Ex* that orders had been given to Commandants & governors to hear legally the Claims of the Parties interested with appeals to the Council of war, which is the Tribunal to which according to our Treaties these matters belong. By this very Post the same Orders are repeated & yr Ex* may give notice to the proper Persons of the means of obtaining justice.

I say the same with regard to what is called, Abuse of our Ports. But to convict so dignified a Personage as a Commandant of Collusion with Privateers or their Agents, formal Proofs are necessary. Believe me, that were there such, the King knows how to make himself obeyed & that out of his Justice & Probity he will never be wanting in supporting, what has at any time been communicated by me to yr Ex*. I assure you at the same Time that I desire & endeavour to cultivate the good Harmony which exists between our Courts, & to serve yr Ex* in your Commands. God grant yr Ex* long life & S* Lorenzo. 18 Nov 1777.

Signed

El Conde de Floridablanca

NB. Added in the Minister's own hand.
P.S. Orders are given on the subject of the Convoy, which it was suspected was to meet at Bilbao, altho' I consider the Notion as groundless & arising from some inquiet & turbulent Disposition.


November 19

GOUYON DE MALLÈVRE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Monseigneur

Sorti de la riviere de nantes le quatorze, je suis entré à brest le soir. dans ce moment l'on travail au débarquement des bois je n'ai vien rencontre à la mer; mais pendant les derniers jours que j'ai passé dans la riviere, j'ai été dans le cas de vérifier que les americains envoloient des francois, le corsaire le mars particulièrement et j'ai quelque certitude qu'il en avoit trente cinq à son bord. C'est la dureté du Capitaine de ce batiment qui a donné lieu à cet eclat, leurs désir etant alors que je les eus réclamé. j'aurois pu faire usage de l'article de l'ordonnance qui dit qu'on s'emparera de tous les francois qu'on trouvera à bord des batimens etrangers, mais les liaisons de ceux ci avec nous, les interess compliqués, les avantages que nous retirons de cette diversion, toutes ces réflexions m'arrêtèrent, et avec dautant plus de tran-
My Lord,

Having departed from the Nantes river on the fourteenth, I entered Brest in the evening. At this time we are discharging lumber. I met nothing at sea, but on the last few days that I spent in the river I was in a position to verify that Americans lure Frenchmen, the privateer Mars especially, and I am fairly certain that there were thirty-five of them on board. It is the hardness of the captain of this vessel which caused this uproar, their desire at that moment being that I reclaim them. I might have made use of the article in the ordinance that states that we will take charge of all Frenchmen found on board foreign vessels, but the connections of the latter with us, the complicated-interests, and the advantages we draw from this diversion, all these reflections stopped me, and with even more calm as their families in Paimbeuf had made no demands reaching me, and I had heard that they were largely tradesmen and adventurers. I limited myself to reporting it to Comte d'Orvilliers. A few days later the privateer set sail and I as well. Upon arriving in Brest I have just advised the general officers, who approved. I very much desire, my Lord, to have the same approbation from you.

Brest 19 Nov. 1777

Gouyon de Mallèvre

No. 70.

My Lord,

A young Sailor whose name is John Jordan having privately made his Escape from Cunningham on Account of the severe Treatment he received because he refused to engage on board his vessel, having yesterday applied to me for Assistance to enable him to return home in order to serve on board some of His Majesty's Ships I did not hesitate one Moment to grant his Request, but sent him immediately to Ferrol on board an english vessel now ready to sail for Topsham. Cunningham having this morning complained of it to the King's Lieutenant (who in absence of the General and Governor now commands this Town) this Gentleman sent me peremptory and possitive Orders to deliver up the man immediately. I excused myself in the best
manner I could by acquainting him the Man was already gone on the Road too far to be overtaken, that I assisted him as a distressed Seaman belonging to Great Britain without enquiring where or to what vessel he belonged, and that, tho' I had known him to belong to Cunningham, I hoped he would not deem it a Fault in me to assist a British Subject to escape from Rebels who detain him by Force, and compel him with Blows to take Arms against his native Country.

The Answer which I have this moment received is that he will make me answerable for him. As I apprehend he means to confine me to my House by a Guard of Soldiers, untill the man is deliver'd up or that I can satisfy Cunningham some other way. I have lost no Time in transmitting His Excellency Lord Grantham an exact Account of this Transaction, and I hope His Lordship will be able to protect me, in the mean Time I most humbly and earnestly beseech Your Lordship will be pleased to consider the disagreeable Situation I am in, and to remove me to some better Employment when a vacancy will admit of it.

I most humbly recommend myself to the Continuance of your Lordship's Protection and Favor, having the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.


LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH


My Lord,

Having seen and conferred with M. Floridablanca in consequence of the several Instructions which I have lately received from Your Lordship, I am to acquaint you more particularly with what has passed on those Occasions than I could by the last Post.

Before the Receipt of your Lorship's Dispatch No. 28 by Staley,1 I had very fully laid before the Spanish Minister such Accounts as I had received of the fraudulent Pretences under which American Prizes had obtained Entrance into the Ports of this Kingdom, and repeated to him my Complaints of the Facility with which some of them had been admitted to Sale, on which occasion I obtained from him the Promises which I acquainted your Lordship with in my last, together with Assurances that he was in earnest, that they should be executed, and I have not thought it amiss, for the sake of Precision, to recapitulate them in an Office which I have sent to him, and which goes to your Lordship under this Cover.

As M. Floridablanca had acquainted me with Orders having been given for the Restitution of the Vessel taken by Hibbert at Bilbao, I had little more to say on that Subject, than to urge my Sentiments of the Insult offered to the Spanish Coast in that particular, as well as of the Injustice done to His Majesty's Subjects. I must however observe to your Lordship, that the Account of that Transaction sent by M. Gomez y Barreda [to his] Correspondent in London, is the first Detail of it which I have received. The first Notice I had of it being very slight, and not justifying me in saying more upon it officially, and at first, than I did in my Office to the Spanish Minister, communicated to your Lordship in mine No. 56.2
On the subject of the other Cases he could not but allow, that the Commandant of Galicia (General O’Neill’s) Conduct was blameable, as well as that of others, who have acted on the Evidence offered by the Prize Masters, & of Persons interested in the Sales, which he would remedy by the fresh Orders abovementioned; and he could by no means attempt to justify the return of Cunningham, which I stated to him in the Office, which I have sent him.

In the course of this Conversation, M. Floridablanca expressed his own resentment at the Americans for having seized on board a French Vessel, Le Fortune some Goods the Property of Spanish Merchants. This Insult, he said, he should take proper Measures to chastize, and should contrive to have his Disapprobation of it signified to the pretended Deputies of America at Paris, not however through the Spanish Ambassador, as it would be beneath The Catholick King’s Dignity to treat with them. These were the Expressions he used.4

This Conference did not however pass off without Renewal, on his Side, of those Fears and Jealousies which he has often affected to express at the consequence of so many armed Vessels at Sea, of their Vigilance, and of the Disturbance of Commerce, which he pretended, was become an universal Complaint. Your Lordship may be assured, that I omitted no Arguments to shew him, how groundless those Alarms were, and that the Interruption which he complained of was owing, if it existed, solely to the Abuse, which had been made of the Flags of other Nations. He discredited that of his own, and took great Merit to himself from no Assistance having ever been as he said, given by this Court in any shape, either of Ships, Arms or Officers. I did not however neglect pointing out strongly to him, that the Connivance given to Privateers stationing themselves in the Ports of this Kingdom, and the allowing Prizes to be sold in them, was a very important Service indeed rendered to the Americans.

Upon his Return from St. Ildephonso I executed His Majesty’s Instructions very punctually; I stated to him the general Fact of large Supplies from many Ports of France being intended for America, & that several Ships, of which I had received Advice, were arming in some Ports of this Kingdom, and were intended to convoy them. It was natural for him to express a Degree of Surprize at this Intelligence, to disbelieve the Court of France from countenancing any such Intention, and to throw the blame of it on the Avarice & Enterprize of private Adventurers.

With regard to the measure of their being convoyed from hence, he admitted, as fully as I could wish, the high Impropriety of it, and in short, gave me the most positive Assurances, that he would immediately write to the Commandants of the Northern Coasts, & other Officers to prevent any such Attempt: affecting at the same Time to disbelieve the existance of it. He told me, that he had seen the French Ambassador just before, and that he could answer for the Court of France not intending to do, or allow anything which could give Umbrage or Offence to us. In this Conference I found him very much in that Disposition and, I confess, that I attribute it to Advices received from France, that such a Step as suffering a great Fleet of American Ships to go from the Ports of France and Spain could not be justified, or supported, or allowed with Security. There is therefore at this Instant an Appearance that such a Measure is not likely to take place. But I can in no respect venture to suppose that anything like an active part, will be taken here against the Americans, and fear that according to Events, numberless disagreeable Discussions must still arise. In the course of which I shall endeavour to add, certainly as much Prudence as I can,
to the plain & firm Language, which I always hold upon these Subjects. I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham

P.S: Since this Dispatch has been copied, I have received an Answer to my Office from M. Floridablanca of which I enclose the Original & a Translation. Your Lordship will observe that the Postscript to it, is written in the Minister’s own hand. This answer acknowledges & confirms the sending the orders which he promised me to issue. It is drawn up in the Temper in which I found him on his Return from St Ildefonso & seems upon the whole as satisfactory, as I could expect at this Juncture.

I am to add that upon my repeating my sollicitation to M. Florida blanca on the Subject of the Morning Star, he assured me that M. Galvez the Minister of Indies was preparing an Extract from all the papers belonging to that business, which were very voluminous, and that he would without Loss of Time remitt it to me—G.

2. Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 15 Oct. 1777, above
4. For a further observation on Spanish views, see Marquis D’Ossun to Comte de Vergennes, 13 Nov. 1777, above.
5. Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

November 20

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Monsieur

Il y a differentes Matiéres sur les quelles je dois avoir l’honneur d’entretenir Votre Excellence des que j’aurai celui de la voir. en attendant je crois Monsieur le comte qu’il est de mon Devoir indispensable de vous communiquer le Papier cijointe que je viens de recevoir dans l’instant

Je me borne a reclamer le Vaisseau anglais et sa Cargaison dont je ne doute nullement que vous n’ordonniez La Restitution immediate. Je ne ferait aucune Reflexion sur la Conduite du Pirate Americain. Je suis bien persuadé que cette Cour est trop fidelle a ses Engagemens, trop éclairée sur ses Interêts, trop Jalouze de sa Dignité pour ne pas punir severement de pareils Attentats.1 J’ai l’honneur d’Être [&c.]

à Paris ce 20. 9bre. 1777

Stormont.

[Translation]

Sir

There are various matters about which I am to have the honor of speaking to your Excellency as soon as I have the honor to see you. While waiting, I believe M. Le Comte, that it is my bounden duty to forward to you the enclosed paper that I just received a moment ago.

I am limiting myself to laying claim to the English vessel and its cargo of which I have no doubt whatsoever that you will order its immediate return. I shall make no comment on the conduct of the American pirate. I am indeed convinced that this
court is too faithful to its commitments, too clear as to its interest, too jealous of its
dignity not to punish severely such attacks.1 I have the honor to be [etc.]

Paris, 20 November 1777

Stormont

[Enclosure]

Particulars of Captain Hawkins’s Protest

Robert Hawkins Master of the Brig Emperor of Germany parted from Cork the 27th
Oct and on the 11 Nov got in sight of the Tower of Corduan; at 2 o clock same Day
got a Pilot on board who told him that two Vessels then in Sight were American Pri-
vateers who at that time were about two Leagues from him on which he immediately
made Sail and was chased about one League within the Tower of Corduan when he
was boarded by the Schooner Swallow John Martin Master who had on board part of
the Crew belonging to the Portsmouth Captain John Hart who’s long-Boat full of Armed
Men also came on board in a few Minutes After She being Ordered to row round by
the Tower, in order to intercept said Hawkins in the River in case he had taken the
North Channel having taken possession of his Vessel they made sail towards the
Portsmouth on board of which they put Capt Hawkins and all his Crew &c

Captain Hawkins remonstrated with Capt Hart on the Illegality of taking Him
in the River of Bordeaux to which He made no vindication but on the contrary said
that his People in the Boat had orders to take Him even tho’ He should reach Blaye
&c &c

Early next Morning He ordered Capt. Hawkins and his crew excepting one he
retained into the Pilot Boat having plundered them of most of their Cloaths about
eight o clock they landed at Ryan


1. Vergennes replied on 20 Nov., stating that Sartine was making an investigation in order to con-
firm the deed and to order the seizure of the prize. Ibid., fol. 381.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN OF THIS PLACE,
DATED AT BOURDEAUX, NOVEMBER 20, 1777.”

“It is with the utmost concern that I inform you the fate of the gallant Captain
Weeks—A French vessel arrived here the other day, brought in the only man who
was saved out of the whole crew of the Reprisal.—In a gale of wind which happened
the 1st of November2 (at which time they were three days past the Banks of New-
foundland) the ship was pooped with three heavy seas, which carried her down—This
man and one more floated on the gangway ladder until the 3d, when his commrade
through weakness dropped from it—He was that day picked up by the Frenchman
who brought him in here—And he now goes for America with Capt. Moore.”3

Dunlap’s Maryland Gazette; or the Baltimore General Advertiser, 3 Feb. 1778.

1. Repri sai. cook, Natha Jaquays. Abraham Whipple to John Paul Jones, 14 June 1778. MiU-C, Abra-
ham Whipple Letter Book.

2. Pennsylvania Packet (Lancaster), 11 Feb. 1778, quotes the same letter, but gives 1 October as the
date of the sinking.

[Extract]

No. 34. Stockholm November 21st. 1777.

My Lord,

... I received lately advice from Gothenburg, that a quantity of sixty Quintals of Gunpowder had been exported from thence to Marstrand, which was afterwards laid up, together with a Parcel sent from Lubeck, at a Fishery hard by Marstrand, and that it was probably designed for the use of the Rebel Vessels now in that Harbour. Mr. Erskine, from whom I had this Intelligence, wrote me at the same time several particulars relative to it, informing me likewise, that he had already requested the Governor of Gothenburg in order to have the Powder prevented from being shipped, which in answer the latter assured he would do. In consequence hereof I took the first opportunity of speaking on this subject to Count Scheffer, whom I desired to send immediately strict orders to the Governor not only for the confiscation of the Powder, but also for calling to account those who contrary to the King of Sweden's express Prohibition had exported such a quantity of Gunpowder without special licence. His Excellency promised that he would write without loss of time to General Duriezt ordering him to act in this Affair according to his Royal Masters positive and repeated commands, and that he would of course communicate to me his Answer as soon as it was received, adding, that he made no doubt but it would prove satisfactory in every respect, and convince me entirely of the sincerity and good faith with which this Government was always acting.

I took afterwards an opportunity of mentioning to Count Scheffer the admission of unarmed Trading Vessels belonging to the Rebels into the Port of Marstrand, calling to His Excellency's mind that he had once assured me at a certain occasion that the King of Sweden would not allow His Subjects to carry on Trade with the American Rebels. He answered, that according to the Privileges granted to Marstrand every Trading Vessel without distinction was to be allowed entrance into that Free Port; but that His Swedish Majesty would by no means permit His Subjects to carry on Trade in their own Vessels to any of the American Ports; His Excellency repeated at the same time in very strong terms, that the King his Master would at all times strictly follow His System of preventing to the utmost in His power that the Rebels may by no means get any supply of Arms or Ammunition from Sweden; that however, notwithstanding the best precautions which had always been and would for the future constantly be taken, it was impossible for every Government to prevent entirely some Contraband Trade carried on by some Individuals, but that he was sure it could not be but most insignificant from this Country. Upon my mentioning that one Woodhouse, Master of a Rebel Vessel, had been received Burgher at Marstrand and his Ship made a Swedish Bottom, His Excellency said, that when that Free-Port had been established, all sorts of People had been invited to settle there, and that consequently Woodhouse could not be refused; but he had upon him the same obligation as every other Swedish Burgher not to carry on Trade to any American Port; and should he act contrary to it, he would lose of course his right, and must impute
to himself if he was then taken by some of the British Cruizers. When I asked Count Scheffer, whether His Swedish Majestys Prohibition against admitting Pirate armed Vessels into His Ports was not equally to be extended indistinctly to all Piratical Prizes; His Excellency answered, that there was not the least doubt but the King his Master would in such a case act in consequence of those Principles which He had for ever adopted in order to prove His sincere Friendship towards His Britannick Majesty to Whose arms He always wished the happiest success. . . . I have the Honor to be [&c.]

J. L. Doerfeld


LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN HENRY LLOYD, R.N.

Whereas we have received Information that several Privatiers belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America are cruizing between Cape Pinas and Bilboa in order to intercept the Newfoundland Ships and other Trade of His Majesty's Subjects bound that way, (which Privatiers are of very inconsiderable force) and that there is in that Port, a Ship called the Rambler, laden with a large quantity of Rigging, Harpoons and other Goods, bound, as it is said to Hudson's Straits to whale and Trade with the Esquemaux Indians, and furnish'd with English, French, Spanish & American Papers and Colours, as more particularly mentioned in the inclosed Extract of the said Intelligence: You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed and cruize between the abovementioned Cape and Cape Machacaca [Machacaco] for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects and to use your best endeavours to take or destroy the abovementioned, or any other Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovemention'd which you may be able to come with, keeping a good look out for the said Ship Rambler and if she should put to Sea and you should have good reason to think that She belongs to any of the Colonies abovemention'd, using your best endeavours also to seize her and bring her into Port.

You are to continue upon the above Station for the space of 14 days after your arrival thereupon, and then proceed to the Coast of Portugal, and cruize for the like purposes between Cape Finisterre & Lisbon, calling off that place and Oporto to make enquiry of the British Consuls there for Intelligence.

And in case you shall receive either from them, or others, Information that can be depended upon from any Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovemention'd being in parts contiguous to, tho' not actually within the Station you are hereby directed to cruize upon, you are at liberty to proceed in quest of them, taking care to return immediately to the said Station, as soon as you shall have taken, destroyed, or driven them away, or be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there.

You are to continue to cruize between Cape Finisterre and Lisbon as above directed until your receive further order, transmitting to our Secretary by every op-
portunity such Intelligence as may have come to your knowledge with an Account of your Proceedings and the state & Condition of the Ship, or Ships under your command, and Monthly, (or oftner if proper opportunities offer) to transmit to him a Copy of your Journal also, and you are once, in four or five Months to proceed with the Ship you command to Lisbon to heave down, taking care to get it done with all the dispatch possible, & never otherwise (except in cases of absolute necessity) to go into Port, and even then not to stay there a moment longer than you can possibly avoid: and, when you shall have occasion to go into the Tagus, you are never to go higher than the Bay of Wares, except to heave down as abovementioned.

You are to enter all Seamen being His Majesty's Subjects, who shall offer, and to bear such as may be more than sufficient to compleat your allow'd Complement: as supernumeraires for wages and Victuals until you shall have an opportunity of putting them on board any of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels which may be short of Complement, or of disposing of them, in such other manner as we shall think fit to direct.

And whereas His Maj's Ship and Sloops named in the Margin ² have been sent out to Cruize for the same purposes between Oporto and Lisbon you are in case of falling in with the Hussar to take her under your command, her Captain being directed to obey your Orders, and to employ her as you shall judge best for the more effectual carrying into execution the object of these Instructions, taking care however that whenever it may be absolutely necessary for her, or the Ship you command to go into Port, that the other do remain upon the Station hereby assign'd you diligently cruizing for the purposes abovemention'd, and that they do not if it can be possibly avoided, ever go into Port at the same time, and whereas we intend that the two Sloops shall return forthwith to England, you are upon falling in with them to deliver the inclosed Pacquets to their respective Commanders containing Our Orders to them to return accordingly.

And in case any other of His Maj's Ships or Vessels whose Commander shall be Senior to you, shall be appointed to cruize upon the said Station while you continue thereon, you are to follow his Orders: And on the otherhand, if he shall be junior to you, he is hereby required to obey such as he shall receive from you. Given &c. the 21st. November. 1777.

Capt. Lloyd—Pelican—Spithead
By &c.
P.S.

To the Captains or Commanders of all Ships of War, armed Vessels and Privateers from the United States of North America.

Gentlemen,

Complaint having been made of Violences done by American armed Vessels, to neutral Nations, in seizing Ships belonging to their Subjects, and under their Colours; and in making Captures of those of the Enemy, but under the protection of neutral
Coasts, contrary to the usage and custom of Nations; This is therefore to warn and request you, not to commit any such Violation of the Laws of Nations; but (according to the powers express'd in your Commission) to confine yourselves to the capture of the Enemys Vessels when not within the protection of a neutral River, Fort or Coast, and of all others whatsoever that shall be carrying, Soldiers, Arms, Ammunition, Provisions, or other contraband Goods, to any of the British Armies, or Ships employed against the united States. In every other Case you will respect the rights of neutrality, from which you expect Protection, and treat all neutral Ships, with the utmost kindness and Friendship, for the honour of your Country and of your selves. We are, Gentlemen, Your &c.

Paris Novr 21st 1777.

Messrs Delaps Paris Novr 21. 1777—

Gentlemen

We are informed that the Ship Portsmouth, which left Bourdeaux a few days since, made Prize of a Vessel from Cork entering the River, with a Pilot onboard & after she had got into the Passage of Grave.1 This is the Captain's Story, on which his complaint is founded. We ask you to enquire into the particulars of this Transaction and send in the Pilots Acco of it Attested.—Several American Vessels have been taken in the Course of the last Season by the English near the Coasts of France & one or more as we have been informed in near the same Circumstances; You will oblige us by enquiring how near the Land American Ships have been taken bound to your Port & sending us the Acco—We are [&c.]

B.F.

S.D.

The Pilots Name is Doussier of Royan a Copy of the Declaration made at the Admiralty is wanted if it can be obtained—

LB, CdHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. The capture of brig Emperor of Germany, Robert Hawkins, by New Hampshire privateer ship Portsmouth, and Maryland letter of marque Swallow, on 11 Nov.

Silas Deane, for the American Commissioners in France, to Jonathan Williams, Jr.

Mr Williams Paris Novr 21. 1777—

Sir

You are desired to get from Cap' Adams a particular Acco of his being taken,1 in which he must ascertain as exact as is in his Power, at what distance he was from the Coast of France when he was first Chased and when he was actually taken, he must make oath to his narration and send it up to us by the first Courier—if you have knowledge of other Vessels taken by English Ships of War near the Coast of France...
I wish you to enquire into the particulars of their Capture, & at what distance it may have happened & send up the Account to the Commissioners—I am &c

SD—

LB, GfHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. John Adams, of the Massachusetts schooner packet Lynch, was captured by H.M.S. Foudroyant off the coast of Belle Isle on 9 May, NDAR 9: 390–91. He later escaped and by late October was in Nantes.


November 22

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. INVINCIBLE, CAPTAIN HYDE PARKER, SR.

Novr 78 [77] I. Ush. [Ushant] EbN ¾ E 141 L

Saturday 22nd D° Wea° [Light airs & Cloudy] with Calms, with a swell from the N.W. Convoy in Compo with 2 Strange Sail.

Liz° [Lizard] ENE 137 L°

D° Wea°

D. UkLPR, Adm. 51/478.

1. Continental Navy ship Ranger, Capt. John Paul Jones, and one of two prizes, brigantines, the Mary and the George.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'OРИENT

A Versailles Le 22 Gre 1777

J'ay reçu, Monsieur, votre Lettre du 12. de ce mois au sujet des frégattes Anglo-Américaines le Raleigh, et l'Alfred, Et j'avois reçu vos précédentes lettres par lesquelles vous m'avez rendre compte des opérations qui se faisoient pour mettre ces deux Bâtiments en état de partir, et des mesures que vous prennez pour les accélérer; vous me marqués par votre dernière que le Raleigh étoit entièrement caréné, et travaillot a se regreer et s'équiper, et que l'Alfredalloit commencer trés incessament sa carène; vous continuerks a veiller a ce que ces Bâtiments partent promptement; Les deux Capitaines qui doivent les commander sont partir pour se rendre à l'orient ou ils doivent être actuellement, au moyen de quoi leur départ ni peut être retardé.

Sur cequi concern les prises qui étoient mouillées dans la Riviere de Crack, je ne doute pas que les officiers de l'amirauté n'ayent fait ponctuellement exécuter a leur égard les intentions du Roy, et je compte que vous aurés veillé de concert avec eux au débarquement des Matelots francois qui y étoient embarqués.

a l'egard du Navire la Brune2 que vous m'aves mandé devoir être expédié avec un Capitaine et un Équipage francois sous une destination simulée pour nos colonies, et sur le quel un anglo-Américain devoit s'embarquer en apparence en qualité de passager, c'est un arrangement qu'il n'est pas possible de tolérer, vous vous opposerés au passage,3 et prendrés les mesures nécessaires à cet effet; vous avés très bien fait de me rendre compte de cequi se passoit à ce sujet — Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

vous prendrés la soumission du cap°°° francois qui doit commander la Brune de se rendre dans nos colonies ou de faire son retour en France sous telles peines que
Versailles, 22 November 1777

I have received your letter, Sir, of the 12th of this month concerning the Anglo-American frigates Raleigh and Alfred, and I had received your previous letters by which you reported on the operations which were going on in order to put these two ships into condition to leave, as well as the steps that you were taking to hasten them. You pointed out to me by your latest that the Raleigh had been completely careened and was working to re-rig and re-fit, and that the Alfred would very shortly begin her careening. You will continue to take care that these two ships leave promptly. The two captains who are to command them have left to return to Lorient where they ought to be at present, so that their departure cannot be delayed.

As to the prizes which were moored in the Crack River, I do not doubt that the Admiralty officers have punctually caused the King's wish concerning them to be carried out, and I expect that you kept watch along with them on the debarkation of French sailors who had been embarked thereon.

With reference to the vessel La Brune which you reported on, supposedly being cleared with a French captain and crew, for a feigned destination in our colonies, and upon which there was supposed to be an Anglo-American pretending to act in the capacity of a passenger; this is an arrangement which is impossible to tolerate; you will stand in the way of this passage, and you will take necessary measures to that effect. You did well to report to me what was happening in regard to this. I am [&c.]

desartine

You will assure the compliance of the French captain who is to command La Brune to go to our colonies or to return to France under such penalty as His Majesty will deem appropriate to pronounce; you will keep in mind the order concerning the sailors in conformity with the circular letter which you ought to have received.

---

1. A mark here refers to a marginal notation in Sartine's hand: "ou des [illeg.] se rendre tres [illeg.]

2. The Brune, which was owned by Béard Frères & Co., was captained by M. Berube Dufrasne, who took her to Boston, where she eventually became the Continental Navy ship Queen of France. The American on board was John Green, captain, Continental Navy.

3. A mark here refers to a marginal notation in Sartine's hand: "de ce captaine americain": "of this American captain."
Copie de Lordre que vous lui avez remis, de faire route directement pour Le port au prince, et de Se presenter, a son arrivee, au gouverneur general de la Colonie. Les procés verbaux, faits En mer dans de pareilles Circonstances, ne peuvent qu'etre tres suspects. Le Certificat des passagers daté, du neuf fevrier dernier, decele la Collusion; mais Le procés verbal, du 21 mars suivant signé par les officiers de L'Etat major, et Certifié par les memes passagers, ne Laisse aucun doute sur la desobeissance du Capitaine qui a fait route volontairement pour Boston de L'avis et du Consentement de Ces memes officiers et passagers. Une Contravention pareille aux volontis du Roy ne peut rester impunie. Je vous envoie, en Consequence, un ordre, En vertu du quel vous ferés arréter et detenir en prison Le S? [?] Fautrel, jusqua Ce que sa majesté en ordonne autrement. Je suis [&c.]

desartine

vous prendra des mesures pour que ce capte soit gardé en prison avec sureté et vous l'interrogerez pour scavoir de vrai, vous lui témoignerez le plus grand mecontentement de sa desobeissance.

vous previendrez M? de la vigne Brisson mais [approx. four words illeg.] que le secret soit gardé jusqu'a ce que les ordres de S. M. soient executés.

[Translation]

Versailles, 22 November 1777

I have received, Sir, your letter of the 14th of this month by which you announced the arrival at Lorient of the merchant vessel Amphitrite,1 of Le Havre, coming from Charlestown with a cargo of rice and indigo. You included the documents by means of which M. Fautrel, captain of this ship, claims to prove that he was not able to execute the bond which he gave you on 10 January last, at the foot of the copy of the order which you sent him, to set a course directly for Port-au-Prince, and upon his arrival to present himself to the Governor General of the Colony. The testimonies taken at sea under similar circumstances can only be very suspect. The certificate of the passengers dated 9 February last disclose collusion. But the testimony of the following 21 March signed by the chief officers, and certified by the same passengers, leave no doubt as to the disobedience of the captain who voluntarily set course for Boston with the advice and consent of these same officers and passengers. Such a breach of the King's wishes can not remain unpunished. Therefore I am sending you an order, by virtue of which you will have M. Fautrel arrested and detained in prison until His Majesty shall ordain otherwise. I am [&c.]

desartine

You will take steps so that the captain be kept in prison in safety, you will interrogate him to find out the truth, and you will show him your dissatisfaction at his disobedience.

You will forewarn M. de la Vigne Brisson [but take care?] that the secret be kept until the orders of His Majesty have been carried out.

1. Nicolas Fautrel, commander of the Amphitrite, took her to Boston, the first of Beaumarchais's ships to arrive in America. When John Paul Jones arrived there later to take command, Fautrel refused to turn over the ship to him and would have accepted Jones only as a passenger. Subsequently Fautrel sailed to Charleston, S.C., for the cargo, with which she had just arrived at L'Orient.
22 NOVEMBER 1777

MONSIEUR

Aussi tot que le Deputes du Congrès américain ont été informé de la prise faite du Navire anglais L'Empereur d'Allemagne, Capitaine Robert Hawkins, venant de Cork a Bordeaux, a l'adresse du S's Gallois et qui a été pris dans la passe de Grave, par le Travers de la tour de Cordouan et ayant a bord un Pilote de Royan nommé le Dossier; ils ont écrit à leur Correspondant à Bordeaux pour interoger le dit Dossier pilote, ne doutant pas que le Capitaine anglais qui a été pris aura fait sa declaration a son avantage. D'après les Informations, Monseigneur, que les dits Deputes receveront, ils vous prieront de prononcer sur la Satisfaction que vous desirez, et ils se feront une Loix d'y contraindre le Capitaine du dit Corsaire, dont ils n'ont jamais eu de connoissance, et qu'îls vous prient de faire arrester si il paraist dans aucune port de France. Les dits Deputés, Monseigneur, sont en etat de mettre sous vos yeux Les preuves qu'une frégate anglais a pris cette année dans la même passe un Navire americain ayant aussi un Pilot de Royan a son Bord. Je suis [&c.] Passy ce 22. 9bre 1777. (Copie) signé Le Ray de Chaumont

Translation

My Lord

As soon as the deputies of the American Congress were informed of the capture of the English ship the Emperor of Germany, Captain Robert Hawkins, coming from Cork to Bordeaux, directed to Sieur Gallois, which was taken in the channel of Grave near the tower of Cordouan and having on board a pilot from Royan named Dossier, they wrote to their correspondent at Bordeaux and requested he interrogate the said pilot, Dossier, having no doubt that the English captain who had been taken would have made his declaration to his advantage. Depending on the information that the said Deputies will receive, My Lord, they will ask you to state what satisfaction you desire, and they will make a point of retaining there the captain of the said privateer, of whom they have never had any knowledge, and they will ask you to have him arrested if he shows up in any port of France. The said Deputies, my lord, are prepared to put before you proofs that an English frigate has taken this year in the same channel an American ship also having on board a pilot from Royan. I am [&c.] Passy, the 22 Nov. 1777. (Copy) signed Le Ray de Chaumont

Copy, PHi, Benjamin Franklin Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "Mgr de Sartine Ministre de la Marine.

Herman Katencamp to Felix O'Neill

Señor Comandante General de este Reyno

Señor. Don Herman Katencamp Consul de S. M. B. en este Reyno con la major veneracion devida Digo a VS. que havendose ausentado d'escapado (sin la menor inteligencia mia) Juan Jordan Marinero Ingles de a bordo del Corsario Americano Rebel de que se halla en este Puerto,1 motivado del maltrato que recevía por no haver querido firmar Artículos de Servicio en dho Corsario, Cuio marinero se ha aplicado a mi para que le ampare y proteixiese para su retiro a Inglaterra, en lo que no puse la menor
Objeción, mandándole al Ferrol abordo de un navio Ingles nombrado Thomas su Capitán Joseph Pine, quese hallava pronto a hazerse a la vela, siendo bien persuadido que hacía lo devido en amparar y assistir a los Subditos de mi Soberano que toman refugio en un Pais neutral, escamandose de los Rebel des que por violencia les tienen y obligan a tomar las Armas contra su Patria, y allo la estraña novedad y attentado que segun aviso que por propio me acava de dar dho Capitan Joseph Pine que en la noche del día 20 del Corriente cinco marineras de la Tripulacion del citado Corsario acompañados de dos Soldados Armados de los de la Guarnicion de la Plaza de dho Ferrol, pasaron a su bordo, y con fuerza y violencia llevaron a dho marinero Juan Jordan sin que precediese manifiestacion de Orden alguna lo que me veo precisado a representarlo a la Justificacion de U.S. y rendidamente suplico Se Sirva tomar las mas seria Providencia mandando que dhos cinco marineros sean examinados muy por menor, y que el Juan Jordan traido ante al Tribunal competente a donde pueda libramente hazer su defensa en Forma legal respecto no tiene Segun me ha informado echo Obligacion alguna, y en cas de salir inocente, castigar a los deliquentes o a su Capitan por haver les mandado cometer semejante violencia, y Ultraxe en un Puerto neutral, Merced que con Justizia espero recivir de la notoria Justification de VS. Corunna 22* Nov: 1777.

H Katencamp

[Translation]

Commanding General of this District

Sir. Mr. Herman Katencamp, consul of his Britannic Majesty in this district, with the greatest veneration, informs you that John Jordan, English seaman, having absented himself by escape (without my least knowledge), from on board the rebel American privateer that is in this port,¹ motivated by the bad treatment that he received because of not wanting to sign the articles of service in the said privateer, has applied to me to shelter and protect him. For his return to England, to which he has no objection, I sent him to Ferrol on board an English ship named Thomas, Captain Joseph Pine, which was soon to set sail, being well persuaded that he ought to protect and assist the subjects of my sovereign that take refuge in a neutral country, escaping from the rebels that by violence take them and oblige them to take up arms against their country. And I learn the strange news and offence that according to information that the said Captain Joseph Pine has just given me by messenger that in the night of the 20th of this month, five seamen of the crew of the said privateer, accompanied by two armed soldiers from the garrison of the plaza of the said Ferrol, came on board, and with force and violence took the said seaman John Jordan without first showing any orders. I have the necessity to represent this to you for your explanation and humbly entreat you to take the most serious steps to have the said five seamen examined very closely, and John Jordan brought before a competent tribunal where he could freely make his defense in a legal form in respect to having not—according to what he has told me—undertaken any obligation, and in case he is found innocent, to punish the delinquents or their captain for having sent them to commit unjustified violence within a neutral port. Your honor, with justice I wait to receive your explanation from the notary's office. Corunna 22* Nov: 1777.

H Katencamp.

Copy, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 390. Notation: "Copia."

Muy Senor mio

Para atender a lo que Um\textsuperscript{d} me representa con fecha de oy, quedo en tomar los conducentes Informes en punto a los motivos que el mariner0 Juan Jordan que servia en la Embarcacion de las Colonias Americanas que Um\textsuperscript{d} apresa haya tenido para reclamarle, como de los procedimientos que segun dice Um\textsuperscript{d} hubo en Ferrol (que ignoro no obstante que estube alli hasta el dia de hayer) abordo del navio Ingles nombrado Thomas, a donde le ha embiado Um\textsuperscript{d} cauthelosamente (como me ha informada el Theniente de Rey de esta Plaza a my regreso) y en su Vista providencias\textsuperscript{e} lo que sea mas correspondiente anadiendo entretanto que el paso dado por el Marinero, y lo praticado por Um\textsuperscript{d} (seduciendo para que saliese de dho Embarcacion según me hallo noticioso) no lo considero arreglado pues cualquier queja que tuibiese quedar del referido Capitan devia hacerlo a mi sin entramenterse Um\textsuperscript{d} a tomarse una Authoridad que no lo competi.


[Translation]

Dear sir,

In order to attend to what you represented to me, under today’s date, I made inquiries of the informed officials on the matter of the seaman John Jordan, who served in the ship of the American colonials, whom you seized in order to reclaim him. As to the proceedings that according to what you told me took place in Ferrol (of which I know nothing, although I was there until yesterday) on board the English ship called Thomas, where you had sent him (as the king’s lieutenant of this place has informed me at my return) and he ordered that which in his view was more suitable; furthermore insomuch as the passage given for the seaman and what you did (seducing him to leave the said ship, according to information I have) I do not consider proper, inasmuch as any complaint you have concerning the captain referred to you ought to make to me without interposing yourself to take on yourself an authority to which you have no claim. May God keep you many years. Corunna 22d. Nov. 1777.

Felix O’Neill.

---

**November 23 (Sunday)**

**CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO MIDSCHPMAN JOSEPH GREEN**

By John Paul Jones Esq’ Captain of the American Navy &c—

M’ Joseph Green

Sir

You are hereby Appointed Commander of our Prize the Brigantine Mary, you are to Navigate her with all possible dispatch to Nantes Bourdeaux, or some other of the most convenient and Safe Ports in France, should you be able to hold way with the Ranger you are to keep Company, untill I give you Orders to make the best of your Way, either by hailing you, or if at a distance by hoisting a Jack at the Maintop-gallant Mast head, I depend on your being particularly careful that no part of the
Cargo be Embezzled or destroyed, on your Arrival you are to make Application by Letter, or Personally to Wm. Lee, or Thomas Morris Esqrs. American Agents at Nants and Bourdeaux, who are Authorized to make Sale of the Prize, should you meet with any of the Enemies Ships, you are to personate the late Master Tho' Riches, Hail from Malaga, and let One of your Men pass for the Mate, the rest for the Crew, you are not to leave the Vessel, yourself until you see her Cargo delivered of which you are to take a particular, and exact Account, you are also to take an inventory of the Vessels Stores, and you are to return the Mideterranea n pass to me together with any other papers which you may discover on board, you are notwithstanding to Obey all future Orders from me however different the foregoing.

Given on board the Ranger at Sea 23d day of November 1777.

Jn' P Jones

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE FRENCH AND SPANISH COURTS

The Commissioners from the United States of America are extremly concerned to understand that the Courts of Spain and France are offended with said States, on Account of the taking of the French Ship Fortune by an American Privateer, which Ship was bound from England to Cadiz, and is represented to have had Spanish Property on board. The Commissioners are confident that nothing can be more distant from the Intention of the said States; than that their Subjects should profit by making such Prizes (as they have no War with those Nations but consider them as real Friends,) and have moreover the greatest personal Respect for their most Christian & Catholic Majesties with the strongest Desire of meriting & cultivating their Friendship. The purpose of the Congress in commissioning armed Vessels, as well as the Measures taken in their several States by establishing Courts of Admiralty to prevent or remedy irregular Captures (in which Courts all Prizes brought there are to suffer a regular Trial) appears on the Face of the Commissions granted, an authentic Copy whereof is hereunto annexed,¹ By which Commission also it will appear that the Congress have not authorized any Act that may be contrary to the Law of Nations.² The Commissioners tho' they have no Concern or Correspondence with the Captain who took the Prize in question, are of Opinion, that knowing it to be a common Practice with English Merchants to cover their Property in Ships bound to Spain under the Names of Spanish Subjects, he might conceive the Goods consigned to Cadiz from London in the Fortune were of that kind; & that it was therefore right to have a Trial on them by sending the Ship to Boston, where it is not doubted but that the Ship will be discharged and her Freight and Damages paid, as belonging to France, and the Goods reclaimed, or their Value on the Proofs appearing that they belong to Subjects of Spain, be delivered to the Claimers. By this means only the Irregularities & Inconveniences of such Captures, (which in no War can possibly be entirely prevented) will be rectified and remedied.—And in this Confidence the Commissioners hope the Displeasure conceived against their Country on the present Occasion will subside, and that the United States will obtain and preserve the Favour of their Cathlick and most Christian Majesties which of all things is most earnestly desired. They also submit it to consideration whether the Appointment of an Agent or Consul
to reside in America and take care of the Interests of the Merchants of these Nations, by making Reclamations when necessary, and supporting such Claims in the Courts of Justice, would not be useful, not only in obtaining more speedy Justice but in preserving that good Intelligence between the People of the different Countries which may be advantageous to all: To prevent Misunderstandings for the Future, we purpose to write immediately to the Congress acquainting them with this Transaction, and urging them to give strict Orders to all who act under their Commissions to Respect the Flags of every neutral or friendly Power, under severe Penalties for Disobedience.

And in the meantime we shall recommend it to our Correspondents at the several Ports, to warn the Captains of American armed Vessels to conduct themselves as if such Orders were already given.—

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

Paris, Nové 23. 1777.

1. The enclosed printed commission, signed by John Hancock but with the blanks not filled in, is reproduced in Stevens's Facsimiles, vol. 19, no. 1746. Portions of the text that concern prize adjudication, posting of bonds, and observance of the laws of nations are underscored.

2. The commissioners omitted the following passage that occurs at this point in the draft. The omission was requested by Vergennes. Conde de Aranda to Conde de Floridablanca, 26 Nov., below. See also Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 184–85. "And it is to be wished that when Ships are taken by such armed Vessels in Seas remote from America but near to the Ports or Dominions of neutral Powers, those Powers would permit the Entrance and Trial of such Prizes by their own Courts of Admiralty, to the Decision of which Courts the Congress is willing and desirous they should be submitted, as will appear by the same Commission. In that Case the Necessity the Captors seem to be under of sending their Prizes to America for Trial, when ever sufficient Suspicion arises that the Property of their Enemies may be cloaked under the Names of Friends would be avoided; and the Ships or Goods reclaimed by the Subjects of France or Spain, would be tried in their own Courts, and Justice more speedily rendered than it can well be from a Country so distant as America; where nevertheless it will certainly be obtained, (tho' with greater Trouble and Loss of Time by reason of that distance) on due Proof being made that the Property reclaimed belongs truely to the said Reclamant & not to the Subjects of Great Britain." NjP, Franklin Papers.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

A Versailles, le 23. 9Oec. 1777.

J'ai l'honneur, Monsieur, de vous remettre, ci joint, le précise que vous m'avez communiqué, de la protestation du Capitaine Haukins, Maitre du Brigantin l'Empereur d'Allemagne, au sujet de sa prise par le Senault l'Hirondelle, qui étoit commandé par John Martin, ayant à son Bord une partie de l'Équipage du Portsmouth: J'ai fait des démarches sur ce qui concerne cette prise, même pour la restitution du Brigantin s'il est possible. Je reçois au surplus une lettre de M. le Marquis de Montbas datée du 12., à Bord de la Frégate qui étoit au bas de la Riviere de Bordeaux et qu'il commandoit, par laquelle cet Officier me mande qu'il venoit d'apprendre que dans la nuit du 10. au 11., hors de la vue de Cordouan, le Capitaine Jean Hart, commandant le Portsmouth, avait pris un Bâtiment Anglois qui cherchoit à entrer en Riviere, et en m'observant qu'il pouvoit approfondre cette affaire, il m'en rendroit compte, il a ajouté que c'étoit un Pilote de la Riviere, qui l'avoit du aux Gens de l'Équipage de la Frégate, et que suivant son rapport, l'affaire s'étoit passé tout à fait au large. J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c.]

de sartine
Versailles, the 23rd of November, 1777.

I have the honor, sir, to remit to you enclosed herewith, the summary which you have sent me of the protest by Captain Haukins, Master of the brigantine the Emperor of Germany, regarding its capture by the snow the Swallow which was commanded by John Martin, having on board part of the crew of the Portsmouth. I made some inquiries concerning that prize, even for the restitution of the brigantine, if possible. Moreover, I received a letter from M. the Marquis de Montbas, dated the 12th, on board the frigate he commands which lay downstream in the Bordeaux River, by which letter this officer advised me of his having just learned that in the night of the 10th to the 11th, out of sight of Cordouan, the Captain John Hart, commanding the Portsmouth, took an English ship which tried to enter the river, and calling to my attention that if he could thoroughly examine this affair he would report to me about it, he added that it was a river pilot who told the people of crew of the frigate about it, and that according to his report, the affair took place entirely on the open sea. I have the honor to be [&c.]

de sartine


1. Etourdie.

November 24

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN JOHN STOTT, R.N.

By &c

Whereas His most Christian Majesty hath ordered the two Merchant Ships named in the Margin lately taken by an American Privatier on their Passage from Jamaica & carried into Nantz to be restored to the Owners who have applied to Us for a Convoy to bring them in safety to England & informed Us that they are nearly ready to sail; And Whereas we think fit that the Ship you command accompanied by His Maj’s Ship the Thetis now at Plymouth shall perform that Service & have ordered each of them to be supplied with a Pilot properly qualified for the Coast of France, You are hereby required & directed to proceed without a moments loss of time off Plymouth Sound & taking the Thetis under your command (her Commander being directed to follow your Orders) put to Sea again with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed with her & the Ship you command with all possible expedition to St Nazier Road in the Entrance of the River Loire where you are to enquire for the said two Merchant Ships & taking them under your Convoy see them in safety as far as Spithead at which place you are to remain until you receive further orders sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings

Given &c 24th Nov 1777

Sandwich

Lisburne

By &c PS.

H Palliser

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 446-47. Addressed at foot of letter: “Cap’ Stott—Minerve—Spithead.”

1. “Clarendon Hanover Packet,” i.e., Hanover Planter.
MEMORIAL OF THE MERCHANTS, TRADERS, AND SHIP OWNERS OF LONDON
TO LORD WEYMOUTH

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Weymouth
One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State,
The Memorial of the Merchants, Traders, and Ship Owners of London
whose Names are hereunto subscribed.
Humbly sheweth:

That there have been already laid before your Lordship by the individual parties injured, many and various Cases of the Depredations committed against the Trade of this Kingdom, by American Privateers being permitted to carry British Ships and Cargos into French and Spanish Ports, and there to sell them, in violation of a fundamental and incontrovertible Maxim of the Law of Nations, vizt

"That before the Ship or Goods taken, can be disposed of by the Captor, there must be a regular judicial Proceeding, wherein both Parties may be heard, and Condemnation thereupon as Prize in a Court of Admiralty judging by the Law of Nations and Treaties: and the proper and regular Court for these Condemnations in the Court of that State to which the Captor belongs."

That notwithstanding the Orders which your Memorialists have been informed have been issued by the Court of France, prohibiting American Privateers from bringing Prizes into their Ports, the Practice has been and is now continued in a much more alarming and dangerous Shape; for they now carry them into the Bays of France and unload the Cargos by means of the Assistance afforded them by the Inhabitants, which your Memorialists apprehend could not be executed if the Court of France were sincere in their Professions to the Court of Great Britain, or serious in those Orders issued to their own Subjects.—

That many Ships, particularly those returning from the Newfoundland Fishery, have lately been taken by American Privateers, and carried into the very Ports of their destination in Spain, where they have been disposed of with their Cargos, by the Captors; and that no Court in that Kingdom will take Cognizance of the Complaints and Claims of Restitution made in behalf of his Majesty's Subjects the right Owners.—

These are Practices to which your Memorialists could not apprehend they were exposed from those two civilized States, either in the principle of the Law of Nations or the feeling of Amity between Great Britain & France, and Spain; they are practices which must be productive of general Piracy, and leave a Train of that most dangerous and worst of Crimes, for Years to come, even after a Reduction of the present Rebellion.—

They are Practices, which if not immediately put a Stop to, must sap the Vitals of this Kingdom; for to such a Price has the Premium of Insurance already arisen, in Contemplation of those Hazards, that many of the most valuable Branches of the Navigation of the Kingdom cannot support so heavy a Charge and must therefore be greatly impaired in their Extent, if not totally foregone and laid aside.—

The great Importance of the Subject renders any further Arguments unnecessary, to engage your Lordship's immediate and serious Attention to the Redress of an Evil, replete with the most fatal Consequences to the Prosperity and Security of the Navigation of this Kingdom, on which it's natural Strength and Safety must ever depend.—
Honble Arthur Lee Esq

Dear Sir

Your much esteem’d favours 20th ulto. & 6th Ins are now before me, in answer to which you may depend on my best efforts towards serving our mutual freind M’ Ross to whom shall inform of what occurs with his cargoe of flour, which thus farr I find remains in Coruna to the number of 2009. Bls.

DS, UklPR, S.P. Foreign 78/305, 139.
I doubt not but the Conductt of some of the Privateers must have given you conc-
cern, but hope you have 'ere now settled this delicate point to the entire satisfaction
of all parties, & that no such accidents will happen in future.

In mine of the 27th ult. I promis'd you that as soon as I shou'd receive orders
to ship the sundry articles for the other side of the watter, I shou'd without lossing
a moment begin to ship them, & I once more repeatt the same, but must inform you
that no such order have as yet reced, & cou'd wish to have it as soon as possible, as
the latter it comes to hand it will be the worse, so pray consider.

With respectt to the value of the fifty thousand Livres you desire me to employ,
I have given orders to my house in Bilbao to comply therewith doubting not but their
bills to said sum will be punctualy paid as you tell me, so refer you to my said house
on this head. By letters from said house I find a prize made by an American Priva-
teer is gott there from Burdeaux consign'd to an Irish house call'd Lynch & C° who
are on the other side of your question, & as I understand that the same & another
that was sent before were recomended to said L. & C° by your Burdeaux freinds
Messrs. Delaps, I beg you wou'd exert yourself in getting those Gentlemen to recomend
in future to my said house, as I think my attachment & services to the cause deserves
it, & besides shou'd any difficulty arrise about the vessells, I shall not dare to serve
the owners unless they are under my own people, & pray excuse it. Your private or
particular advise about the sailors in England was comunicated as you desir'd.

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (84). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard
University.

November 25

JOHN AND THOMAS KIRWAN TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord

At the request of our Correspondents Messrs. Pat McGuire & Sons of Dublin We
beg Leave to trouble your Lordship with the following relation respecting the Cap-
ture by an American Privateer of the Ship Brothers—Cap. Nichs. Kelly bound from
Dublin to Oporto. which Vessell our said Correspondents had put under Portugeese
Colours hoping thereby to avoid such Capture. By the Captains Protest at St. Andero
& his Confirmation thereof here it appears that the Ship saild from Dublin on the
16th of Sep't last Laiden with Linnen's Butter &c. for Oporto & on the 24th day of said
month fell in with a Large Cutter whom he endeavourd to avoid but the Weather be-
coming Calm the Cutter soon came up with her & fid a Gun under English Colours
on which the Cap' hoisted Portugeese Colours & brought to. when he was orderd
from the Cutter to get his Boat out & come on board with his papers which he did.
the papers he brought on Board were his Portugeese pass & his Clearance from the
Custom house of Dublin as a Portugeese Ship which Clearance was Granted by the
Commissioners of his Majesties Customs there. the Privateer (who proved to be the
Revenge Commanded by G Cunningham) Detaind the Captain on board for about 7
hours during which time they searchd his Ship for English papers & not finding any
dismissd Him, with orders to keep Company all night detaining on board the Cut-
ter two of Cap'. Kelly's Crew who he believes informd against the Ship as being an
English one. for on the 25th between 7 & 8 OClock in the morning the Cutter (who stuck close all night) orderd Cap't Kelly to hoist his Boat out & send her on Board which he comply’d with & in a short time after they put 9 or 10 men in the Boat, Took possession of the Ship & orderd all the Ships Crew, on board the Cutter & by what Cap't Kelly could Learn they were directed to carry her into Nantes on the 28th. Sept. they met with a Spanish Brig from the Havannah to S. Andero on board of which they putt the Cap't Mate & passengers who were Landed at S. Andero on the 2d. Oct by advices receivd afterwards from Messrs. McGuire & Sons we find the Ship was sent into Coruna in Spain & there Claimd by part of the Crew as Portugeese property as this Claim cannot be maintaind (tho we are in hopes has servd as a de-tention of the Ship) till there Can be a proper one made in the support of which we request the favour of Your Lordships protection We have the honour to be [&c.]

Riches Court Lime Street
Jnº & Thoº Kirwan
25th. Novr 1777—


1. For Conyngham's account of the capture see Gustavius Conyngham to Silas Deane, 3 Oct. 1777, above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Captº Thompson
Paris 25th Novemr 1777
Sir

We advise you on your return to L'Orient to put your Ship in readiness for Sea, Cap't Hinman will do the same, and after you have obtained the best intelligence to be had, of the British Merchant Ships, & Commerce to pursue the Course, which you judge best for intercepting and making prizes on Our Enemies Ships, & property. As it is by no means safe to return into the Ports of France, you will calculate your Stores, so as to have a sufficiency for your cruise, which we cannot indeed be particular in the Direction of; it was been suggested that one or more of the India Ships returning may be intercepted—That part of the West India homeward bound Ships are expected about This Time, as well as Transports returning from Newyork, and elsewhere in America and that by cruising in the proper Latitudes You may meet with them.—That the British Factories and Commerce on the African Coast are at this Time without any Force sufficient to protect them, and that by running along that Coast you may greatly annoy, and distress the Enemy in that Quarter, and afterwards go for the West Indies. As you & Cap't Hinman, have already considered these several plans for a Cruise, We leave with you to determine which to prefer, & the manner in prosecuting either, or any other that may appear more likely to An-swer the design of your Commission.

We are happy in observing the harmony, & Confidence which subsists between you and Cap't Hinman, and hope the same prevails among your Officers & Men which we are certain you will attentively cultivate through the whole of your Expedition, in which We recommend to you, to avoid giving any offence to the Flaggs of Neutral powers, & to shew them proper Marks of Respect, & Friendship. As you may meet with Vessels of the Enemy, so near the Coast of Europe, that you may be under the
Necessity of sending them into some Port of France, advise you to agree with Messrs. Goulade &c on the method of conduct in such Case previous to your departure, and give Orders to the Officers, to whom you give the Command of such Prizes, accordingly thereto—whenever You judge it prudent to dismiss Prisoners, subjects of his Brittannic Majesty, We advise you To take from Them in writing an Acknowledgement of their having been your Prisoners, their Quality, Place of Residence, and that they are dismissed by you in Confidence that an equal Number of the Subjects of the Thirteen United States of the same Rank that Now are or may hereafter be Prisoners to his sd Brittannic Majesty will be set at Liberty. You are also to deliver a Copy of such Writing to The Prisoners enjoining them to deliver the same on their Arrival in Brittain, to the Lords of the British Admiralty, and by the first Opportunity, inclose a Duplicate to the Committee or Board of Marine in Boston, and another to Us, with an Acc't of your proceedings. We shall Deliver Captn. Hinman Copy of this Letter, who will proceed in Concert with you in the Cruise. With best Wishes.

Copy, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 2, 390. Another copy is in the Arthur Lee Papers, MH-H.

Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L'Orient

'25 November 1777'

You have received, Sir, the orders to arrest the Sieur Fautret, captain of the ship *Amphitrite*, and I am relying on you to carry them out. It will now be necessary to question him on the following points:

1) To ascertain the reasons that he had in changing the destination of his ship. The official reports that he submitted and which you sent to me prove nothing else than
a deplorable condescension on his part, all the more reprehensible since he could not be unaware that he was the absolute master of his vessel, and that consequently he ought to have made use of his authority in opposing all assembly and all contrary opinions.

2) Why he took on a cargo of rice and indigo and why he was not in Chesapeake Bay to take on a cargo of tobacco, a capital point upon which we must enlarge.

3) To ask him what was the news that they had received of the Americans at the time of his departure from Charleston.

Finally, to question him about everything that can be relative to his voyage and the non-execution of his instructions, and as soon as you shall have questioned this captain, you will please inform me without delay. I am [&c.]

de sartine

You understand well that this questioning ought not to be judicial.

L., FrLAL, series 1, E4 80, fol. 153. Addressed at foot of first page: “M. Gonet.” Notation: “R. le 1re Xo”; “Received the 1st of December.”

VERBAL INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO JEAN HOLKER

[Extract]

Instruction verbale donnée à M. Holker le 25, 9brc. 1777

... On doit l'attendre qu'on Se plaindra du peu de faveur que prouvent les Corsaires. Mais on doit faire sentir que toute Puissance que se respecte, se doit à Elle-même de remplir les obligations qu'elle s'est imposée par les traités; et qu'en rendant ces traités communes aux américains, c'est les mettre au niveaux de toutes les nations indépendantes; d'ailleurs les prises que ces Corsaires peuvent faire dans les mer d'Europe n'enrichement point les Etats-unis, tandis que la présence de ces même Corsaires inquiète le commerce, donne l'éveil aux anglais, les oblige à des croisières plus nombreuses et plus serrées, ce qui intercepte le commerce des américains mêmes, et les prise des resources qu'ils entrouïent.

Il ne faut pas omettre de faire connoyer combien la france et l'Espagne ont lieu d'être blessés des differentes atteintes commis par des Corsaires contre leur pavillon. des batiment français ont été pris en Europe et conduit en Amérique sous pretexte que leur cargaison étoit angloise; exception a la quelle les deux puissances ne peuvent souscrire; d'autres ont été visités, maltraite, spolïes dans different parasages: on s'attend que la réparation la plus prompte aura lieu.

Sinformer....

Qu'elle est la situation de sa marine: qu'els fonds en y employe: Quels sont les prix auxquels on y Construit, Combien on peut lever de matelots; qu'el seroit le nombre des matelots français a leur service? Qu'els sont les articles dont on pourrait avoir le plus grand besoin pour l'usage de la marine....

Qu'elle est la situation de la marine Angloise? qu'elle croisière tiennent leurs navires armés en guerre; Combien elle employe de matelots.

Qu'elle est la situation des ports de mer americains, s'il y a des forts érigés pour en defendre L'entrés; si on etablit quelque croisière pour éloigner les vaisseaux de guerre anglois & proteger les vaisseaux marchands....
25 NOVEMBER 1777

[Translation]

Verbal instruction given to M. Holker on the 25th November 1777

... It may be expected that complaints will be made [by leaders in Congress] of the little favor which the [American] privateers experience [in French ports]. But they must be made to feel that every power which respects itself owes it to itself to fulfill those obligations it has imposed on itself by treaties; and that by making these treaties common to the Americans they are put on a level with all other independent nations; besides, the captures which these privateers may make in the European seas do not enrich the United States, whilst their presence disturbs commerce, gives the alarm to the English, obliges them to make more numerous and more intense cruises, thus intercepting the commerce of these very Americans, and depriving them of the resources they were drawing from it.

It must not be omitted to make known to them how much France and Spain have reason to be offended at the various outrages committed by privateers against their flag. French vessels have been captured in Europe, and taken to America, on the pretext that their cargo was English, a distinction to which the two powers cannot subscribe: others have been searched, ill-treated, despoiled in various regions: it is expected that most prompt reparation will be made....

To find out....

What is the condition of its [Congress's] navy; what money is used for it; what are the prices at which they build; how many sailors can be raised; what would be the number of French sailors in their service? What are the articles which would be most required for the use of the navy?....

What is the condition of the English navy? What route are their armed vessels following? How many sailors are employed?

What is the condition of the American seaports; whether there are any forts erected to prevent entrance thereto; whether cruisers are despatched to keep off the English warships and protect merchant vessels?....

The French ministry had asked Jean Holker, a French merchant planning to sail to America, to report on conditions in America and, in an unofficial capacity, to let leaders there know that the French government was doing its best to oblige American commerce. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 238.

Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France

Honble Gentlemen. (No 90) Nantes Nov. 25. 1777.

Mr. Peltier has receiv’d his Instructions from Mr. Montieu, but they are not exactly similar to yours, Mr. Montieu intending to put all his Goods on board the Chalotais, & I prefer putting as much of yours as I can on board of this Ship, which by the tenor of your agreement it appears I have liberty to do; however rather than have any further Difficulty or delay, I have consented to go on loading provided that M. Peltier will insure me a place on board of this Ship for at least 240 Cases of arms. I did this because I think both Ships equaly good except some advantage the Chalotais has in point of Sailing, and because your agreement being a better one than I imagine we could make again were it now to be broken, I think it best to obviate difficulties rather than make them; we are therefore loading all three Ships and we shall go on with all
possible dispatch. I must however observe to you that it does not appear to be the Intention of Mr Montieu to send his Ships to the North of Virginia. The Lion therefore cannot accompany them the whole way.—

As it will be impossible to release the Dolphin 'till I have some other place to keep my men, I cannot put her to sale 'till the Lion goes away.—I have in the mean time ordered an Inventory of her to be taken and shall try for a purchase.—

I have just receiv'd Mr Dean's favour of the 21st, and shall next post send you Cap' Adams's narrative properly authenticated.—I have the Honour to be [&c.]

J Williams


CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO SILAS DEANE

Sir. Crona. [Corunna, Spain] Nov'r 25. 1777

I have wrote Several times Since we have Come into this part of Country Acquainting As fully as the times will permitt, I have had no Answer to any one Letter, this I partly Can Account for. you have been inform'd by m'r Lagoanere of the proceedings heare the Last prize I brought in heare, A Vessell from Newfound And have Dispos'd off And Sorry to enforme you at A Low prise At my Arrivall heare I petition'd for Discharg'd as the Vessll Was Leaky it Would not be Granted Untill Orders from Court, in the time I was Offer'd. They Sums of And they weare to Run All risque Whatsoever, in Consequence of your Letter to m'r Lagoanere I Consented to the prise Offer'd, tho much Against my Inclinations, I have the pleasure to enforme you that the order from Court Arrived With the Liberty to Discharge and Sell. this it selfe is Some Small Satisfaction as it partly paves the Way for Others, I am know [now] Ready and fitted for Sea the Vessell I must enforme you is not fitt for to Cruze in those Seas in the Winter, After I go out if I find the Weather Mod'd I Shall Continue on this Coast to the Middle of next month in hopes to be able to intercept the fish men but if the Weather will not permitt I Shall push for the west indies or the Continent, the Brig I took in the North Seas that Cap'n Bailey went Master of I Can not learn any thing off I am much Afraid She is taken Or Some Accident is happend. if She is taken I must beg of you to Make enquirries of a young Lad the Name of Redmond henderson born in phil'd and his mother lives theare and Much Respected in the City She will Really Go Distracted if She Comes to theare he is taken my Motive for Sending him in the Brig to be Out of the way of Dangere, I have Seen in the papers that An American the name of hodge is Released Out of the Bastielle if so I Congratuated him I am Sure he will have recompense for his Captivity, You may Assure him I Shall Do all in my power—I wrote you Some time Agoe in Respect of my people I have Assurd them that for the Distruction the[y] have Done and for what the[y] Can do the[y] will be recompenced At their Arrivall in the Continent, as m'r Carmichel Diserd I Should ensure them this I have Done I have not the least Doubt but you have represented to the honourable Congress the Nessity their is to take this into Consideration for the encouragement of Seamen, the Disbursemnts heare is pay'd Out of the prise of the prize, the rest to the Am't of &c. is to be at your Order, I have not time to write you fully on this hear, theare being An english Ves-
Captain Gustavus Conyngham
sell in the Offing And I am trying if possible to be Able to pays my Respects to her before She Can Gett in—

1. Ship *Two Brothers*. See Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 7 Nov. 1777, above.
3. Brig *Northampton*, Thomas Hall, was retaken by the tender *Kitty*, Lieutenant John Moore, R.N. See NAR 8:517–19.
4. The rest of the letter is crossed through.

JOSEPH HARDY TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]
No. 29

Cadiz 25th Nov. 1777

My Lord,

In my last I mentioned to your Lordship my suspicion of two French Vessels fitting out in this Port as Privateers. One of them an American built Sloop called the *Esperance* Pierre Reynowe Master has been compleatly equipped with ten carriage Guns, and upwards of fifty Men. She sailed from hence this morning cleared out for Port au Prince but, I am certain she is bound to Charles Town in Virginia, and has on board a considerable quantity of Arms and Ammunition. inclosed I send Your Lordship a Copy of the Office I passed to the Governor on this occasion to which I have received no answer.1 I have since had a long conference with the Captain General Count O Reilly on the Subject, who plainly told me that neither He nor the Governor could do any thing to prevent proceedings of this nature with regard to the French Ships having no Orders from Court. the Other Vessel calld the *Marquise de Cassigy* Pierre Falmont Master is still here ready to sail, she is mounted with Sixteen Guns and has on board fifty men. I am assured by the French Consul that she is bound to St. Domingo.

I have acquainted his Majesty’s Ambassador Lord Grantham with every particular of this affair and have given the necessary information to Vice Admiral Man at Gibraltar. . . . I am [&c.]

Josb Hardy

1. Joseph Hardy to the Spanish Governor in Cadiz, 22 Nov. 1777, ibid., fol. 393. That letter adds that the sloop arrived in Cadiz from Beaufort, N.C., under a French flag with no cannon and only eleven men. Hardy asserted that it now was equipped with ten guns and fifty men and requested that the governor order the vessel to leave Cadiz equipped the same way it entered.

NOVEMBER 26

THOMAS ERSKINE TO THE EARL OF SUFFOLK

[Extract]
No. 11—

Gothenburg 26th Novem‘r 1777.

My Lord—

Since I last had the honour of writing your Lordship, A quantity of Upwards of 200 Casks of Gun-Powder has been shipped on board of a Swedish Sloop at Marstrand;
I have certain Intelligence that she Accompanys Cap:\ Woodhouse Vessell 1 to Sea, where he receives the Powder, or if the Weather does not permit, he carries the Sloop with him to some port in Norway there to Unload her—

In the Swedish Paspport which he lately got from Stockholm, he is called Cap:\ Trāhus & his Brig the Syrne, she has now got quarter Cloths, painted blau & Yellow, her head (as formerly described) a Woman with a Scepter [Scepter]; he is very poorly manned; if he meets bad Weather in going North about, I think it probable that he will be oblidged to put into some Harbour in Shetland or the Orkneys—2

The two American Schooners are not offering yet to stir! The Herring Fishing on this Coast is very successfull this Season—.

Tho\ Erskine

L. UkJPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot: “The R\ Honble\ Earl of ~uffolk.” Marginal notation: “Extract Sent to the Admiralty.” This entire extract was marked to be copied for the Admiralty. The portion not printed here is a brief paragraph acknowledging news of the birth of a British princess.

1. Brigantine Molly.
2. Woodhouse sailed from Marstrand on 9 Dec., accompanied by the sloop with the powder on board. Erskine had “strong suspicion that his Crew will force him to put into some Harbour in Britain, most likely the Orkneys.” Erskine to Suffolk, 20 Dec. 1777, ibid.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN AT GOTTENBURGH, IN SWEDEN, TO HIS FRIEND AT EDINBURGH, NOV. 26.”

“I wrote you formerly, that the Americans had begun a considerable trade with this country. Three American vessels still remain here. The Molly, Treehouse,1 who has taken on board a Swedish mate and several Swedish sailors, is now at Mastrand ready to sail for America. He was stopped some days, owing to the Agent for the Congress here sending on board some cannon, which appeared to give offence to the Governor of Mastrand. However, that is got over, and Mr. Treehouse is taking in his powder, consisting of 300 barrels.

“It is true, gunpowder is not allowed to be publicly shipped on board the American ships, but to remedy this, it is put on board a Swedish sloop which goes along with Mr. Treehouse’s ship a little to the offing of Mastrand, where it is now shipping. Treehouse threatens to pay a visit at Orkney or Shetland as he goes north about. The other two American vessels are loading in the same manner, but will not be ready to sail before Christmas.”


1. Woodhouse.

THE LONDON PACKET, OR NEW LLOYD’S EVENING POST (LONDON), MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, TO WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1777

London.

The Edward, Cheevers, from London to St. Ubes, in ballast, was taken off Cape Finisterre the 19th by a rebel privateer called the True American, who plundered her of sails, cables, and most of her rigging, and intended to burn her, but after being solicited by capt. Cheevers, gave her up to him, and he arrived at St. Ubes the 27th ult.
INTERROGATION OF CAPTAIN ARY KUNST

Appeared before the Commissaires of the College of Admiralty of the Maese, Capt. Ary Kunst, commanding the Ship Jan Gerard; who hath answered, as is noted to each Article.

1. Ary Kunst says he is about 52. Years of Age, Native of Schiedam, being a Seaman from his Youth.

2. Yes.

3. About 6. Years in this Ship, and before in a Ship of the same Owner about the Space of 17. Years.

4. Yes, that he was freighted at Nantes, but that he loaded a part in the Road of Quimperlee, & the rest in the River of Quimperlee, lying Westward of Vannes, known to the Seafaring People by the Name of Craak, about 6 or 7. Miles by Guess from the River of Nantes.

5. Says to have sailed from Corke in Ireland with Ballast to Nantes, to get a Freight there.

6. Answered in the former Article.

7. To M'r Odiette at Nantes.

8. He arrived there in Ballast.

Interrogatories made by the Council of the Admiralty of the Maese, in the Name and for M'r Gerard Daniel Denick, Councillor & Advocate Fiscal in the said College of Admiralty, to examine Capt. Ary Kunst, commanding the Ship Jan Gerard upon.

1. Name, Age, Place of Birth and Profession.

2. If he does not command the Merchant Ship the Jan Gerard?

3. How long he has been Captain of her?

4. If he comes last from the River of Nantes?

5. If he sailed from hence directly to Nantes, & if he then came from any other Place; & if so, from where?

6. If he is able to say with what Goods he arrived at Nantes?

7. To what House he was consigned?

8. If he discharged his Loading at Nantes which he carried there?
9. Yes.

10. Says as in Article 4, partly in the Road of Quimperlee, or Craak, & in the River of that Name.

11. Answered as before.


13. Says, that he loaded it out of a Frigate, but does not know, if it was an English Frigate, that the whole Crew was French, & That the French Flag was flying above; Says further, that the French Flag was not flying above, but a Stern, & that she appeared English built, but is not however able to say, that it was an English Ship, & all that he can say, is, that it was a large Ship, upon which he did not see any Name.

14. Says, he knows nothing about that.

15. Yes.

16. Yes, that both the Bills of Lading & Passports are with his Bookkeeper Mr. Adrianus Dubbeldemuts.

9. If he is freighted from the same House with the Loading, with which he is now arrived.

10. If he did not take in this Loading without the River of Nantes at Sea?

11. In what Latitude he took in this Loading?

12. If he is able to say, out of what Vessel or Vessels he loaded the Sugar & Campechy Wood?

13. If it is not true, that he loaded the Sugar out of an English Frigate called the Manning?

14. If this Frigate was not taken [by] an American Privateer?

15. If he did not hear that she was formerly commanded by Capt Brewer of London?

16. If he had proper Passports from the Admiralty at Nantes, for [his] taking in of this Sugar?

17. If he had un Acquit à Caution? & if he hath also proper Bills of Lading of his Cargo?
18. 
No, and does not know whether this Ship was at Nantes or not.

19. 
Yes.

20. 
Says, that he does not know the real loader, that there was a Commander on board, but that he did not hear him named, & that he imagines, that a Frenchman, whose Name he cannot recollect, had the chief Direction of it. Says further, that the Name of the Frenchman (as he now remembers) was M' de Coenen, living at Nantes. Says also further, that he cannot recollect what Name is in the Bills of Lading, but that he received his Papers from M' de Coenen, and the Passports from the Broker Odiette.

21. 
He knows nothing about that.

22. 
Answers as before, he knows nothing about it.

23. 
That the Gentleman that he remembers to have had the principal Direction in the unloading was now & then on board his Ship, but that the other, whose Name he never knew, but he was a Frenchman, remained always on board, and that he must declare he knows nothing about the Privateer.

24. 
Yes, at Nantes, and it was also lying at his Bookkeeper's.
25. Says no, that he sailed from Corke to Nantes to look for a Freight, & that he lay above three Weeks at Nantes, before this Freight offered.

26. At the same Place, in or near Craak out of the same Ship.

(Signed) Ary Kunst.

Thus examined, answered and undersigned after all the Answers were repeated over again, to the Person examined, who Persisted in them.

Held before the Court of Admiralty of the Maese this 26th. November 1777.

(Signed.) L. V. Berg.

W. Count of Hogendorp

In my presence, in the absence of the Secretary

(Signed.) A. Nahuys.

Collated with the Original, Secretary being absent

(Signed) Seger Terens

Translation, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 84/558. Enclosed in Sir Joseph Yorke to the Earl of Suffolk, 28 Nov. 1777. On receiving information that American privateers were attempting to surmount difficulties in disposing of their prizes in the ports of France "by unloading the Cargoes into Dutch Vessels in the open Sea," and that a Dutch vessel had just arrived at Rotterdam from Nantes with a cargo of sugar suspected to have been obtained in such a manner, Sir Joseph Yorke, British ambassador to the Hague, asked the Grand Pensionary of Holland, Pieter van Bleiswijk, to intervene and frustrate this fraud. (Yorke to Suffolk, 25 Nov. 1777, ibid.) On 28 Nov. Yorke sent Suffolk this translation of the admiralty court's examination of the master of the Dutch ship, the text of which the Grand Pensionary had provided. (Yorke to Suffolk, 28 Nov. 1777, ibid.) On 2 Dec. Yorke learned that the Amsterdam owners of the ship had had the sugar unloaded and secured in town, where the admiralty court had no jurisdiction. (Yorke to Suffolk, 2 Dec. 1777, ibid.)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO BÉRARD FRÈRES & CO.

Gentlemen,

Yours of the 17th is before us, our Letter by your Express will direct you how to proceed with the Cargo of the Amphitrite, The Ship herself is at the Order of M’ Peltier, and the sooner he has her the better, but the Cargo is at ours.

In regard to which we have nothing to alter from the Directions given in our former untill you favour us with an Answer to our last—The Expences of repairing &c the Two Frigates Cap’ Thompson will settle with you, to whom we refer on the Subject—The Expence of sending the Prisoners to England must be taken out of the Gross amount of the Prizes before the division is made.

We observe what you propose as to the Ship lately bought by you and others but are of opinion that an Exchange between that Ship & Cap’ Hinman cannot be effected without too much delay, & loss of Time—By the description given us of the Ship it appears to us, that if she were loaded out with Salt or other heavy Goods for Boston & the Vessel sold there, it will be the best Plan that can be pursued on which we refer you to Cap’ Thompson & Cap’ Hinman whom we have Consulted on the
subject, and shall be glad that you will write to us after your Conferrin with them what you determine upon—

Capt Thompson & Capl Hinman will direct the Division of the Prize Money agreeable to the Rules of Congress in such Cases

We are [&c.] BF—SD


CONDE DE ARANDA to CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA

[Extract]

N° 1178 Ex'tmo S°r.

Mui señor mio: En la expedicion de V.E. de 23. Octubre que recibió Dn. Ignacio Heredia en mi ausencia, los n°s. 2. y 11. tratan de asuntos de los Americanos; en aquel 1 se manifiestan las intenciones del Rey de ayudarlos competente; y en este 2 se explica S.M. justamente disgustado del exceso cometido por un Corsario Insurgente 3 apresando la embarcacion Francesa la Fortunée cargada con generos para el Comercio de Cadiz, por la sola razón de serlo Ingleses, y venir de aquellos puertos.

Mandabame S.M. hacer á esta Corte la explication correspondiente; y la evacuó inmediamente Dn. Ignacio Heredia con copia que entregó del Oficio de V.E. á M° Devergennes. Igualmente quería el Rey que yo hiciese entender á los Diputados no solo la restitution de la presa con total resarcimiento de los perjuicios causados, sino también unas eficales providencias para que en lo sucesivo se evitasen iguales atentados.

Para evacuar ésta parte, luego que me restitui, llamé á M° Grand el interlocutor reconocido como V.E. sabe; le comuniqué quanto debía, y desde luego el mismo me manifestó el sentimiento con que se hallaban Franklin, Deane, y Lee, habiendo sabido por el Sr. Conde Devergennes el suceso, y el sumo desagrado del Rey Catholico: quedó en trasladar á dichos Diputados mi explication, y sus requisitos, y volvió en el siguiente día á manifestarme de parte de ellos la mas sumisa disposicion, á quanto pudiese satisfacer á S.M., y contribuir á evitar que se repitiesen semejantes desordenes.

Aseguróme M° Grand que por primera ocasion escribrian al Congreso para la restitution de la presa, y resarcimiento de sus daños, como tambien para que con el mayor rigor impusiese á los Corsarios la continencia debida; y aun para remediar de pronto en lo posible comunicarán á sus correspondes en los diferentes puertos de Europa una orden, para hacerla saber á todos los bastimentos Americanos que arribasen á fin de instruirlos, y encargarles que á quantes enconstrasen de su Nacion en sus navegaciones, les previniesen la conducta que debían observar, para no incurrir en aciones de ésta naturaleza.

En uno de los dias pasados me trajo M° Grand el borrador de una Memoria que pensaban pasarme los Diputados para dirigir la mi Corte como en satisfaction de lo ocurrido, manifestando su sentimiento, y ofreciendo practicar quanto les fuese dable en prueba de su respeto por los Soberanos de Borbon. Preguntéle si la había visto M° Devergennes, y respondiéndome que no, le dije que practicase con S.E. el mismo paso de exponersela; y que aquello que M° Devergennes aprobase, ó corrigiese, sería igualmente mi dictamen.
El 21. estuve en Versailles, y pregunté a M. Devergennes si el Banquero Grand había cumplido con mi encargo de hacerle ver la Memoria dispuesta por los Diputados, diciéndole al propio tiempo que yo me remitía a lo que S.E. arreglase; y me aseguró que si, y haberle prevenido, que suprimiesen la proposicion que hacían de que entrasen en los puertos de ambas Coronas abiertamente sus corsarios con las presas, y que los Almirantazgos juzgasen desde luego las que fuesen hechas en debida forma, y que las practicadas fuera de las reglas corrientes; porque el admitir francamente los armadores con las presas hechas, era autorizar su Corso; y para que los Almirantazgos de por si tomasen conocimiento de las que se introdusesen, no necesitaban del permiso o consentimiento de los Insurgentes.

Volviome a ver M. Grand, y habiendo quedado en que yo recibiría la Memoria que por M. Devergennes se hallase corriente, me ha trahido la que acompañó a V.E. Ha estado a verme M. Lee, para hacerme saber, que habia recibido letras credenciales del Congreso, que lo autorizaban directamente para España, y me indicó si pasaría personalmente a noticiarlo: Respondile, que en ninguna forma, por subsistir las propias razones que anteriormente, y por ser suficiente que me Corte lo supiese para algun caso necesario. Dios g. a V.E. m. a. Paris 26. de Novbre. de 1777.

Exmo. S. B. L. M. de VE. su seg° ser.

El Conde de Aranda

[Translation]

Dear Sir

In Your Excellency's packet dated October 23, received by Sir Ignacio Heredia in my absence, numbers 2 and 11 deal with the subject of the Americans. The former expressed the King's intentions to give them adequate assistance and in the latter His Majesty expresses justified displeasure with the immoderate act committed by an insurgent privateer in capturing the French ship la Fortunée laden with goods to sell in Cadiz, for the sole reason that these goods were English and it had come from English ports.

His Majesty asked me to make the proper explanations on this to this court, and Sir Ignacio Heredia did this immediately, sending a copy from Your Excellency's office to M. de Vergennes. The King also wanted me to ensure that I made the deputies realize, not just that they must return the spoils with total compensation for damages caused, but also that measures must be taken to ensure that such attacks will not happen again in the future.

To fulfill this part of the request, as soon as I returned, I called on M. Grand, their acknowledge spokesman, as you know. I spoke to him about that which was required and immediately he himself passed on to me the opinions held by Franklin, Deane and Lee, having learned through the Comte de Vergennes the result and the extreme displeasure of the Catholic King. He agreed to give my explication and its stipulations to these deputies and returned the next day to tell me that they had taken a very submissive stance with regard to satisfying His Majesty and avoiding a repetition of these disruptions.

M. Grand assured me that they would take the first opportunity to write to Congress to return the spoils, make compensation for damages, and impose due restraint on the privateers. Also, to remedy the situation as soon as possible, they would order their correspondents posted throughout Europe to inform all arriving
American ships and charge them, when they meet others from their nation sailing, to warn them of the conduct they must observe to avoid committing an act of this type.

In the last few days, M. Grand brought me the first draft of a memorial which the deputies thought to send me, to pass on to my court as an apology for the occurrence. It contained their sentiments and an offer to do whatever was possible as proof of their respect for the sovereigns of Bourbon. I asked him if M. de Vergennes had seen it, and he answered that he had not. I told him to show to His Excellency the same text of apology, and whatever M. de Vergennes would approve or correct would be my judgment as well.

On the 21st, I was in Versailles and I asked M. de Vergennes whether M. Grand the banker had complied with my request to show him the memorial submitted by the deputies, telling him at the same time that I was referring to the one His Excellency was to check. He told me yes, and that he preferred to delete the proposition they were making that their privateers could enter the ports of both crowns openly with the prizes and that the admiralty courts be allowed to judge at that time which items were taken rightly and which taken illegally, because openly to receive the privateers with their prizes would be to sanction their act, and the admiralty courts themselves did not need the insurgents' consent to take cognisance of the prizes they brought in.

I went back to see M. Grand and having agreed to receive the report that M. de Vergennes emended, I have brought the one I am enclosing to Your Excellency.

M. Lee came to see me to let me know that he had received letters of credence from Congress, which authorized him directly for Spain, and asked me if he should come personally to notify me of it. I told him no, to continue as before, and it was enough that my court knew of it if needed.

God keep your Excellency many years. Paris November 26, 1777.

Most Excellent Sir, I kiss the hand of your Excellency, your devoted servant

El Conde de Aranda

L. SpVAS, legajo 4612. Addressed at foot of last page: "Excmo Sr Conde de Floridablanca." Docketed: "Paris 26 de Novex de 1777/El Conde de Aranda/Sobre varios puntos relativos a los Americanos; sus explicó con los Diputex de ellos y tambien con el Ministerio Incluyo una memoria presentada por los primeros"; "Paris November 26, 1777/The Conde de Aranda/On various items relating to the Americans: the explanations from their deputies and also from the Ministry; includes a memorial presented by the Americans." The omitted passages deal with the French government's promises of support to the Americans, and its instructions to the emissary it was sending to Congress. For the instructions, see Verbal Instruction Given to Jean Holker, 25 Nov. 1777, extracted above, and, for the full text, Stevens's Facsimiles, vol. 19, no. 1748.

1. SpMAA, legajo 4072, expediente 201, pt. 2, no. 2.
2. Conde de Floridablanca to Conde de Aranda, 23 Oct., above.
3. Massachusetts privateer brigantine Civil Usage, Andrew Giddings, commanding.
4. American Commissioners in France to the French and Spanish Courts, 23 Nov. 1777, above.
5. Floridablanca's response is below, at 9 Dec.

ARTHUR LEE TO JOHN ROSS

The First

Abstract, part of a Letter received by John Ross from the Honble—Arthur Lee Esq, dated Chaillot 26 Nov 1777.
"M. Deane has informed me that you have taken upon yourself to answer for the public Share in Cunnynghams Vessel, I shall be obliged to you for informing me whether you understand it so."  


1. For the answer see John Ross to Arthur Lee, 3 Dec. 1777, below.

JOSEPH GARDOQUI & SONS TO ARTHUR LEE

[Extract]


Honour'd Sir

... We observe the directions you are pleased to give us in case any arm'd vessel in the service of the United States should send in here, or the adjacent Ports any prize, which depend will Endeavour to follow with the strictest punctuality, but as there is positive orders load' d here, not to permit the disposal of any prizes or prize goods, you can hardly imagine the difficulties arising from those dispositions, as such have now been ordered to Reship Two fish cargoes of the Kind landed for sale & see of course no probability of Success.

We are offered almost weekly here any sums of money at the moderate Ratte of 3 £C 3 a anum, which have never admitted as thank God our capital is at present more than sufficient to carry on the commercial branches we are Engag'd in, however, should the Sum you Intend to deposit have the destination of being Invested in Articles to be shipt off from this port we would advance as far as 4% £C assuring you that this commerce is at present so limited, that it would be out of our power to draw out any profit on any other terms or yet sufficient to pay the Interest thereof... We are [&c.]

J: G. &ca.


1. See Arthur Lee to Garдоqui and Sons, 15 Nov. 1777, above.

2. The orders came from the Spanish crown. See Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 71 Corunna 26th Nov: 1777

My Lord.

I most humbly beg leave to refer to my last of the 19th Instant.

The Next Day the Captain General being returned from Ferrol where he had been to inspect that Garrison, the Kings Lieutenant refer'd to him what had passed between us respecting the Seaman who made his Escape from Cunningham, I also waited upon him on the same Errand when he was pleased to tell me in Very good Humour that he thought the Kings Lieutenant had acted wrong, that if the Seaman was gone there was no help for it, and that he had just sent Cunningham fresh Orders to depart, and heartily wished him away. After such Language Your Lordship may judge how great was my Surprise the next Morning when I received Advice from
Ferrol that on the 20th Instant at midnight the Seaman was forcibly carried away from on board the vessel to which I had sent him in order to take his Passage home by five of Cunningham's Crew assisted by two Soldiers, and that it appeared on Enquiry these men were sent to Ferrol the same morning in a Boat with Letters from the said Cunningham, and the Kings Lieutenant to the General, who thereupon gave Orders for committing this Outrage.

Tho' I have a great deal to apprehend from this Gentleman's Resentment, yet I could not pass over so flagrant an Act of Injustice and Partiality without taking some Notice of it, accordingly I drew up and immediately sent him the Representation of which I have the Honor to Inclose a Copy, together with a Copy of his Answer the whole Tenour of which is without the least Foundation, for I knew nothing of the Seaman's Escape from the Privateer untill he applied to me for Assistance, and I beg Leave to assure Your Lordship that the General himself gave the Orders of which in his Answer he declares himself ignorant. It is impossible for me My Lord to push Things to further Extremity to obtain Redress here, but I have transmitted Lord Grantham the fullest and most exact Account of this Transaction in hopes His Excellency will be able to put a Stop to the further Continuance of such unfair Proceedings. I shall nevertheless continue on all Occasions to furnish the General and proper Officers with every Document with which I think I can counterbalance the false Returns under which the Rebels bring in their Prizes, but I do not know how this can be done in Bilboa where there is no Brittish Agent of any Kind, but I humbly conceive My Lord the private Appointment there of a Person with a small Salary to give immediate Information to the Proprietors of such Prizes as are brought in there, and to transmit regular Intelligence to His Majesty's Ambassador in Madrid would greatly contribute to His Majesty's Service. If Your Lordship shall think proper to confide the appointment of such a Person in me I flatter myself I shall be able to find a Person perfectly well qualified for it, and one whom I believe would give general Satisfaction.

I most humbly beg Leave to inclose a Letter for the Admiralty Office, and have the honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp

1. See Herman Katencamp to Felix O'Neill, 22 Nov. 1777, and Felix O'Neill to Herman Katencamp, 22 Nov. 1777, above.
2. The British government was represented in Bilboa by Ventura Gomez de la Torre. See Lefras and Le Mesurier to Philip Stephens, 5 Nov. 1777, above.

November 27

Vice Admiral John Montagu to Lord George Germain

Romney at Spithead
27th November 1777

My Lord
I have the Honor to acquaint you that I left my Government the 31st of Octo-ber, that every thing was very quiet, nor did I hear of any Privateers being on the Banks for near three Weeks before I sail'd
The Merchants suffered greatly in the first part of the Season by having many
of their Bankers Plundered, and several taken away, the latter part of the season they
have been much more successfull then they expected, and I believe their greatest
distress is a want of Ships to carry their Fish, and Oil to market. from which large
quantities of both must remain in the Country until next Year.

I am sorry it is not in my power to transmit your Lordship a State of the Fishery this
Year, being obliged to keep the Men of War constantly Cruising on the Banks, which
has prevented their going to collect the particulars in the several Harbours as usual.

The Fort on the South-Head at the Enterance of the Harbour² is completed,
and ready for the Guns, which I expected, and was given to understand, was to be
out this Year. for the want of which it remains useless, and may easily be destroyed
by a Privateer for want of Guns, and Men. as both the Company of Royal Highland
Emigrants, and the Company of Invalid Artillery Men, are mostly Old, and infirm,
and not fit for Duty in so Cold a Climate as Newfoundland.

I beg leave to inclose to your Lordship the proceedings of the Court of Oyer,
and Terminer, held at Saint Johns in October last,³ and am [&c.]

J: Montagu

---

1. Montagu commanded the Royal Navy's Newfoundland Station and was governor of Newfoundland.
2. St. John's, Newfoundland.
3. Not printed.

November 28

**THE DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1777**

Admiralty-Office, Nov. 28, 1777....

Vice-Admiral Montague, who is arrived at Spithead from Newfoundland, has
likewise given an Account of the Ships of his Squadron having taken the following
Prizes, viz.

- The Rebecca Schooner, from North-Carolina, laden with naval Stores and Tobacco.
- The Favourite Schooner, from Virginia, laden with Tobacco.
- The Scarborough Sloop, from South-Carolina, laden with Rice, Tar, and Turpentine.
- The St. Paul Brig, from South-Carolina, with Rice and Logwood.
- The Live Oak, a Brig, from South-Carolina, laden with Rice, Indigo, and Staves.

**LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM**

[Extract]

No 31
His Exc: Lord Grantham.
My Lord St. James’s 28th. Nov' 1777.

... I inclose to your Exc: Extracts of a Letter from E. Gerry, of Philadelphia, to Messrs. Gardoqui, of Bilbao, by which it appears that the latter are engaged in a Trade
with the Colonies in Rebellion very injurious to this Country and that they pretend
to have the Protection of the Court of Spain for this Purpose, as appears by an Arti-
cle published in the Public News Paper, a Copy of which is inserted. The original Papers were taken on board an American Ship, and are in my Possession.\footnote{1} I am &c Weymouth

1. In the margin: "1 Sep 1777." For Elbridge Gerry's letter to Joseph Gardoqui & Sons of 1 Sept. 1777, see Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789, edited by Paul H. Smith (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1976-), 7: 582-84. In the letter Gerry wrote: "I have delivered to the commercial Committee of Congress the invoice of Goods which You shipped by this Opportunity, & have furnished them with an Extract of your Letter relative to Remittances." He also reported placing in the public prints, at the Gardoqui's request, an extract of their last letter "relative to the Indulgence of your Court to Adventurers in the Article of Tobacco."

**JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS**

[**Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777**]

28th of Nov[le] Saturday blowing w[est] the People in the L. Prison detected again in Mining for an Elopement. Here is Various Act[s] of the taking of Philidelphia; but not from any Authority.\footnote{1}


1. On 2 Dec. the prisoners had confirmation of the fall of Philadelphia. On 8 Dec. they learned of the taking of Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga, N.Y. Ibid.

**MIGUEL LAGOANERE & CO. TO LASSORE FRÈRES & CO.**

M. Lassore freres & Comp[e] a Cadiz

Messieurs

La Corogne le 28, 9bre. 1777

Le Cap[e] Gustave Cunyngham commandant le Cotter de guerre nommé la Revenge appartenant au Congrès des treize Provinces unies damérique nous ayant demandé une recommandation pour votre ville, nous lui donnons la presente par laquelle nous vous prions de vouloir lui rendre tous les services que dependront de vous dans le cas où il se trouverait pourvoir de relacher dans vôtre port et de lui compter l'argent qu'il pourroit avoir besoin pour se mettre en état de reprendre la mer, il vous en fournira ses traités sur les députés du Congres a Paris où sur ses autres correspondants, où sur nous même Nous vous aurons la plus grande obligation de tous les services que vous voudrez bien lui rendre & nous avons l'honneur detre [&c.]

Lagoanere & Comp

[Translation]

M. Lassore brothers & Co. in Cadiz

Gentlemen

Corunna the 28 November 1777

Captain Gustavus Cunyngham commanding the Cutter of War named the Revenge belonging to the Congress of the Thirteen United Provinces of America having asked us for a recommendation for your city, we are giving him this letter by which we beg you to be so kind as to render him every service within your power in case he should find himself obliged to put into your port and to furnish him with whatever money he may be in need of to refit his vessel. He will hand you drafts on
the deputies of the Congress in Paris or on his other correspondents, or on us. We shall be under the greatest obligation to you for the services you may be able to render him & have the honor to be [&c.]

Lagoanere & Comp.


November 29

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN

My Lord,

Your Lordship having, in your Letter of the 21st August last, acquainted us that as the Issue of the present Campaign in North America cannot be known here in time to prepare for the Operations of another, if another shall become necessary, His Majesty had come to the Resolution of making every preparation for the further Prosecution of the War that depends upon this Country, so early that in case the Rebellion is not subdued this Campaign, the next may open the Moment the Season will admit, and Your Lordship having, in your aforesaid Letter, signified His Majesty’s Pleasure, that we do give the necessary Orders for providing Ships of sufficient Strength to defend themselves against any of the Rebel Cruizers, for the Conveyance of 3,000 Tons of Tents, Camp Equipage & other Stores to North America, to be in readiness to receive the same by the End of December, it being His Majesty’s express Commands that the whole should be assembled at Spithead in readiness to sail from thence, under the Convoy of such of His Majesty’s Ships as we shall think proper to appoint, on the 1st Day of Febry; We are to desire you will be pleased to acquaint His Majesty, that the Navy Board have, in Obedience to Directions we gave them, in pursuance of His Majesty’s Commands aforementioned, acquainted us that they have purchased six Ships whose Names are in the Margin,¹ to perform this Service, which Ships are Armed with 26 Guns and will be provided with a Complement of 160 Men each. We are further to inform His Majesty that the Nabob one of the aforementioned Ships is arrived at Longreach and ready to receive such part of the aforementioned Camp Equipage & Stores as may be thought fit to be sent on board; that the rest are equipping with all possible Expedition in order to proceed thither also, and that so soon as they are arrived there, we shall not fail to give Your Lordship immediate Notice thereof. We are &c

Sandwich
Lisburne
H. Penton

¹. In the margin: "Nabob Greenwich Lioness Pacifick Supply Dromedary."
à Versailles le 29. 9br. 1777.

M. Le Moine m’a rendu compte, Monsieur, qu’il vous avait informé de l’avis qui lui avait été donné que le Corsaire anglo-américain le *Portsmouth*, Captn. Hart qui avait paru dans le Port de Bordeaux, et qui en est sorti depuis peu, d’avoir se rendre à l’Orient, joindre plusieurs Batimens anglo-américains armés en Course; je ne doute pas que, sur cet avis, vous n’avez déjà pris les mesures convenables pour tacher de découvrir si en effet il y a en ce Port quelques Batimens qu’on puisse Soupçonner d’avoir cette destination, afin de mettre à exécution à cet égard, les ordres qui vous ont été donnés à diverses reprises, au Sujet de ces Sortes d’armemens dans nos Ports, concernant lesquels vous connaissez quelle Sont les intentions du Roi; je vous recommande de veiller avec la plus grande attention Sur les armemens qui se font à l’orient, de même que Sur l’artillerie que les d. Batimens qui arment, peuvent avoir, et celle qu’on voudroit y embarquer, ainsi que des munitions de guerre, afin du vous conformer exactement à ceque je vous ay marqué, tout par rapport à cet objet, que par rapport à la formation de Equipages, pour que le nombre d’hommes que doit les composer, n’excede pas la quantité des Matelots indispensablement nécessaire pour les naviguer; vous me rendez compte de ce qui peu se passer à ce Sujet, et de ceque vous aurez fait. Je Suis [&c.]

[Translation]

Versailles, 29 November 1777

Monsieur LeMoine has told me, Sir, that he had apprized you of the information that had been given to him that the Anglo-American privateer *Portsmouth*, Captain Hart, which had put into the port of Bordeaux, and which left there a short while ago, is supposed to arrive at Lorient to join several Anglo-American ships fitted out as privateers. I do not doubt that, acting on this information, you have taken the necessary steps to try to discover if, in fact, there are in this port some ships that might be suspected of having that destination, in order to put into execution in this regard the orders which have been given to you several times with respect to this sort of fitting out in our ports, concerning which you know what the King’s wishes are. I recommend that you keep close scrutiny on the fitting out that is being carried on at Lorient, on the artillery which the said ships which are fitting out might have, and those they might want to embark, as well as munitions of war, so that you will conform exactly to that which I have pointed out, as much with regard to this purpose as with regard to the formation of crews, so that the number of men who would compose them does not exceed the number of seamen absolutely necessary for them. You will send me a report of what might happen concerning this subject, and what you will have done. I am, Sir, [&c.]

de sartine

L., FrLAL, series 1, E* 80, fol. 160. Addressed at foot of first page: "M. Gonet à L’orient." Docketed: "Classes"; "R. le 3. Xfr."; "Mariners’ Registration"; "Received 3 Dec."
à Versailles le 29. 9ème 1777.

pour vous Seul

Je suis informé, Monsieur, qu’il soit venir à portée en nos côtes quelques Vaisseaux de guerre que la Cour en Londres a donné ordre d’expédier, qui doivent croiser et qui Setiendront vraisemblablement au large; ces dispositions exigent qu’il soit pris en notre part des précautions relativement aux Batimens qui peuvent armer pour l’Amerique Septentrionale; vous ferez venir à cet effet chez vous les Négros du Port en L’orient qui font de ces armemens, ceque vous ferez avec toute la circonspection possible; vous les prendrez en particulier, et vous les préviendrez de n’être point étonner en la rencontre que les Captnes de leurs navires pourront faire de ces vaisseaux; vous les avertirez en même temps de se mettre bien en regle pour leurs expéditions et autres papiers relatifs aux Batimens qu’il feront armer, et qui auraient cette destination pour objet et rapporter la plus grande attention tant sur la nature de leurs chargemens, que pour ne point embarquer cartillerie et des munitions qui puissent les exposer; vous Sentez avec quelle prudence vous devez vous conduire Sur cet objet, et celle que les Négros de leur côté doivent apporter pour prendre leurs précautions Sans qu’ils paroissent avoir été avertir; je m’en rapporte à vous pour la parfaite exécution des ordres que je vous donne a ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

P.S. Agissez prudentement, et informez moi de ce que vous aurez fait; Vous exigererez des Armateurs des soumissions de se rendre en droiture dans nos Colonies, et d’en revenir; Les Matelots qui passent en Amérique manquent ici au service du Roi.

ds

[Translation]

For you alone

Versailles, 29 November 1777

I have received information, Sir, that several warships under sailing orders from the Court of London have come within range of our coasts, which are to cruise and will very likely keep themselves well to the open sea. These dispositions require that on our part we take precautions regarding ships that might be bound for North America. Therefore you will summon to you the merchants of the port of Lorient who are in the shipping business, something that you will do with utmost circum- spection. You will take them aside privately and warn them not to be at all surprised to learn that the captains of their ships have met these warships. At the same time you will warn them to put all of their ship’s papers in order, and other papers relating to the ships that they are having filled out, and which might be bound for that destination, and to pay the closest attention to the nature of their cargo so as not to load artillery and munitions which might expose them. You are aware how prudently you must conduct youself in this matter, and what precautions the merchants in their turn must take without their appearing to have been alerted. I shall rely on you for the perfect execution of the orders that I have given you on this subject. I am [&c.]

de sartine
P.S. Act prudently and inform me of what you have done. You will require guarantees of the shipowners to head straight for our colonies, and to return therefrom. The sailors who go over to America are taken away from the king’s service here.

Gabriel de Sartine to Lieutenant-General Comte Duchaffault

A M le Cte Duchaffault
Commandant L’Escadre du Roi A Brest
En Mer Le 29 Novembre 1777.

J’ai reçu, M, le Lettre que vous m’avez l’h’ de m’écrire le 24 de ce mois.

J’approuve que vous ayez autorisé M de Montperoux Commandt La frégate L’Oiseau, à prendre les mouillages qui seront le plus à sa portée, dans le cas où il prouverait des mauvais tems dans la Croisière qu’il va occupera de Belle isle à Oleron.

Je compte que M de Kergariou ne tardera pas à se rendre à la station de Nantes aussitôt qu’il aura embarqué les 6 mois de vivres qui ont été ordonnés.

Vous recommanderez à M de Montperoux et aux Commandants des Corvettes que vous avez destinées pour observer les frégates Angloises de donner avis des frégates ou Vaisseaux de cette nation qu’ils pourroient rencontrer en Croisière au large, et de se conduire avec prudence et de maniere à ne pas compromettre le Pavillon du Roi.

Vous informerez les Commandans des frégates de Bordeaux et de Nantes, aussi que ceux des Bâtimens en Croisière que d’apres les avis qui me sont parvenus, j’ai lieu de présumer que six Corsaires Anglois doivent croiser dans le Golphe de Gascogne à 3 lieues de distance des Côtes à dessein d’interrupter les Bâtimens insurgens, et qu’en cas de remontre des V’ du Roi, ils doivent arborer le Pavillon des Colonies unies de l’Amérique. Comme je vous ai fais connaitre dans differentes circonstances les intentions de sa Mte pour ce qui concerne les Corsaires de quelque nation qu’ils soient, je n’ai rien à ajouter à cequi vous a été prescrit à cet egard: et vous recommanderez aux Commandans des Bâtimens du Roi de se conformer aux instructions que vous avez du leur donner.

D’apres ceque je vous ai mandé par mes precedentes Lettres, vous jugerez assez que le réarmement du Magnifique ne doit point être pressé, à moins que sa Mte ne jugeât à propos de donner des ordres particuliers à ce sujet.

Le Roi ayant reconnu que le nombre des Bâtimens attachés à l’Escadre ne seront pas suffisans pour fournir avec facilité aux Croisieres et aux Stations de l’hiver, S. M. a décidé qu’il seroit ajouté deux frégates à l’Escadre. J’en fais passer l’ordre à M. le Cte D’Orvilliers. J’ai l’h’ d’être [&c.]

[Translation]

To M le Comte Duchaffault
Commanding the King’s Squadron at Brest
At sea, 29 Nov. 1777

I was privileged to receive the letter you wrote me the 24th of this month, Sir.
I approve your authorizing M. de Montperoux, Commander of the frigate L' *Oiseau*, to anchor in the nearest place he can find in case he encounters bad weather during the crossing he will make from Belle Isle to Oleron.

I expect M. de Kergariou not to tarry in proceeding to the Nantes station as soon as he has brought on board the 6 months of supplies which were ordered.

Recommend that M. de Montperoux tell the commanders of the corvettes you sent to observe the English frigates to give warning of frigates or ships of the line of that nation that they may encounter cruising on the open sea, and to act cautiously and in such a way as not to compromise the king's flag.

Inform the commanders of frigates from Bordeaux and Nantes, along with those of cruising ships, that according to the reports I have been given, I have reason to presume that six English privateers are supposed to cruise through the Gulf of Gascony three leagues from the coast for the purpose of intercepting insurgent ships, and in case of meeting any of the ships of the line of the king, they are supposed to hoist the flag of the United Colonies of America. As I told you under various circumstances his Majesty's intentions regarding privateers of any nation whatsoever, I have nothing to add to the orders already given you in this respect: and you will recommend to the commanders of the king's ships that they conform to the instructions you must have given them.

According to your instructions by my former letters, you will judge that the rearment of the *Magnifique* is not to be hurried unless his Majesty gives special orders on this subject.

The king having realized that the number of ships attached to the squadron will not be enough to provide sufficiently for cruises and winter stations, his Majesty has decided to add two frigates to the squadron. I will pass the order on to Comte D'Orvilliers. I have the honor to be [&c.]

---

Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France

1050 European Theater

Honble Gentlemen (No 92) Nantes Nov. 29. 1777.—

Agreeable to the orders of M' Dean & M' Lee I have the honour to transmit Cap' Adams's Deposition properly authenticated.—

I have no american News, there being no Arrivals since my last, but I have just heard a melancholy Acco' of Cap' Wickes having foundered on the Banks of Newfd-land. This I am much disposed to disbelieve, and the more so as I think the acco' does not carry with it an air of certainty. I have it in this Way. Cap' Ashburn who sailed from Bordeaux the 22d bound to S' Martins & thence to america with a load of Salt, was risen upon the 25th by his Crew and himself with two people who continued faithful to him were put into a Boat and sent a drift; they were taken up by a french Sloop and are now at this Place; this Cap' Ashburn tells me, that the Tuesday before he sailed which must be 18th a man arrived in a french Vessell from the Banks who called himself the Steward of the *Reprisal*, and said that when the Ship foundered he saved himself by the gang Ladder which supported him, till the french Vessell took him
up; Cap' Ashburn does not remember the name of this man; The Name of the Reprisal's Steward is Thomas Glenn; if therefore you have the name of the Reporter of this News thro' any other Chanel you may ascertain its truth, for my own part I must repeat my disbelief of it, tho' I think it my duty to communicate it to you.

I every day see the necessity of some proper place to keep my men as they begin to grow very discontent with their Situation. I do not pretend to say what is proper to be done, but I am sure if the Raleigh was here we should keep them with less Ex pense, less noise, & more satisfaction on allsides. The weather growing cold makes the Dolphin a very uncomfortable Habitation, & many are obliged to stay on shore at expence for want of sufficient room on board. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jona Williams J

1. See Silas Deane, for the American Commissioners in France, to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 21 Nov. 1777, above.
2. The survivor was the Reprisal's cook, Nathan Jaquays. Abraham Whipple to John Paul Jones, 14 June 1778. MiU-C, Abraham Whipple Letter Book.

November 30 (Sunday)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF COMMERCE

Gentlemen, Passy Nov 30th. 1777—

In a former Letter we acquainted you, that we had engaged an Officer one of the most Skilful in naval Affairs that this Country possess'd, to build us a Frigate in Holland on a new Construction, (Drafts of which we sent you) and to go over in her to America and enter your Sea Service. The Frigate is almost finished. She is very large, is to carry 30-24 pounders on one Deck, & is suppos'd equal to a Ship of the Line: But the infinite Difficulties we find in equipping and manning such a Ship in any neutral Port, under the Restrictions of Treaties, together with the want of Supplies from you, have induced us to sell her to the King, who by a large Pension offer'd to our Officer, has engaged him to remain in his Service, and pays us what we have expended on her.

We have built a small Frigate at Nantes, which we hope to get away soon laden with Supplies of various Sorts. We meet with Difficulties too in shipping Arms & Ammunition in her, but hope they will be surmounted. Several other Vessels, some under the Direction of M'. Ross, others belonging to French Merchants, are almost ready to sail for America, and we had thoughts of sending them in a little Fleet under Convoy of the Rawleigh & Alfred, but on Consultation, considering the Spies maintained by England in all the Ports, and thence the Impossibility of making up such a Fleet, without its being known so as to give time for a Superior Force to lie in wait for it, we concluded the Chance better of their going off singly as they should be ready. In these Vessels are Cloaths ready made for 30,000 Men, besides Arms, Cloths, Linnens & naval Stores to a great Amount, bought by us and M'. Ross. The private Adventures also will be very considerable. And as we shall continue our Endeavours to compleat your Orders, we hope if the Ships have common Success in passing you will be better provided for the next Campaign than you have been for any of the preceding.
How we are enabled to make these Supplies must be a matter of some Surprize to you, when you reflect that little or nothing from you has been received by us, since what came by Capt. Wicke's, till now by the Arrival of the Amphitrite; and that the seeming uncertainty of your publick Affairs have prevented hitherto our obtaining the Loan proposed. We have however found or made some Friends, who have helped, and will we are confident continue to help us.

Being anxious for supporting the Credit of Congress Paper Money, we procured a Fund for Payment of the Interest of all the Congress had proposed to borrow. And we mentioned in several of our Letters, that we should be ready to pay all Bills drawn for the Discharge of such Interest to the full value in Money of France, that is 5 Livres for every Dollar of Interest due. We were persuaded that thus fixing the Value of the Interest would fix the value of the Principal, and consequently of the whole Mass. We hope this will be approved, tho we have yet no Answer. We cannot apply that Fund to any other Purpose, and therefore wish to know as soon as may be the Resolution of Congress upon it. Possibly none of those Letters had reached you, or your Answers have miscarried: For the Interruptions of our Correspondence have been very considerable. Adams by whom we wrote early in the Summer was taken on this Coast, having sunk his Dispatches. We hear that Hammond shar'd the same Fate on your Coast. Johnson by whom we wrote in September was taken going out of the Channel; and poor Capt. Wickes, who sail'd at the same time & had Duplicates, we just now hear foundered near Newfoundland, every man perishing but the Cook. This loss is extremely to be lamented; as he was a gallant Officer & a very worthy Man. Your Dispatches also which were coming by a small Sloop from Morris's River, and by the Mere Bobie Packet, were both Sunk on those Vessels being boarded by English Men of War.

The Amphitrite's Arrival with a Cargo of Rice and Indigo, near 1000 Barrels of the one & 20 of the other, is a seasonable Supply to us for our Support, we not having for some time past (as you will see by our Former Letters) any Expectations of farther Supply from Mr Morris; and tho' we live here with as much frugality as possible, the unavoidable Expences and the continual Demands upon us for Assistance to Americans who escape from English Prisons, &c. &c, endanger'd our being brought to great Difficulties for Subsistence. The Freight of that Ship too calls for an enormous Sum, on Acc' of her long Demurrage.

We begin to be much troubled with Complaints of our armed Vessels taking the Ships and Merchandize of neutral Nations. From Holland they complain of the Taking the Sloop Chester Capt. Bray, belonging to Rotterdam, by two Privateers of Charlestown, called the fair American & the Experiment. From Cadiz of the Taking the French Ship Fortune, Capt Kenguen, by the Civil Usage Privateer, having on board Spanish Property: And here of the Taking of the Emperour of Germany from Cork with Beef belonging to the Marine of France, just off the Mouth of Bourdeaux River. We send herewith the Papers that we have received and Answers given relating to those Captures and we earnestly request that if upon fair Trials it shall appear that the Allegations are true, speedy Justice may be done & Restitution made to the Reclaimers: It being of the utmost Consequence to our Affairs in Europe that we should wipe off the Aspersions of our Enemies who proclaim us everywhere as Pirates, and endeavour to excite all the World against us. The Spanish Affair has already had very ill Effects at that Court, as we learn by [the] Return of the [Cou]rier mentioned [in] our last. We
have by Letters to our Correspondents at the several Ports done all in our Power to prevent such Mischiefs for the Future, a Copy of which we herewith send you.³

The European Maritime Powers embarras themselves as well as us by the double Part their Politicks oblige them to act. Being in their Hearts our Friends and wishing us Success, they would allow us every Use of their Ports consistent with their Treaties, or that we can make of them without giving open Cause of Complaint to England. And it being so difficult to keep our Privateers within those Bounds, we submit it to Consideration whether it would not be better to forbear Cruizing on these Coasts and bringing Prizes in here, till an open War takes place, which tho’ by no means certain seems every now and then to be apprehended on both Sides: Witness among other Circumstances the Recall of their Fishing Ships by France; ⁴ and the King of England’s late Speech.⁵ In Consequence of this embarress’d Conduct, our Prizes cannot be sold publickly; of which the Purchasers take Advantage in beating down the Price. And sometimes the Admiralty Courts are obliged to lay hold of them in consequence of Orders from Court obtain’d by the English Ambassador. Our People of course complain of this as unfriendly Treatment, and as we must not counteract the Court in the Appearances they seem inclined to put on towards England, we cannot set our Folks right by acquainting them with the essential Services our Cause is continually receiving from this Nation: And we are apprehensive that Resentment of that supposed unkind Usage, may induce some of them to make Reprisals, and thereby occasion a deal of Mischief. You will see some Reason for this Apprehension in the Letter from Capt. Babson,⁶ which we send you herewith; relating to their two Prizes confiscated here for false Entries: and afterwards delivered up to the English: for which however we have hopes of obtaining full Satisfaction, having already a Promise of Part.

The King of England’s Speech bullers [blusters] towards these Kingdoms as well as towards us. He pretends to great Resolution both of continuing this War, and of making two others if they give him occasion. Yet it is conceived he will with Difficulty find Men or Money for another Campaign of that already on his Hands; and all the World sees that is not for want of Will that he puts up with the Daily known Advantages afforded us by his Neighbours. They however, we have Reason to believe, will not begin the Quarrel as long as they can avoid it, nor give us any open Assistance of Ships or Troops. Indeed we are scarce allowed to know that they give us any Aids at all; but are left to imagine, if we please, that the Cannon, Arms &c. which we have received and sent, are the Effects of private Benevolence and Generosity. We have nevertheless the strongest Reasons to consider that the same Generosity will continue; and it leaves America the Glory of working out her Deliverance by her own Virtue & Bravery; on which with God’s Blessing we advise you chiefly to depend. — You will see by the Papers and a Letter of Intelligence from London, that the Continuance of the War is warmly condemn’d in Parliament by their wisest and ablest Men, in the Debates on the Speech; but the old corrupt Majority continues to vote as usual with the Ministers. In order to Lessen their Credit for the new Loans, we have caused the Paper,⁷ which we formerly mentioned, to be translated and printed in French & Dutch by our Agent in Holland. When it began to have a run there, the Government forbad the farther Publication, but the Prohibition occasions it to be more sought after, read and talked of.
The Monument for General Montgomery is finished and gone to Havre in nine cases to lie for a Conveyance. It is plain but elegant, being done by one of the best artists here, who complains that the 300 Guineas allow'd him is too little: and we are obliged to pay the additional charges of Package &c.—We see in the Papers that you have voted other Monuments, but we have received no Orders relating to them.—The Rawleigh & Alfred will be well fitted and furnished with everything they wanted, the Congress Part of the Produce of their Prizes being nearly equal to their Demands.

Be pleased to present our Dutiful Respects to the Congress, and assure them of our most faithful Services. We have the honour to be [&c.]

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

L, DNA, PCC, item 85, pp. 93–100 (M247, roll 114). Docketed: "Commissioners/to the Comme/Nov 30th 1777/rec'd May 2d by/Capl Young/Via Baltimore." Notation: "rec'd. May 2d 1778."

1. American Commissioners in France to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, 12 March 1777, NDAR 8: 672.
2. Lyon, subsequently the Continental Navy frigate Deane.
3. The American Commissioners in France to Commanders of Armed American Vessels, above at 21 Nov.
6. James Babson to Benjamin Franklin, 12 Nov., above.

December

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO BENJAMIN PEEL

Capt' Peale 1

Si² You are to Stay by the Brig to such time as all the formallity is Accomplish'd. And I you must Petition for A Survey on the Vessell And I beg you will take Special Care at the time the[y] Are on board² that the Vessell Shall make What is Sufficient And What materials is Wanted. When every thing is Compleated go to the Groine.² Apply to m² Lagoanere and follw his instructions to you heare from me which with Gods help will not be Long I am

G.C.

1. Benjamin Peel may have been prize master of Syren or Dispatch.
2. The area of the Spanish coast that includes the ports of Ferrol and Corunna.
December 1

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

[Extract] December 1st 1777.

... The Pacifique, a frigate of 14 guns, twelve-pounders, and a new ship lately launched at Nantes, carrying 24 guns on one deck, are now fitting with the utmost dispatch for Boston and will sail about the 20th of this month. They take in 400 bales of woollen goods, 15,000 suits of ready-made uniforms, and a quantity of arms; they both sail under French colours.

The captains of the American ships of war are gone to Lorient and are ordered to intercept if possible part of the West India convoy. They have received every necessary whatever from the King's stores at Lorient. . . .


1. Frigate Lyon, which would become Continental Navy frigate Deane.

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

[Extract] Treasury Chambers, ½ pt 1 P.M.

My dear Lord—With the information you have received, I have no difficulty to advise that the captains of the ships which were going to sail for the protection of the convoys should be expressly directed to take the Pacifique if they can. . . .


SILAS DEANE TO JOHN ROSS

Dear Sir Paris, Dec 1st, 1777.

I received yours of the 25th ultimo and should have replied two or three Days since, but Mr. Moyland setting out I chose to refer you to him who will better explain personally than can be done by Letter his plan.

I am happy to find there will not be any misunderstanding between Mr. Williams & him—Respecting the Dolphin I find by Mr. Williams that she cannot be dismissed until the Lyon sails, without great Prejudice; Mr. Hodge proposes to be at Nantes in a few Days who will consult you on the Spot & to him I refer as I shall leave it with him to make use of the Dolphin or not as you shall Judge Prudent. Cunningham has lately carried another Prize into Spain, loaded with Fish, and Suffer'd himself in a Gale of Wind on acco of his Mast being too large, he was altering it & getting ready for another Cruize—The Letter from thence was dated the 12 Nov—I shall be glad to hear of Greens being ready to sail & to know the arrangements you make as to freight, Consignments &c What Concern I have expect to share like others & have full Confidence in your Direction of it—I will only hint what occurs to me at present—that the Primary object is to ob-
tain a Cargo of Tobacco for the Ship back. To do which if the Salt & freight are not sufficient you must write Messrs. Willing & Morris to whom you will probably Consign her, to draw on my Brother, Barnabas Deane Esq. to make up my proportion of the Cargo back, in the next Plan if the Ship can not be loaded back and it should be found best to sell her to the Publick, my Interest in her as well as in her Cargo I desire may be paid to my Brother Simeon Deane at Petersburg Virginia should he be arrived there, if not to my Brother Barnabas Deane Esq. in Connecticut—I propose this should the Vessel be sold, as its possible she may be Changed with the Publick for another In that Case I should incline to continue my Interest, as a return of the Effects here is my Principal object—Please to let me know how soon the Ship will be ready & I will write you again on the Subject—Refer you to Mr. Moylan for on which I know not what Judgment to form except that Burgoyne is undoubtedly ruined, but affairs to the Southward do not look so favorable, tho I do not think them really bad. I am &c.

SD—

Mr. Jn. Ross—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. John Green, in the Brune.

Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L'Orient

A Versailles le 1er Xbre. 1777.

Je serois bien aise d'avoir, Monsieur, des informations précises sur l'origine du Sr Béral qui réside a l'Orient ou je crois qu'il est négociant. Vous voudrez bien me marquer s'il est regardé comme Citoyen de cette ville, ou comme Etranger, et quel est le genre de son commerce. Je vous prie de prendre ces éclaircissements sous main et en secret, et de me les adresser promptement.1 Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 1 December 1777

I would be pleased to have, Sir, precise information as to the background of one M. Béard, who resides at Lorient, where I believe he is a merchant. Would you be so kind as to inform me if he is considered a native of that city, or if he comes from elsewhere, and what is the nature of his business. I beg you to seek this information covertly and in secret, and to forward it to me promptly.1 I am [&c.]

de sartine


1. On 19 Dec. M. de Sartine acknowledged receipt of M. Gonet's letter of 8 Dec., clarifying the status of M. Béard, but as he did not recall "on what occasion I made the request, nor from which bureau my letter was dispatched, I am asking you to return it to me; the handwriting alone being able to put me back on the trail." Ibid., 225.
December 2

**THE LONDON CHRONICLE, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, TO TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1777**

London.

Letters from Corke, dated Nov. 20, mention, that a large Dutch ship had, two days before, been boarded by the crew of an American privateer, of 26 guns,\(^1\) off the Old Head of Kinsale, who plundered her of seven barrels of powder, several muskets, and other articles, under pretence of her being bound to America, with warlike stores for the use of the British troops.

1. Perhaps Massachusetts privateer ship Mars, Thomas Truxtun, commander, which had sailed from Nantes about 14 Nov. and by 15 Nov. was taking prizes. Gouyon De Mallèvre to Gabriel De Sartine, 19 Nov., above; Captain’s Journal, H.M.S. Greyhound, 23 Dec. 1777, above.

**NEW-LLOYD’S LIST (LONDON), TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1777**

The Mary, of Biddiford, was taken by the True Blue Privateer, and retaken off the Island of Terceira by the Experiment M. W.

**DEPOSITION OF JOHN PEARCE, LATE MASTER OF THE BRIG MERCURY**

The Mercury Brig^e^ about 150 Tons belonging to John Green Esq^r^ & Co of Poole, whereof John Pearce was late Master Sailed from Newfoundland the 25^th^ of August bound for Barcelona, with Three Thousand Two Hundred & Sixty two Quintals of Fish and on the 8^th^ of September, was taken by the Portsmouth Privateer of Portsmouth in New England, commanded by John Hart, and after taking Captain Pearce & all his Crew out of the Mercury, they dispatched her for Bordeaux; where Captain Pearce arrived about Eleventh of October in the Privateer as will more fully appear by his Protest made at Bordeaux the 20^th^ of the same Month; and on their Arrival he was informed by Captain Hart, that the Mercury had been sailed Some days before for Bilboa and about a week after that Captain Hart told him she was arrived at Bilboa where the Cargo was selling, and which was confirmed by the People belonging to the Privateer receiving Prize Money for the Mercury and also by Captain Simmonds’s Affidavit herewith,\(^1\) in which He mentions the Name of the Mercury wrote in her Stern had been erased.—

Captain Pearce was at Bordeaux for about a Month, and during his Stay there, He saw the Privateer cleaned, & compleatly fitted for the Sea, and She sailed on a Cruise a Day or Two before he left Bourdeaux which was on or about the 12^th^ day of November last.—

The foregoing is a true State of Facts relating to the capture of my late Brig^e^ Mercury.—

Witness my Hand

London Dec^e^ 2^d^ 1777

John Pearce

at Poole.—

or

at Messrs Bingley & Pitt

Berchin Lane
1058 EUROPEAN THEATER


1. See Deposition of Edward Symonds, 10 Nov. 1777, above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG

Capt. Young Paris 2d Decr 1777

Sir

You will receive by Mr Moylan dispatches for Congress, which you will secure ready for sinking in Case of Danger—On your Leaving the River Nantes it has been recommended as the safest to keep well in with the Coast of France until you can leave the Continent entirely—Of this you will be the best judge. We advise you to avoid speaking with every Vessel on your Passage, and to make the first safe Port you can in the United States; if the wind & weather permit some port near Boston appears to be the best. But must submit it to your Judgment as the winds may serve or as other Circumstances may occur. Capt. Bell will take a Passage with you, & we recommend to you to trust the Case of your Dispatches to him in Case of accident to yourself (which God forbid,) or on your arrival if the Care of your Vessel or other Circumstances prevent your going yourself express to Congress therewith, that you intrust them to him, but the Dispatches for Congress are not to be given to other persons than one of you, before they are delivered to Congress. Private Letters may be delivered or forwarded as you find Opportunity. Your Bills of Disbursements and Expences at Nantes you informed us would be settled by Mr Morris; we have only to say that the Hon W. Lee Esq being joint Agent with him ought to have an Acc of the Disbursements at Least for his Direction in his accs. This is not a matter of ours and we mention it as we are Confident you will do every thing proper to avoid any misunderstanding in that Affair. We most heartily wish you a safe & speedy Passage, and recommend you to the Notice of Congress for your services. We are &c

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM

Capt. Cunningham Paris Decr 2d 1777

Sir

The Sloop Revenge now under your command being put under the direction of Messrs John Ross, & Wm Hodge you are directed to render them an Account of your Proceedings, and Disbursements in the Sloop from the Time of your leaving Dunkirk, and also of what, you may have received in sales of Prizes, that they may adjust and settle the Same—and you are to attend their orders in future respecting the Sloop &c—I am [&c.]

Silas Deane

A Copy

Copy, ScHi, Henry Laurens Papers.
Gentlemen

Yours of the 12 of Novr I rec'd & return you my thanks for your kind attention to our Affairs in your Port—This will be handed you by Mr Hodge a Gentleman of Philadelphia, whom I recommend to your Civilities. He is empowered to take the Care and direction of Capt. Cunninghams Vessel, and it is with pleasure I assure you that you may rely on him as a person well acquainted with american affairs and on whose information you may depend. I shall be happy in the Continuance of yr correspondence. I am &c.

S. D.


Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L'Orient

Versailles 2. Xbre. 1777.


Vous m'informez par la prête du Projet qu'ont Messrs. Dessaudrais Sebire et Compagnie d'armer leur Vaisseau le Beaumont de 11. à 1200. Tonneaux pour Cadix ou pour nos Colonies de l'Amérique. Rien ne peut empêcher cette Spéculaiton, quoique ces Négociants vous ayant assuré qu'il n'entéroit point de Munitions de guerre dans la composition de Son armement, vous avez bien fait de leur defendre a tout evenement d'en charger ce vous y tiendrez exactement la main. J'approuve par cette raison l'observation que vous faites sur l'artillerie que ce Vaisseau doit avoir pour sa defense. il est certain que si elle était dans sa calle on pourroit la Soupçonner de cargaison. d'apris cela il faut absolument que les Canons Soient monté en batterie.

Quant à l'Equipage qu'ils proposent de lui donner, dès que vous trouvez que 200. hommes ne sont pas un nombre trop considerable en egard a l'artillerie du Vais.

Je concens qu vous en permettrez la levée en faisant cependant en sorte de conserver pour le service les meilleurs matelots.

Vous me rendez compte par votre seconde Lettre de la suite de l'expédition des frégates américaines les Raleigh et l'alfred et du changement de destination du Navire la Brune. Je ne puis que me référer à lettre que je vous ai écrite le 22. 9bre. au Sujet de ce Batiment et vous ne la laisserez pas partir que vous n'ayiez retiré du Capitaine sa Soumission de n'aller que dans nos Colonies et de faire son retour en france.

Les raisons que ont déterminé cette précaution pour ce Batiment doivent être apliquées au Beaumont et vous exigerez également du Capitaine une semblable soumission. En général vous en userez de même pour tous les Batimens d'une certaine marque destiner pour les Colonies; et comme vous l'observez fort bien Je donnais le même ordre dans tous les Ports.

a l'egard des Commissions en guerre que vous este instruit que le Congrês donne a nos Capitaines votre réflexion est très juste: une parieelle conduite est contraire aux vœus du Gouvernement et il ne peut l'autoriser en aucune façon. vous aurez donc soin de signifier aux Capitaines de votre départemt que l'intention du Roy est qu'ils n'acceptent pas ces Commissions, que leur désobéissance sera très sévérement punie et que dans le cas de prise ils n'auront à espérer aucune protection de la part
I have received, Sir, your two letters of the 17th and 26th of last month.

You informed me by your first of the plan of Mssrs. Dessaudrais Sebire and Co. to load their ship Beaumont with from 1100 to 1200 casks for Cadiz or for our colonies in America. Nothing can prevent this speculation. Although these merchants have assured us that there would be no munitions of war entered into the makeup of her cargo, you did well to forbid all instances of their loading any, and you will keep it under your control. For this reason I agree with the observation you made about the artillery that these ships ought to have for their own defense. It is certain that if it were in the hold one might suspect it to be cargo. Accordingly, it is absolutely necessary that the cannon be mounted in broadside.

As for the crew that they plan to put on her, as soon as you find that 200 men are not too considerable a number in regard to the artillery on the ship, I consent to your promising a levy, making efforts, however, to conserve the best sailors for the service.

You reported by your second letter about the result of the sailing of the American frigates Raleigh and Alfred, and of the change of destination of the vessel La Brune. I can only make reference to the letter which I wrote you on 22 November concerning this ship, and you will not allow her to depart without procuring from her captain his pledge to go only to our colonies, and to return to France.

The reasons which have determined these precautions for this ship should be applied to the Beaumont, and you will require a similar pledge from the captain. In general you will make use of it as well for all ships of a certain mark destined for our colonies, and therefore you will observe it fully. I issued the same order in all ports.

In regard to the letters of marque which you learned that the Congress is giving to our captains, your views are very accurate. Such conduct is contrary to the views of the Government and cannot be authorized in any way. You will be very careful, therefore, to point out to the captains of your department that it is the king's wish that they not accept these commissions, that their disobedience will be very severely punished, and that in case of capture they will not be able to expect any protection on the part of the government. I shall also write a circular letter on this subject to the other departments. I am, [&c.]

L, FrLAL, Series 1, E4 80, fols. 175–76. Addressed at foot: “M. Gonet.” Docketed: “R. du 8. 9e 1777.” “Received 8 November [December] 1777.”

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGennes

[Paris, 2 Dec. 1777]

L’Ambassadeur d’Angleterre vient de recevoir des Informations exactes touchant le Vaisseau Anglois Ann Susanna Capé Taylor que des Pirates Américains ont pris il y a quelques tems et Conduit dabord a l’Orient; ce Vaisseau se trouve actuellement a Pelerin a trois Lieus de Nantes. L’Ambassadeur parle d’apres la de-
position d’un Homme très digne de foi qui a vu ce Vaisseau à Pelerin le Vingt Six du Mois de Novembre, on a effacé le Nom qui étoit peint sur la poupe et on travaille à le défigurer tant que l’on peut. Il y a actuellement beaucoup d’ouvriers occupés à l’équipement de ce Vaisseau qui doit porter donnant le Nom de la Mignonne.

L’Ambassadeur d’Angleterre qui ne peut pas douter de l’exactitude de cette Information, proteste, comme il est de son devoir, contre l’irregularité de ce procedé, et demande, que le dit Vaisseau avec tous ses Mats, Acrets Voiles &c et toute sa Cargaison soit mis en sequestre pour être restituée aux Propriétaires Anglois ou leur Ayant cause des qu’ils Auront produit Leurs Titres de propriété.

Il est tres persuadé que la Cour de France reconnoitra dabor la Justice de cette demande et qu’elle sera toujours bien eloigné d’Autoriser ces Ventes fraudulenses.

Stornont.

[Translation]

The Ambassador of England has just received exact information dealing with the English ship Ann Susanna, Captain Taylor, which American pirates seized some time ago and took first to L’Orient. The ship is now at Pelerin, three leagues from Nantes. The Ambassador says, according to a statement from a very reliable source who saw the ship at Pelerin on the 26th of the month of November, the name painted on the ship’s stern has been removed and workmen are working to alter its appearance as much as they can. There are now many workmen busy outfitting the ship that will bear henceforth the name la Mignonne.

The English Ambassador, who does not question the accuracy of this information, protests, as it is his duty, against the irregularity of this procedure, and demands that the said vessel, together with its masts, rigging, sails, and cargo, be sequestered in order to be returned to the English owners or their representative as soon as they have produced their titles of ownership.

He is very certain that the French Court will recognize, at first sight, the justice of this demand and that it will always be anything but inclined to authorize these fraudulent sales.

Stornont


CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gen^a L’,Orient Decr 2d 1777

Inclos is a Letter which I most earnestly desire you will deliver to the minister of marine—You will Judge from the Contents we have not been Treated in a manner agreeable to the Character we appear in—I think the Honour of the united states violated in this Instance—and must if Possible demand satisfaction; in my Person, as their officer I represent the States and whatever Ill Treatment I meet with as an officer, is an Insult offered to them. the Commissary here took upon him to accuse us of delay, of being at Paris on Pleasure, and that we did not design to go to sea, that we was not doing anything toward fitting the ships &c &c. and said the ships should go to
sea, and that Instant he order'd Two Pilots onboard to Carry the ships out don or not don (is this Friendship or Insolence of office?) we stay'd here on Promise of assistance and protection and now thy want to turn us out in the face of an enemy without guns and provisions—I am satisfy'd our officers have used the utmost dispatch their vile Customs will allow of—had they given us free leave As have taken our own method we should have been long ago ready—the ships are now in the Road, with their Ballast and water, tommorrow shall begin to take in the Guns and Provisions—I am exceedingly vex'd to think I Cannot Convince them that we are heartily rid of them and that we want to get away, full as much as they want to have us gon—they had better debar the american ships of war any access, not play this fast and looss game it is Triffling with Serious things—you will please to Translate the Letter and give it a proper adress—you have nothing to fear from any rash act of ours here; no, I will hold a Candel to—a Little Longer for the sake of Conveniency to those that are obligd to be in their Clutches; neither am I insensible we have hitherto been obligd to the French, nor do I doubt to see the day they will be obligd to us—for they soon must Joyn us to thrash the English; or we Joyn England to help to thrash them—I am [&c.]

Tho Thompson

So I Leave you to Judge the Consistancy of delivering the Letter but urge it exceedingly, as to myself The Commissary in very Insolent terms told me our delays would make us forfit the Love of the King and government and deprive us of that Indulgence they wish'd to Shew us


December 3

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

3rd [Dec'] Wednesday Rainy weather the People in the L. Prison Once More Detected in Mining, which is the 4th. Attempt they have made

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]
Secret N° 172

Paris December 3rd. 1777

My Lord

... On Monday Last I received the inclosed Letter from M' Liege, and in Consequence of the Information He gives me drew up a little Memorial—which I delivered to M de Vergennes yesterday. He read it aloud, made some general Remarks upon the fraud, and Artifice employed by Individuals to elude the Orders of Government, and promised me that the Matter should be attended to.

I then told Him that there was a subject of much greater Importance on which I should give in no Memorial, but should state it to Him plainly and strongly in a very
few Words, being persuaded that the bare stating it would be sufficient. I have good reason to believe Sir, that a vast Quantity of Arms, purchased for the use of the Rebels, is going to be shipped on board of the American Privateers that are at Nantes and L'Orient: If my Intelligence is exact there is no less than fifty thousand Stand of Arms M de Vergennes seemed surprized at so large a Quantity. I know very well Sir how difficult, how improbable it is to procure such a Quantity without extraordinary assistance but that is a Point I will not enter into Now, as I could not bring direct positive Proof what share M de Montieu has in all this I will not pretend to inquire, but confine myself to this plain Proposition which applies directly to the present state of the Case.

Such Quantities of Arms cannot be shipped in your Ports without the Knowledge of those who command there, and those Officers never can, or dare suffer a thing of this Nature, if the Intentions of this Court are agreeable to its friendly Professions. I said this shortly and Strongly, and left the Matter there. M de Vergennes did not Attempt to contravert the Principle I had advanced, but affected to doubt of the Truth of my Information, said that He would speak to M de Sartines on the Subject, and took a short note to Assist his Memory.2 He added that positive Orders had been sent to oblige the two Privateers the Raleigh and Alfred, to put immediately to sea, so that he imagined they were actually sailed. I had no Opportunity of seeing M de Maurepas alone.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

Most Confidential

My Lord

I enterd into no particulars with M de Vergennes but I think it my Duty to communicate to your Lordship all that I have learnt with Regard to the Arms that are shipping at Nantes for the use of the Rebels. Some Months ago Mr Deane purchased of Mons' Montieu a very large Quantity of these arms that were reformed in that Transaction of M. de Bellegarde which made so much Noise.1 He purchased about Eighty thousand Stand of arms at a very low Rate. They were deposited in a large Warehouse which the Rebel agents have hired at Nantes and which is situated directly over against the Exchange, but on the other Side of the River. In the lower Part of this Warehouse are many Bales of Cloth and other Goods for the use of the Rebels. I have spoken to a Person who has been often in this Warehouse and seen and examined the arms many of which are fit for Service. These arms are not Shipped in great Quantities at a time, at least have not been so hitherto. They are put up in chests of which Every Ship that goes from Nantes to North America takes some...
**JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE**


"Respecting the Cutter 2 mentioned to you by M' Deane M' Hodge part owner, was the first who spoke to me of her from some Causes of discontent on acct of the unsuccessful expensive Cruizes of that vessel, when he intimated to me his beliefs, that M' Deane wished to get ride of her, & was willing to dispose of the part owned by the public.—At same time pressing me to become purchaser I concluded in Consequence thereof to speak to M' Deane, & know his Sentiments, who confirmed it but from the impossibility of adopting any regular conclusive mode of Settlement, he told me that the Vessel could not be considered equal to the first Cost, nor practicable to ascertain her value, but proposed to give directions to the Captain & to M' Hodge to have the hull & materials examined, & the Value or Condition of them Mentioned in an Inventory, & if approved of by me to take the public part of her on my own Acct. I shoud only be charged what the Committee of Congress & I agreed on in America for the Interest they had in the Cutter, which he doubted not woud be agreeable to all parties—Upon those Conditions, I accepted of the proposial, merely to oblige M' Hodge, as the Vessel might be employed more to his Interest under private Instructions than that of the present, & left it interely to M' Deane & M' Hodge to settle it in this Manner, assigning me the orders—This business not being final, the Commissioners may approve or disapprove as I want no favor or Interference to the prejudice of the public—but is disposed to be relieved of this vessel, leaving the Settlement on M' Deanes plans M' Hodge being at Paris will receive the Instructions necessary to give the private owners possession of her—I have lengthened this epistle to give you the particulars. In the mean time I have &c &c.”


1. Arthur Lee to John Ross, 26 Nov. 1777, above.
2. Continental Navy cutter *Revenge*.
3. Another copy has “if”. ViU, Lee Family Papers.
Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth

Corunna 3rd December 1777

My Lord.

I am honor'd with your Lordship's circular Letter of the 4th: of last month, and sincerely rejoice at the happy news contained therein.

On Friday last the 30th: Instant several english vessels being seen off this Harbour Cunningham put to Sea, and in less than thirteen Hours from his Departure, within Cannon Shot of this Harbour, took and sent into Ferrol the Brig Syren Captain James Renolls from Newfoundland with 2500 Quintals of Codfish. The master and all the Crew excepting three were brought in here the same night, and have made their Protest, an attested Copy of which I immediately sent to the Captain General with a strong memorial representing the Affront Cunningham had offer'd to His Catholick Majesty's Rights by seizing a vessel under the Protection of his Cannon and praying that the Ship and Cargoe might be restored to its real Owners since it could not be consider'd a legal Capture.

The Answer he returned was to the same Purpose as those he has constantly hitherto been pleased to amuse us with, viz that he will examine into it. He promised the same in his Answer to the Representation I made about the forcibly seizing and carrying off the Seaman John Jordan (of which I had the Honor to acquaint your Lordship in my last No: 71) yet never made the least Enquiry about it. It is in vain to expect Redress here, I am rather inclined to think that immediate Permission will be given to land and dispose of the Cargoe without even once examining our Claim as has already been done with the Cargoe of the Two Brothers (mentioned in my Letters No. 68, & 69,) for the Sale of which Leave has been obtained from Madrid. Nevertheless I flatter myself His Majesty's Ambassador to whom I have transmitted the necessary Documents will meet with better Success, and obtain the Restoration of the Brig Syren to the master and Crew, who remain here in expectation of the Result.

It is said Cunningham has sent two other Prizes into Ferrol but I have not yet received any certain Information thereof, however he continues cruising at the mouth of this Harbour within the Headland that not a vessel can escape him. His principal Object at present is a french vessel named the Gracieux Cap: Emanuel de Tournois which is every moment expected from London with a valuable Cargoe of woolens.

The Cantabria Packet is just arrived from Buenos Ayres, and brings Intelligence that on the Arrival there of the Diana Packet, which left this Harbour six Months ago, Peace was proclaimed and all Hostilities ceased. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

P.S. The Brig Dispatch, Emanuel LeGeyte of Jersey bound to this Place from Newfoundland with Codfish is taken and this moment sent in here by Cunningham.

December 4

"Extract of a Letter from Cork, Dec. 4."

"On the 11th ult. the brig Emperor of Germany, Capt. Hawkins, of this port, was taken near the tower of Courdelong, in the river of Bourdeaux, by the Portsmouth privateer of Portsmouth in North America, Capt. Hart, master, mounting 26 nine pounders and 150 men. The crew were carried on board the privateer; and asked to enter, which, on refusing, they were sent on board a pilot boat and carried into Bourdeaux. On arrival there, three of the said crew entered on board an American letter of marque, the Hetty, of Philadelphia, mounting six carriage guns and four swivels, bound from Bourdeaux to Philadelphia, with tea, bale goods, and cordage, but were to take in salt at St. Martin's. The three men of the Emperor of Germany's crew, with four others shipped at Bourdeaux, concerted a scheme to take the said ship, which they effected in the night of the 25th ult. having had the Captain, with three of his men tied, sent them on shore in the ship's boat; the remainder of the crew joined them in bringing the said prize safe into Dungarvan on Monday last. The ship and cargo, it is thought, will bring near 7000L."


Captain John Paul Jones to the American Commissioners in France

Gentlemen

Nantes Dec 4\textsuperscript{th} 1777.

Inclosed you have copies of letters which I had the honor of writing you from Portsmouth \textsuperscript{1}—the latter of which could not have reached your hands as I understand that the mail was destroyed—I sailed from Portsmouth the 1\textsuperscript{st} UltO and arrived safe in this River in the Ranger the 2\textsuperscript{d} Currt\textsuperscript{e} having taken two Brig\textsuperscript{t}ines from Malaga laden with Fruit for London\textsuperscript{2}—I ordered them for this Place or Bourdeaux—I did not meet with an Opportunity of making a greater number of captures—my orders were not to Cruise unless I saw a fair Opportunity—I however brought too a great number of Vessels which did not appear to be English property.

I fell in with a Fleet of Ten Sail about 80 leagues to the Westward of Ushant under a strong Convoy—but they were kept so close together that I found it impossible, notwithstanding my endeavours, to detach some of them from the Convoy.—\textsuperscript{3}

The Ranger wants Iron Ballast and spare sails sails—she is rather Crank owing to the want of the former—and to her being somewhat-over-Masted—I think it will be necessary to reduce her lower Masts and her bottom is very foul—I shall lose no time but go on with the necessary Outfit in order to have her as soon as possible in order for Service.—I wait your orders which I shall obey with particular pleasure—I have sundry Orders which I shall forward with the dispatches now in the hands of Mr Williams for your perusal.

As the post is Just going I must curtail my letter.—Our affairs in America I left in the most promising Situation. I have the honor to be [\&c.]

Jno P Jones
Jonathan Williams, Jr., to The American Commissioners in France

[Extract]
Hon'ble Gentlemen (No 96) Nantes Decem' 4. 1777.

I have at present to inform you of the arrival of the Frigate Ranger Capt. Jones with the Duplicates of the Dispatches I sent you by Mr. Austin. This Ship left Portsmouth the 1st of November but brings not a syllable in addition to what we have had, and as Capt. Jones tells me that his Dispatches were on board before Mr. Austin sailed, I conclude that the Expence of a Courier Express may be saved, and accordingly shall keep them a day or two in expectation of a private hand. If I am disappointed in this I shall then send off a man and horse.—If you do not intend that Capt. Jones shall immediately sail I shall be glad to send my men on board of his Ship as I am afraid of uneasiness among them so little Room is there for them on board the Dolphin. Capt. Jones made two prizes in his way hither, but they are not yet arrived here. . . . I am [&c.]

J. Williams J


2. Brigantines George and Mary.

Captain Gustavus Conyngham to The American Commissioners in France

Sir: ferroll. Decemb. 4th.

I was Yesterday Oblig'd to put in hear being Chased all the forenoon by A frigate, & the Weather Being Bad I thought it most prudent to put in, I See by your Letter to the prize master of the Brig heare that you imagine there will be Some Dispute by the reason of the Capt protest She was So nyh [nigh] the Shore this every body is Sure it his interest So to do, but will not our protest be of equal force I think it Ought to be and furder neither Vessels or from the shore Can be any Witness one way or Other but to Close all I have Sold her and Cargoe to the same man that bought the two Brothers, for the Sum of Six thousand hard Dll. [dollars], the half to be paid Directly to me the Other half to you in 30 Days. With Giving you sufficient Suerty and he to run all risque Whatever in every Case, and I beleive will Close the Bargaine with him for the Other Brig that is with you if not Sold, On this head Shall Write you if Concluded on, the next Newfoundland fleet will be on the Coast in 8 or 10 days if winds will Answer—


CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

December 5

Nantes Decr 5th. 1777.

Gentlemen

I had the honor of writing to you yesterday by post under cover by Mr. Williams—I inclosed copies of two letters which I wrote you previous to my departure from Portsmouth—together with a plan which I drew up at Philadelphia on the Regulation and Equipment of our infant Navy.—I now inclose you a letter which I had the honor to receive in charge from the Secret Committee in May last—I my then orders were to deliver it into your own hands—but as Mr. Williams Assures me that he will send it by an Opportunity Altogether certain—and as I think my presence here is necessary for a few days until the Equipment &c. of the Ranger is fairly begun I have taken the liberty of putting the letter into his care.

I am here ready to receive and to pay cheerful and prompt Obedience to your Orders. It is my first and favorite Wish to be Employed in Active and Enterprizing Services When there is a prospect of rendering Acceptable Services to America. The singular Honor which Congress hath done me by their generous acknowledgments of my past Services hath inspired me with Sentiments of Gratitude which I shall carry with me to my Grave—and if a life of Services devoted to America can be made instrumental in securing its Independence I shall regard the continuance of such Approbation as an honor far superiour to what Kings ever could bestow.—

I am ready to lay before you my Orders which I have received from Congress—at present I take the liberty of inclosing for your inspection a very honorable and Unexpected Appointment which I received in February last the intention whereof was rendered Abortive by the Jealousy of the then Commodore Hopkins.²

I have always since we have had Ships of War been persuaded that small Squadrons could be employed to far better Advantage on private expeditions and would distress the Enemy infinitely more than the same force could do by cruising either Jointly or Separately—were strict Secrecy Observed on our part the Enemy have many important Places in such a defenceless Situation that they might be effectually Surprised and Attacked with no very considerable Force—We cannot yet Fight their Navy as their numbers and Force is so far Superiour to ours—therefore it seems to be our most natural Province to Surprize their defenceless places and thereby divide their attention and draw it off from our Coasts. but you see that my honorable Correspondent is, and I know that many others are of the same opinion.

I wish for opportunites to testify with how much respect I have the honor to be [&c.]

1. Secret Committee of the Continental Congress to the American Commissioners in France, 9 May 1777. NDAR 8: 941.
2. On the unrealized plan to have Jones command a squadron in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, see NDAR 7: 1109–12, 1315–16, and 1318–20.
Honored Sir

I take the liberty of inclosing two introductory letters Addressed to you in behalf of my Lieutenant—Who since his embarkation into the Service in July last under my Command hath behaved with becoming dilligence and Attention to duty.—should I have the honor of being called to Paris—or should any Alteration immediately take place in my Command I shall have an Opportunity of giving you further information on this head meantime I am &c.

Jn° P Jones

---

**EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM AN OFFICER ON BOARD THE RANGER CONTINENTAL SHIP OF WAR, JOHN PAUL JONES, ESQ; COMMANDER, DATED NANTZ, DECEMBER 5, 1777.**

"We arrived here after a pleasant Passage of 32 Days—Near the Land’s End, a Man at the Mast Head saw 17 Sail, which we gave Chace to, and they proved to be the Gibraltar Fleet, under Convoy of a 74 Gun Ship; and we had then got under his Command with the two Prizes we had taken, and knew not what to do, but our Captain took a very wise Step, which was, to heave to with the Convoy, and there lay with our Prizes, till the Commodore of the Fleet made Sail, which was in about two Hours; we then made Sail with the Convoy and tarried with them until almost Night, and then tackt Ship to the Southward, and got clear: had he suspected us to be Americans, we must have been captur’d, but he took us and our Prizes to be Part of his Convoy. I believe Capt. Jones will get a Frigate, he is a Gentleman of great COURAGE and CONDUCT, and is deserving of the best Ship in America; his men greatly like him, I expect we shall have bloody Noses before we return, especially if Capt. Jones keeps the Range; for he had as lives run along-side of a Frigate as a Merchantman. A Brig arriv’d from Boston the Day before us and brought the News of Burgoyne’s Surrender."

*Freeman’s Journal, or New-Hampshim Gazette (Portsmouth),* 14 Apr. 1778.
1. H.M.S. *Invincible*, Captain Hyde Parker, Sr.
2. Brigantines *George* and *Mary*.
3. Brigantine *Penet*, John Harris, master, engaged by the Massachusetts Board of War to transport Jonathan Loring Austin with dispatches to the American Commissioners in France.

---

**JOURNAL OF H.M.S. BEDFORD, CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO**

1777

December

Friday 5th

Cape Finesterre S 32° [illeg.] Dis° 12 Leagues

Mod° and fair at 7 AM saw and gave Chace to a Sail in the SW° Q° at Cape Finestere bore SBW Dis° 12 L° at Noon spoke with the Chace found her the *Annie Brig* from Newf° which had been taken by the *Sturdy Beggar* 11th Nov° and was going to Bilboa or Bourdeaux
Reverend Sir

Both my duty and present Situation oblige me to take the liberty of writing to you; Had I been treated as any man of my station should Expect here At Dunkirk, I could have been of some Service to the Cause long since, moreover there is no greater Sign of Our Departure at present than was ten days Ago as the wind still continues in the same point, besides Our Going to Nants by Sea is very precarious, as there are so many people here who make it their business to inform the English of the most minute things that Are here transacted And who very well know we are for Going there, however should the wind Serve we must go, as for my part, which is in some Respect Shame-full, I have not the Second shirt to wear nor much of Any other Apparel, however I must content myself until I get to Nants, where I earnestly Reacornmend myself to your protection. I have Served since the year Seventy five,' And Sailed from Philadelphia in the month of February last, honoured with The Commission of first Lieutenant on board the Hornet A Continental Sloop Commanded by John Nicholson Esq. Now in Forton prison from whence I have made my Escape with five others all Safe Arrived; I have met with Mr Johnston 2 of London who treated me most kindly and payed my Expences to Dunkirk And Gave me An order upon Mr Blake 3 here, which he should have Accepted had Mr Hodge not been here, who took no more notice of me than of the lost Sailor. I have the honour Sir of Subscribillg myself [&c.]

Dunkirk 10th ye 6th 1777

W: Moran

1. Moran earlier had been a master's mate in Andrew Doria. NDAR 4: 712, 1329; 5: 29, 727; 9: 1007.
3. Perhaps William Blake of South Carolina, merchant at Nantes.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

à Versailles le 6. Xbre. 1777.

J'ay reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 1er de ce mois par laquelle vous m'informez que les Capitaines des frégattes anglo-américaines le Raleigh et L'Alfred sont arrivés à L'Orient, et que vous leur avez notifié de mettre en mer au premier vent; j'approve ce que vous avez fait à ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine
[Translation]

Versailles, 6 December 1777.

I have received, Sir, your letter of the first of this month by which you inform me that the captains of the American frigates Raleigh and Alfred have arrived at L'Orient, and that you have notified them to put to sea with the first wind. I approve of what you have done on this subject. I am, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E4 80, fol. 187. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet à l'orient." Docketed: "Classes R."; "Mariners' Registration Received."

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

Versailles 6. Xbre. 1777.

Je reçois des plaints, Monsieur, que vous voulez forcer les Capitaines des frégates américaines de partir sans leurs vivres et leur artillerie. Si cela est vous allez trop loin: il suffis que vous exigiez leur départ dès qu'elles seront en stat de reprendre la mer. Je vous prie de me mander ce qui en est; et en faisant exécuter les ordres que je vous ai donnés ci-devant, de ne point donner lieu à des plaints sur la manière dont vous les exécutés. Rapellez vous ce que je vous ai dis moi même à ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 6 December 1777

I am receiving protests, Sir, that you wish to force the captains of the American frigates to leave without their provisions and their artillery. If this is true, you are going too far: It suffices that you require their departure as soon as they are in readiness to put to sea. I ask you to inform me what the situation is, and in putting into execution the orders which I have given you formerly, do not give occasion for protests over your manner of their execution. Call to mind what I have told you personally on this subject. I am, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E4 80, fol. 183. Addressed at foot: "M Gonet." Docketed: "R. le 10 Xo; "Received 10 December."

DU BOISVIOLLETTE GENEVOIS & CIE. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Sir

Having made an agreement with M‘ John King in behalf of the Common Wealth of Virginia for a quantity of Salt to be deliver’d in James River, ¶ our Ship the Algonquin, as you‘ll be pleased to See by the inclosed Contract, this Ship is quite ready Since a fortnight to put in Sea, only expecting a fair Wind, having for Pilote for the American Cost M‘ Joseph Pryce from Philadelphia who is returning to america after having been a Six months time detained Prisoner in England by the Treachery of his Crew.¹

The merit of this is to ask the Favour of you, to give us the Signals that we are to use upon the Cost of America for to avoid running in to any harbour where there may
be any English Men of Wars riding for ancor, and as We are entirely unknown to you, we Send this under the Cover of our Friends Messrs Dupont & Fils Banq at Paris, who will inform you that We are not able to abuse of the favour we asks, and We dare Say that our ship in the present Circonstances, will be much desired in Virginia.

We Expects the favour of few words in answer at the first post, and return of the Contract, remaining most respectfully [&c.]

Nantes Dec 6th 1777. du Boisviolette Genevois & Co


JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honle Gentlemen

Nantes 6 Dec 1777.

I have kept the Duplicates of the Dispatches to this Time in Expectation of a private Hand, that failing I am now obliged to send a Man on purpose, but in the least expensive way. If you have no further commands for him please to discharge him directly; he is not to return Post unless you order him so to do.—

The minister lately sent orders to stop the Lion, after that, orders came to allow but a certain number of men to each Ship, and now to compleat our ruin, Orders have arrived at the Commissarys, that the french merchant who fits out Ships for the French Islands shall give security at the Office that they shall go directly thither . . . and the Captains and Crews shall return to France, in failure of which he is to answer in his proper Person. This stops every Expedition that is now preparing as French Property for america as neither Mr Peltier nor any other Frenchman will subject himself to the penalty. I presume that the late good news from america and the present prosperous State of our military affairs will operate to obtain from ministry a repeal of these orders, in expectation of which I shall go on loading the Ships (which are continually taking in, but if you cannot obtain an alteration in these orders, we shall not be able to dispatch any of them. I therefore hope that the present moment of our prosperity will be employed to procure a permision to sail, For we are already much too far advanced in the Season.

You have never recalled your orders to me relating to the management of the Ships of War Prizes &c. I was therefore on the arrival of the Ranger at a loss how to act. I will never disobey your Directions and yet I wish to avoid disputes, which can do no good, and may do hurt to our affairs; in this Situation Mr Ross undertook to settle the matter between Mr Morris & myself and desired him to empower me by Letter to act.—Mr Morris spoke to me about it himself, and expressed his wish for a good understanding between us, I told him I desired to preserve it, and wished only to do my Duty to you and the public. He then wrote me a Letter by which he gives me the management of concerns in future, in the manner he has hitherto done to Messrs G and P. I in answer accept it, requiring him to furnish me from Time to Time with the necessary Funds. These we shall no doubt be obliged to apply to you for, over & above what we may be able to get out of the hands of the above mentioned House, and the proceeds of prizes; one arrived to day, a small Brig with Lemons Raisins & 11 quarter Cask of Wine, which we have run off at 12500 Livres; this is as
much as I expected to get for her.—The Frigate will want many supplies, and must have them from some where, it was therefore necessary that some steps should be taken, and let who will transact the Business I suppose the money must in the end be paid by you. My Object therefore in consenting to this arrangement, was only that the public Business should not suffer, and by it I comply with your orders without opposing any one. I do not wish to interfere in the matter, nor is it my desire to make any private advantages. I only strive to do my Duty without any disagreeable altercation, but if you see any impropriety in this piece of Conduct, I beg you will signify it and I will act agreeable to your orders only; I flatter myself however you will not disapprove of the measure, or, if you do you will kindly allow my Intentions to have been good & point out my Error.—I have the honour to be [&c.]

J Williams J

1. Ellipsis in the original. For the order referred to see Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L'Orient, 2 Dec., above.
2. Gruel and Penet.
3. Thomas Morris, stating that private business fully occupied his time, consented to having Williams take care of the business of the Secret Committee, splitting sales commissions between them. Williams agreed to the arrangement. Morris to Williams and Williams to Morris, both 5 Dec. 1777, PPAmP, Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 131, and vol. 37, 123.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CADIZ, DEC. 6, FROM THE MASTER OF THE TWO SISTERS, A NEWFOUNDLER."

"On the 12th ult. a few leagues to the westward of Cape Ferrol, we fell in with an American privateer, called the Boston Hero, of 18 guns and 120 men, who ordered all the crew into a pilot-boat we spoke with, that landed us at the Groyne. His sending us all on shore, made me suspect he meant to dispose of the cargo at some of the Spanish ports: I therefore wrote to Cadiz, as the wind was fair for that port when they took us, giving a description of the vessel to Mr. Williams, who by return of post informed me of her arrival there. I immediately set out for this place, and on my arrival entered a protest against her being sold, or her cargo, and doubt not of her being restored to me. I find the above is the usual way the American privateers now do; they get rid of the English crew, then put in hands of their own, forge papers, and pretend they come from America."


December 8

EARL OF SANDWICH TO LORD NORTH

A Paper sent to Lord North on 8th December 1777 relative to the American war and urging more efforts to be made at home.

The mode of carrying on the war in America has been such for the last two years that the fleet has not been employed in the purposes in which it can be most useful.
towards distressing the enemy, and making them feel their inability of holding out against the mother country.

Lord Howe has had this year under his command about 90 ships of all sorts, six of them of the line and ten two-deck ships, that is to say ships of fifty and forty-four guns; and it was natural to suppose that with such a force properly stationed he could have made it very difficult for the Americans to receive their supplies, carry on their trade, and fit out privateers to annoy the trade of Great Britain. The contrary however has been the case [has happened], because the greatest part of Lord Howe's fleet has been employed in convoying, embarking and disembarking the troops, and attending the operations of the army, which his Lordship in his first letters after his arrival in America mentions as his principal object, to which all others must give place. I do not mean to say that this was wrong, but the consequence of it was that our trade suffered, and that the enemy got the supplies from Europe by which they have been enabled to resist us.

It must not however be imagined that any force will be sufficient entirely to execute the purpose of blocking up all the rebels' ports and putting a total stop to their privateering; for along so extensive a coast, full of harbours and inlets, many ships will in spite of all our efforts get in and out by taking advantage of their knowledge of the coast, of dark and long nights, and events of wind and weather favourable to their purposes. However, we may certainly distress them infinitely more than has hitherto been done, and throw such burdens upon their trade and privateering as to make it difficult to carry on either without considerable loss, which, it is to be hoped, together with their want of necessaries from Europe, would soon make them tired of the war.

But in order to be able to employ the naval force in America effectually to this purpose, it is absolutely necessary that the army should secure the possession of several places along the coast which are tenable (independent of a fleet to defend them) against any force the Americans can bring against them. These places must be such as the King's ships can resort to at all times and seasons, and which will give them shelter and refreshments for their men; and it is necessary that one of them at least (exclusive of Halifax) should afford complete and secure conveniences for careening and refitting the ships, without which both the ships and men will soon become unfit for cruising, which it is to be feared is already the case of many of Lord Howe's squadron.

Such ports are absolutely necessary, and without them no such naval war as is now recommended can be maintained so as to answer the purposes expected; for it must be remembered that cruisers can keep the sea only for a limited time, and that they must have friendly ports to repair to, to wood and water, and to supply their want of stores, and repair their defects, as also for the preservation of the health of their people. This was the idea of the Admiralty from the beginning of the war, and Lord Howe was accordingly by his instructions directed to consider and propose to us what ports were in his opinion properest for these purposes; but he has as yet made no return thereupon.

To supply what has been omitted in this particular, I would propose that a commissioner of the navy with proper assistants should go over in the first ships, with power to make such naval establishment and in such place as upon consulting with Lord Howe shall be thought most advisable. New York, Rhode Island, or Philadelphia, would in all probability effectually answer these purposes; but it is impossible to decide the point at this distance, and therefore I would leave it to be settled on
the spot and with Lord Howe's advice, who from the experience he has had and his local knowledge will be, it is to be presumed, a perfect master of the subject.

The Navy Board should be directed to send out what materials and artificers they may think proper for the beginning such establishment; but as it will take some time before this business can be completed, particular attention should be had, and immediate orders given, to provide for the security of Halifax, which since the late fatal event is in my opinion in imminent danger of an attack from New England early in the spring. If that important place should fall into the hands of the enemy, it would be a blow not easy to be recovered, as it is the only port in the whole continent of America where ships can be cleaned and refitted at this time, and is the seat of a commissioner of the navy with an established naval yard and proper artificers and materials for carrying on the business. It is to be always remembered that the fleet alone cannot defend the place, and that there must be a reinforcement of troops and additional works, if the present are not sufficient to repel every attempt of an enemy. While the American forces were employed at a distance, and the people of New England were expecting an attack at home, a small garrison was sufficient; but that is no longer the case, and as the rebels have no better means of employing their northern army than in attacking Canada or Halifax, and probably both, it seems to be our duty to attend to the security of these very important posts.

And for the better carrying on the naval service in that very extensive continent, it seems advisable that the command should be divided into two parts at least, viz the northern and southern; the first to include all Nova Scotia and Canada, the other from the Bay of Boston inclusive to Georgia. [But this cannot effectually take place till the naval establishment in the centre is formed; and therefore Lord Howe should be directed to send a sufficient naval force to Halifax early in the spring to cooperate with the land forces in case the place should be attacked.]

It is much to be wished that a separate command was also fixed in the southern colonies; and perhaps Port Royal in South Carolina would be a very proper place for the headquarters of that squadron. But I fear that at present this arrangement cannot be executed, for unless we are masters of the shore by means of our army, or by the goodwill of the inhabitants, none of the purposes wanted for the fitting and refreshing our ships can be obtained; and I can see nothing more to be done with regard to that district as yet than to leave it as it now is, giving directions to Lord Howe to employ as many cruisers to the southward as he can possibly spare, and to relieve them from time to time from his central post.

[It would also be highly proper to have a separate command for the Floridas and the Bahama Islands, for the security of those colonies and the Jamaica trade passing the Gulf: this command should consist of frigates and such vessels as the harbours in those parts will admit and afford them a proper place to careen and refit.]

Lord Howe should be told that his principal object now should be to block up the American ports, [and also to cooperate with the army in any attempts that may be thought advisable and practicable for making ourselves masters of those ports, destroying their shipping, and alarming and attacking their coast upon every proper occasion]. For these purposes he should keep as many cruisers at sea in small squadrons as his force will enable him to do; and it should be pointed out to him to be particularly attentive to the sending frequent intelligence to England of any armed vessels fitting out in America, for want of which 18 rebel privateers of whose exis-
tence we had no intelligence from his Lordship sailed at once from Boston and Salem [and came upon us unprepared in different parts, having appeared first on the Banks of Newfoundland where they took the Fox and did considerable damage to the fishery, while others attacked the homeward-bound West India convoy, and some had the audaciousness to insult our own coast and the trade in the British Channel].

It seems to me to be within the scope of the present subject to say a word or two on the state of our naval force at home [as all our exterior efforts are derived from that centre], and to consider whether it is adequate to the services that may be expected from it. We have 42 ships of the line in commission at home, which may fairly be considered as ready for service. I fear that France and Spain united have at least an equal number in Europe in commission, and I believe they have many more ready to receive men. I observe that France has only sent one ship of the line out of Europe, therefore her whole naval force may be said to be at home. Spain has no less than 42 ships of the line in commission, many of which are in foreign parts; and they certainly already have or can collect a formidable fleet at the Havana without detaching from Europe.

[The French have lately sent a large number of troops to their West India islands, with artillery and artillery officers, dismounted dragoons, and every other apparatus of war.]

We are vulnerable by a fleet at Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, and in North America, even without the aid of land forces; and with their aid, in the East Indies, and (if the Governor of Gibraltar's late account is true that he cannot defend the place without double his present garrison) in the Mediterranean also.

As soon as France determines to make war a squadron will be sent to attack us in one of these parts. We shall not know where the storm will fall, therefore the only measure of safety will be to have a respectable force in every part, [or at least to have a sufficient force in readiness at home to make large and immediate detachments to all our distant possessions]. Will our 42 ships supply the necessary detachments to answer this purpose, and to leave us superior at home to anything the House of Bourbon can bring against us in Europe after their detachment is made? Certainly not. Therefore, unless we are sure that France has no hostile intentions, is it prudent for us to remain a moment longer in our present state?

It will take a twelvemonth to get 25 more ships of the line ready for sea; 7 of these 25 (including the Victory) are now ready to receive men, and if they were commissioned would be ready for sea early in the spring; and 7 others would be immediately taken in hand, and ready to be commissioned in about two months. If we are in imminent danger of a foreign war (which in my opinion is the case), a day ought not to be lost. What shall we have to answer for if we are taken unprepared, and reduced to the necessity of either leaving our distant possessions undefended or seeing France and Spain in the Channel with a superior fleet?

In short, if we are certain that France and Spain will not take advantage of our distresses, our force at home is more than sufficient, and the public ought not to be burdened with that enormous expense; but on the other side, if from their falsehood and repeated breaches of their most solemn promises relative to succours sent to America, [and from the great armaments they have made notwithstanding the distress of their finances, at least those of France,] we may conclude that they are at the bottom our inveterate enemies, and are only waiting for the favourable moment to
strike the blow, I do think we risk the whole with regard to the safety of our country if we are any way remiss in using every precaution and exertion for our defence that our present circumstances require.  

I would therefore humbly advise that the 7 ships now ready to receive men, or at least 6 of them, should be commissioned, and that orders should be given for getting an equal number ready to receive men. Before it comes to their turn to be commissioned, events will show whether it is necessary to proceed farther.

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38) 1: 327–35. The editors note: "There is another copy, marked 'sent to Ld North Dec: 7th 1777' and endorsed thus: 'Opinion about the Naval War Dec: 8th 1777 sent to Ld North shewing the impropriety of trusting to the promises of France & Spain, and proposing further Armaments.' Both copies are in the Earl of Sandwich's writing. Passages in square brackets in the paper printed here are insertions in the other copy; passages in italics within square brackets are in the other copy, but not in the one printed."

1. Lords of the Admiralty to Richard, Lord Howe, 4 May 1776, UkLPR, Adm. 2/1332.
2. This passage marked in the original "added by the desire of Ld. Geo. Germain"; it is only an insertion on the other copy.
3. In the other copy the last few lines of this paragraph read thus: "... safety of our country and our personal security (which God knows is a very small article in the present consideration), if we are any way remiss in using every precaution and exertion for our defence that God and Nature have put us in possession of."

Dear Sir Passy 8th Decr 1777—

The Commissioners expect in about Eight or Ten Days to dispatch another Packet for America & Consequently will not detain Cap' Young 1—I send you the Gazette Extraordinary of the Court of London which peruse & forward to M' Hancock with the other News Papers sent you—We are still uncertain how soon Cap' Nicholson will be ready for Sea, or if you have Shipp'd all the Goods on Montieus Two Vessels or other ways. please to be explicit on this subject in your next—

I hope Cap' Nicholson may set out for Nantes or elsewhere to meet his Ship the last of this Week, when we shall finally determine on his destination There is no mention of you in the Dispatches from America nor any thing said on the old Subject—I hear that a Continental Ship of War is arrivd at Nantes with Duplicates of the last Dispatches tell us in your next what Ship this is & what her Errand 2—I am &c

SD—

PS as to Cap' Elliot & the other Officers at Nantes I must leave it with you to supply their present wants in the most Oeconomical manner consistent with their Stations. I hope they will not expect more than Pocket money, & to purchase necessary Cloathing for the Voyage—As to paying wages due from Congress to them we cannot do it—

You will take Rec 3 of them for the Sums paid and give a Duplicate to Cap' Nicholson to Settle in America—

1. Williams wrote the commissioners on 2 Dec. requesting instructions whether to detain Young's dispatches, in expectation of additions to them, or to send Young off immediately. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 232.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "Mr Williams."

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.
December 9

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

Versailles 9. Xbre. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, La lettre que vous m'avez écrite le 1er de ce mois contenant les réponses aux questions que je vous avois chargé de faire au Capitaine Fautrel; Et Sur le Compte que j'en ai rendu au Roy Sa Majesté, a bien voulu agréer Sa justification et faire cesser Sa détention.1 Je joins ici en conséquence l'ordre pour le faire mettre en liberté que vous signifierez au Géoluir des prisons de l'orient.2 Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 9 December 1777

I have received, Sir, the letter which you wrote me on the first of this month containing the answers to the questions that I had charged you to ask Capt. Fautrel. And on my reporting this to the king, His Majesty has been pleased to accept his justification and order the end of his detention.1 I am attaching, therefore, the order to set him free which you will give to the jailer of the Lorient prisons.2 I am [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E4-80, fol. 207. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet." Docketed: "R. le 15." "Received the 15th."

1. On 2 Dec., Sartine had instructed Gonet to tell Fautrel that "nothing will excuse him from carrying out the precise orders which you will have given him before his departure." Ibid., fol. 177.

2. The order to release Fautrel is at ibid., fol. 208.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. RESOLUTION, CAPTAIN SIR CHALONER OGLE

[1777]

Cape Portuga 18.46 E.1 distance 34 Leagues

Decce

fresh gales & Cloudy at 6 AM/Saw 2 Sail to the S'wards, wore Ship & gave Chace, Punish'd Alexr Forbes, wh. 12 lashes for Mutiny, ½ past 11 brought the chace too, found her the Smyrna Galley, taken by ye Sturdy Beggar Provincial Privateer, hoisted ye Boats out & brought the Prisoners on board, sent the 4th Lieut., a Mate, a Midshipman & Men to take charge of her

Cape Finnistaer 25 19 E1 distance 20 Leagues.

fresh Breezes & Cloudy at 1 PM/Made Sail after the Sturdy Beggar At 3 Sprung ye foretopmast at 4 tk'd Ship at 5 in 2 R Topsails hove to for ye Smyrna Galley At 6 Sett the foresail at 11 Saw a light in ye SW Q'.

D, UklPR, Adm. 51/778.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO CONDE DE ARANDA

[Extract]

No. 3.

Exmo. Señor

Ha destinado V.E. la Carta No. 1178. de 26. de Noviembre 1 á los puntos relativos á las Colonias Anglo-americanas, y voi á contextarlá después de haber enter-
ado al Rey de las diversas especies que contiene, y tomado sus R° ordenes sobre cada punto.

Ha parecido mui bien á S.M. quanto V.E. ha trabajado con M° Grand, interlocutor de los Diputados Americanos, sobrè la restitucion de la embarcacion Francesa la Fortunée cargada para el Comercio de Cadiz, y apresada por un Cosario insurgente, por la sola razón de venir de Puerto Ingles con generos Ingleses.

Mediante las ofertas hechas á V.E. por esos Diputados de escribir inmediatamente al Congreso para la restitucion de la presa y resarcimiento de todos perjuicios, las medidas que iban á tomar para evitar se incurriese en adelante en otros atentados de igual naturaleza, el sentimiento con que se hallaban, su sumisa disposicion á cuanto pudiese satisfacer á S.M. y la confirmacion de estas expresiones en la Memoria que entregaron á V.E. y me remite, queda S.M. enteramente satisfecho, y aprueba admitiése V.E. la Memoria, puesto de acuerdo anticipadamente para ello con el S° Conde de Vergennes.

Ahora manifestará V.E. á los Diputados para su consuelo, que su deferencia y disposiciones han merecido el agradecimiento de S.M. así como el insulto del Cosario le causó gran desagrado; que precisa recomienden al Congreso mucha firmeza en hacer ejecutar las órdenes que tienen sus Armadores de respetar el Pavillon Español y no inquietar en ninguna manera su Comercio, pues no podrá tolerar S.M. lo contrario, y que en el caso presente, prescindiendo de la pronta restitucion y resarcimiento completo de daños, de que no desistirá S.M., experimentarán como hasta ahora la continuacion de los efectos de la R° liberalidad y compasion con que los mira su magnanimo corazon, y de que verán pruebas efectivas y no escasas.

Este mismo en todas sus partes expresará V.E. para su noticia al S° Conde de Vergennes.

Para gobierno solo de V.E. le diré que la intencion del Rey en cualesquiera socorros que haga á los Americanos, és no legarse con promesas ni contratos por muchas consideraciones que interesan tanto su honor cuanto su politica, combinando todas las circunstancias actuales de Europa con nuestros intereses y la situacion de nuestros negocios.

Queda enterado S.M. de haber recibido M° Lee Cartas credenciales del Congreso que le autorizan directamente para España, y aprueba la respuesta que dió V.E. á su insinuacion de si vendría personalmente á noticiarlo; pues si hubiese venido, no solo no hubiera permitido S.M. se le escuchase ni admitiése á tratar negocio alguno sino que le hubiera hecho salir, no siendo en ninguna manera necesaria la residencia aquí de ningun Diputado Americano. . .

Dios guíe á V.E. m° a° Madrid á 9. de Diciembre de 1777

El Conde de Floridablanca

[Translation] No. 3. Most Excellent Sir

Your Excellency has devoted letter no. 1178 of November 26¹ to topics relating to the Anglo-American colonies, and I am going to answer it after having informed the King on the various items it contained and receiving his royal orders on each point.

His Majesty was pleased when Your Excellency was dealing with Mr. Grand, speaker for the American Deputies on the return of the French ship la Fortunée, laden
for the commerce of Cadiz and which was captured by an insurgent privateer for the sole reason that it came from an English port with English goods.

The offers made to Your Excellency by those Deputies to write immediately to Congress for return of the captured ship and compensation for all damages, the measures which they were going to take to avoid the occurrence of other attacks of this nature, their regret, their willingness to submit to whatever may satisfy His Majesty, and confirmation of these statements in the Memorial that they delivered to Your Excellency and is sent to me, His Majesty rests entirely satisfied, and approves Your Excellency's accepting the Memorial, on account of the agreement obtained beforehand for him with the Comte de Vergennes.

Now Your Excellency will show the Deputies, for their consolation, that their deference and disposition have earned the approval of His Majesty as much as the attack of the privateer has caused him displeasure. He goes on to say they should recommend that Congress firmly enforce the orders given their privateers to respect the Spanish flag, and not hinder Spanish commerce in any way, and that His Majesty would not in any way tolerate the contrary. He says that in the present case, as long as the ship is returned and compensation made for damages—failure to do so will not be countenanced by His Majesty—they will continue to enjoy the effects of royal indulgence and compassion with which his magnanimous heart regards them, and of which they will see actual proofs and not parsimonious ones.

Your Excellency will please express these statements in their totality to the Comte de Vergennes.

For your Excellency's sole guidance I will tell you that the intention of the king in providing aid to the Americans is not to commit himself to promises or contracts for many considerations which involve either his honor or politics, but rather to take into account all the current circumstances of Europe as well as our interests and the situation of our commerce.

His Majesty was informed that Mr. Lee received credentials in the form of letters from Congress which directly authorize him for Spain, and approves the response which Your Excellency gave to his suggestion that he come personally to inform him. If Mr. Lee would have come here, not only would His Majesty not have permitted him to be heard or allowed any dealing to take place, but also would have made him leave, as he believes that it is in no way necessary for an American Deputy to reside here.

May God keep you many years. Madrid 9 December 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca

1. SpMAH, Estado, legajo 4072, pt. 2, no. 3. Docketed: "Madrid 9 de Dic[embre] de 1777/Con el Correo Uribarri N° 3/E[l] S° C° [Floridablanca] A [S?°] C° de Aranda. Q° S.M. queda satisfito de las madidas de los Diputados Americanos, p° restituir al navio la Fortunie, y de q° no pasere Lee á España con sus credenciales. Q° la intencion del Rey es, no ligara p° tratada con ellos. Q° se estimar las instrucciones dadas al emisario Francés. "Madrid, 9 December 1777, with the Uribarri mail. The Conde Floridablanca to the Conde de Aranda. That his majesty is satisfied with the measures taken by the American Deputies for the restitution for the ship la Fortunie, and that Lee not come to Spain with his credentials. That the King's intention is not to treat with them. That he approves the instructions given to the French emissary."

2. Conde de Aranda to Conde de Floridablanca, 26 Nov. 1777, above.

3. Massachusetts privateer brigantine Civil Usage, Andrew Giddings, commanding.

4. American Commissioners in France to the French and Spanish Courts, 23 Nov. 1777, above.
December 10

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

No. 175

Paris December 10th. 1777

My Lord

Before I went to Versailles I carefully perused the different Papers transmitted to me in your Lordships Dispatch No. 70, and made an Extract of such Parts of Governor Morris's Letters as I thought it would be proper to communicate to M de Vergennes; and in order to avoid the possibility of any Personal Discussions between Governor Morris, and M de Bouille, and at the Same Time to guard Against the Danger of a Discovery of the Channels thro' which M' Morris receives His Intelligence, I entitled this Extract Authentic Advices from Martinico, and in my Conversations with the French Ministers gave no Intimation of the Channel thro' which the Intelligence comes but spoke of it as certain.

The Spanish Ambassador who happened to go in before me had a Conference with M de Vergennes of an hour and a Quarter: to shew Him that I had remarked it, I began mine with saying, that He was destined to long Conferences that Day, and that I was very sorry to have a great deal to say to Him and always upon the same very unpleasant Subjects. He answered, as He often does, that He was there to Hear, and I went on with observing to Him, that the fraudulent Practice of Purchasing Prizes made by the Rebels still continued, and was a great detriment to many of His Majesty's Loyal Subjects, who had given in a Petition upon this occasion, which Petition was signed by no less than a hundred considerable Merchants, all sufferers by a Practice which was contrary to all friendship, all Justice, and which would not be tolerated in open War. Were we Sir in a state of Actual War with France, you would not suffer the Prizes made upon us by your own Subjects to be disposed of till they were legally condemned, and now, Frenchmen go out to sea to meet the American Pirates, purchase from them the English Ships they have taken, carry these Ships into some French Port, new paint them and make them pass for French Vessels. There are several Such Ships Sir at this Moment in the River of Nantes as I know from a Person lately come from thence, of two of them, which I claim as is my Duty, I know the Names, one is called la Mignonne, which I have already spoke to you about, the other Le Duc de Chartres. M de Vergenne's answer was the Same as usual; that these were abuses which the government did not tolerate, but could not totally prevent, tho' every means was taken to prevent them: that the immense gain got by such Purchases was such a Temptation, as made Men ingenious to find out means of eluding the Orders that had been given; and that I must be sensible how difficult it was to prevent purchases that were made out at Sea. I replied that there were many Marks of Evident collusion; that the American Pirates made Signs when they came near the Coast of France, and People went out in Boats to meet them; that these Ships were carried into French Ports, where they could not but be known; That Workmen were openly employed to paint and disfigure them; and that in a Word it was utterly impossible the Commanders in their different Ports should not see what was seen by every body else, unless they wilfully shut their Eyes. He promised that the Matter should be inquired into, and at his desire I gave Him a Note of the two Ships, and likewise of the Privateer the Independance, Captain Young, that is still at Nantes and of the Dolphin Captain Nichol-
son that is at Painbouf, and serves there as a sort of Guardship. She has 70 Men on board, and several officers destined for a new French ship of 24 Guns, built for the use of the Rebels—several of these 70 Men are English Sailors who tried to get away, and having got to Nantes, were, as my Informer assured me, put into the Town Prison at Nicholas’s Request. (It is however possible My Lord that they had been guilty of some Irregularity, and that that was made the Pretence for their Confinement.)

After having dwelt upon all these particulars, and represented them in their true Light. I told M de Vergennes that serious as these Grievances were, they were far short of what passed at Martinico, I then took my Paper out of my Pocket—and when I gave it to M de Vergennes said that it would shew Him M de Bouilles’ Conduct, as it really was, and begged Him to peruse it with Attention, and then tell me whether all this resembles Peace, or War. I said this decently, but strongly. He seemed Struck, took the Paper read it with great Attention, and when He saw the Number of Privateers fitted out by Prejean, He exclaimed why this is a Fleet! and after reading the whole, He said, Je vous avoue Milord que les Bras me tombent, and that it is impossible for me to reconcile these Advices, which you assure me are Authentic, with M de Bouilles’ own accounts: He expressly says, that He has been careful to correct the abuses tolerated, or at least winked at by His Predecessor, and adds, that He is upon very good Terms with your Governors, and Admiral, and sends us copies of his correspondence with them.

I told M de Vergennes that I had Intelligence, which accounted for all this, but accounted for it in a very disagreeable Manner: our Intelligence, which I pretend not to warrant, says, that M de Bouille has declared, that He has lately received Orders from His Court, to give every countenance and Protection to the Americans and that all He does, or suffers to be done is in consequence of these fresh Instructions. M de Vergennes assured me upon his Honour, that if M de Bouille had said this, He said the Thing that was not, and that He had received no such Instructions. My Answer was, that I did not give this Part of my Intelligence as certain, and therefore had not inserted it in the Paper, not chusing to mix suppositions with undoubted positive Facts. It is Facts Sir we look to, it is by them alone that Nations are to Judge; Your Governor suffers these Privateers to be fitted out against us; He authorizes this Prejean to make War against the Subjects of Great Britain, and that for the Absurdest of all Reasons, because He was born in Arcadia.—M de Vergennes readily admitted the Absurdity of this Reasoning—After what you have told me Sir, I cannot possibly believe that M de Bouille is Authorized to act as He does, but I repeat, it is to His Actions alone that we can look. They are such as are totally inconsistent with every Idea of friendship and Peace. In my apprehension of things Martinico is making war against Great Britain, The fitting out Cruizers is an Act of direct Hostility, it is an Act permitted by the Governor, that is, by the Delegate of your sovereign. If After these Representations the abuse continues, the inference must be, that if the Governor has not secret Instructions to bear Him out, He has at least the secret approbation of his Court. M de Vergennes did not contravert my Arguments, but said with a forced smile, that unless M de Bouille had made Himself King of Martinico, his conduct would change, as nothing could be more contrary to the King His Masters Intentions, and Orders, than to suffer or countenance such unwarrantable proceedings. He ended with saying, you no doubt will go to M de Maurepas pray take the Paper with you (You will be so good as to return it me) and shew it to Him, He reads English as well as I do, and will be as much struck as I am. I took His advice, went to M de Maurepas as I intended, found
Him alone, and after some short conversation upon the same topics I had dwelt upon with M de Vergennes, I gave him the paper. He read it with attention, and I saw understood it perfectly, repeated what M de Vergennes had said of M de Bouilles correspondence, and assured me positively that he had no fresh instructions.

I observed to His Excellency, that I should not enter into the motives or reasons of M de Bouilles' conduct, that it was probable he thought he was acting agreeably to the secret wishes of his Court, but whether he is mistaken or not, a little time will shew; if you do not approve his conduct, you will force a change, if that change does not come, we must infer, your secret approbation. You hate long reasoning sir, and I will be very short: I will say but this, if these acts of hostility, carried on against us at Martinico, are suffered to continue, Your Excellency and I are giving ourselves a great deal of unnecessary trouble in endeavoring to keep matters quiet here, vous savez aussi bien que moi M le Comte, que si le feu s'allume aux Extremites il gagnera bientot le Centre. He did not dispute this, but assured me that the matter should be inquired into, and ended with saying, that that fellow Prejean must be removed.

P.S. . . .


CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE

Gentlemen

Ranger Nantes 10th Decr 1777.

Inclosed you have copies of three letters which I had the honor of writing to you while sitting out at Portsmouth. Which place I left the 1st Utr.—After passing the Western Islands I fell in with and brought too a number of ships but met with no English property 'till within eighty leagues of Ushant. I then fell in with a fleet of Ten sail under a strong convoy bound up Channel—but notwithstanding my endeavours I was unable to detach any of them from the convoy. 1—I took two brigantines from Malaga with fruit &c. for London. 2 One of the prizes is arrived here the other I am now told is in Quiberon Bay.—I arrived here the 2d. Curr. without having met with any misfortune on the passage tho' I met with some very severe weather.—besides the fleet already mentioned I fell in with several ships in the night so that I have had agreeable proofs of the active spirit of both my officers & men—and tho' they have not formerly been conversant in the management of ships of war, yet I am persuaded that they will behave well should I have an opportunity of bringing them to action—for they pay more attention to instruction than conceited fellows who think themselves two knowing to be taught.—

On my arrival I wrote to the Commissioners and forwarded the dispatches without loss of time—the attention necessary to complete the equipment of the Ranger hath induced me to stay here and hasten that business with all possible expedition—this being fairly begun I shall be in readiness to pay prompt obedience to such instructions as I may receive from the Commissioners in consequence of the Orders which they received, thro' my hands, from the secret committee—and should any insuperable difficulty stand in the way of that order I shall then be ready and will proceed on active service with the Ranger alone.
I found the *Ranger* very Crank owing to the improper quality of her Ballast and to her being rather over-Masted—to remedy which I purpose to shorten her lower Masts and Ballast with lead.—as this Ballast will stow under the lower tier of Water the less quantity will be sufficient—of Course the ship will be so much the lighter and sail So much the faster—the lead can be landed on any part of the Continent where Iron can be had in its place.—the sailing of the *Ranger* falls short of the general expectation—for the Above reasons and on account of the foulness of her Bottom—which, except a partial cleaning in July, hath not been seen since she came off the stocks.

It is my hearts first and favorite wish to be employed in active and enterprizing Services where there is a prospect of Rendering such services Useful and Acceptable to America.—the singular Honor which Congress hath done me by their generous approbation of my past Conduct hath inspired me with Sentiments of Gratitude which I shall carry with me to my Grave.—And if a life of Services devoted to America can be made instrumental in securing its Independence I shall regard the Continuance of such approbation as an honor far superiour to the Empty Pagentry which Kings ever did or can bestow.

I understand tho I have yet rec'd no letter that the Commissioners had provided for me one of the finest Frigates that ever was Built—Calculated for thirty Guns on one Deck and capable of carrying 36 pounders—but were under the necessity of giving her up—on account of some difficulties which they met with at Court 3—perhaps the news of our late Successes may now Put that court in a better humour.—but my Unfeigned thanks are equally due for the Intention as for the Act. I have the honor to be

J. P. J.

---

[Extract]

Arthur Lee Esq.

Dear Sir

... By advises from my house at St. Andero I find Cap't Babson of one of our freind's privateers 1 who lately sail'd from Bilbao fell in with about 20 sail of Newfoundlanders under convoy of a strong arm'd vessel with whom she fought two hours & took 6 vessells, but the arm'd one gott away; Babson lost two officers & two privates but got safe to said port with the prizes 2 which circumstance pray keep to yourself. One Hibbert 3 who left (Bilbao), Bilbao about the same time has taken three more which have also putt in near said port, which being what ocurrs have only to add my hearty wishes that all prosperity may attend you & all freinds with you during the present & many succeeding years to command. ...

---

JAMES GARDOQUI TO ARTHUR LEE


...
December 11

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO JOHN THORNTON

Instructions to Mr. Thornton [Paris, 11 Dec. 1777]

You will receive herewith a Letter to Lord North and another to Sir Grey Cooper Secretary of the Treasury, to which you are to endeavour to obtain Answers.

As the Purport is to obtain Permission to visit & examine into the Situation of our People in their Goals, and administer to their Relief we hope a Request so consonant to Humanity will not be refus’d. But if you can not obtain such Permission, yet, (if not absolutely forbidden) we desire you would endeavour to see the Prisoners, take an Acc of their Names, the Rank or Quality they serv’d in, the States they belong’d to, in what Vessel, & by whom they were taken and such other particulars as may tend to give us perfect Information of their Circumstances.

But before you leave London to visit the Prisons, wait on Mr. Hartley (for whom also you have a Letter which you will deliver as soon as you arrive) and desire his Advice or Orders; & if he should be so kind as to give you any relating to the Premises you are to follow the same punctually in your future Proceedings.

You will receive herewith Fifty Guineas for Travelling Expences of which you will render an Acc. We wish you a good Journey, being [&c.]

Your most humble Servants.

Df, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, 392.

1. John Thornton, whose real name appears to have been J. Dumeneg, had been in contact with the American Commissioners by early October. In January 1778 Arthur Lee employed him as his secretary and sent him twice to London on intelligence missions, but discharged him for suspicion of engaging in shady stock dealings. Thornton had, by then, become a British informant. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 26–28; Francis Wharton, The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, 6 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), 1: 659–61.

2. American Commissioners in France to Lord North, 12 Dec. 1777, and Benjamin Franklin to Sir Grey Cooper, 11 Dec. 1777, both below.

Dear Sir,

Receiving frequent Accounts by American Prisoners who have escap’d from your Goals, of the miserable Situation & hard Treatment of their Countrymen at Portsmouth & Plymouth, we have prevail’d with a Gentleman, Major Thornton, (to us much a Stranger but who appears a Man of Humanity) to visit the Prisons there, and give from us some Relief to those unfortunate Men. I hope that thro’ your Interest he may obtain a Permission for that purpose. I could have wish’d that some voluntary Act of Compassion on the Part of your Government towards those in your Power, had appeared in abating the Rigours of their Confinement, & relieving their pressing Necessities, as such Generosity towards Enemies has naturally an Effect in softening and abating Animosity in their Compatriots, & disposing to Reconciliation. This, if I had any Influence with your Ministers I should recommend as prudent; being what would at least secure a Continuance of that kind Usage your People when our Prisoners have always experienced with us. Mr. Thornton is charg’d with a Letter to Lord North, which I request you would procure him an Opportunity of delivering, and endeavour to obtain...
an Answer. Perhaps it may not be thought proper to give any: But I am Sure it will not be an insolent one like that from Lord Stormont to a similar Application. The Remembrance of ancient Friendship encourages me to this Request, if 'tis too much; you can prevent Repetition of it by making no Reply. With my affectionate Respects to Lady Cooper, & love to my former young Friends, I am [&c.]

BF

Df, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, 392. Addressed at foot: "Sir Grey Cooper Barc." Docketed: "Letter to Sir Grey Cooper/Dec 11. 77./Instructions to Mr. Thornton." Cooper (c. 1726–1801), secretary of the treasury and member of Parliament, was a friend of Franklin's.

1. *NDAR* 8: 735n.

**Shipping Articles for the Officers of the Ship Bruné**


Il sera payé trois Mois d'Avance avant le Départ de l'Orient sur les Appoitemens mentionnés ci dessous.

Les Armateurs declarent qu'ils ne veulent s'en tenir n'aucun usage de la Compagnie des Indes, qu'ils ne suivrent au Contraire que ceux du Commerce particulier pour l'Amerique et n'auront egard a aucun autre quelconque pour tout ce qui pourroit concerner le Passage du dit Navire.

Les Armateurs accordent a l'Etat Major un Port permis en Nature et Une Gratification qui leur sera payée deux Mois aprés le Retour du dit Vaisseau de la Maniere et apres, et comme les d. Avantages ne sont accordés que pour les Services qu'ils seront dans le Cas de rendre a l'Armement. Si l’un de eux quittoit le Vaisseau on debarquoit pour Telle Raison que ce fut avant son Retour, il ne pourra presendu aucune Gratification, mais en Cas de Mort seulement pendant la Campagne les Armateurs tiendront compte a la Succession de la Gratification en Son entier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port Permis</th>
<th>Gratification</th>
<th>Appoitemens p° mois</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A M Fautrell fils 2d. Capitaine</td>
<td>un T au en Retour</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A M Livoyes Prem. Lieutenant</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A M. [blank] P° Lieutenant au 2d Poste</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A M Coulas Rozan Chirurgien</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12300</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Il leur sera en outre permis de mettre dans leurs Chambres ce qu'ils jugeront a Propos, et de placer dans La Sainte Barbe une Malle chacun, contenant leurs effets d'usage seulement, sans aucune Marchandise, laquelle sera du Poids ordinaire.
Dans le Cas où a l'Arrivée du Vau la Brune en Amerique, les Propriétaires voulussent y retenir le Navire pour le faire naviguer sous leur Pavillon, ou y donner une autre Destination, l'état Major sera libre de l'accepter ou le refuse Si les Conditions ne leur convenoient pas; et dans ce Cas leur Voyage leur sera dû en son entier, et leur Retour en France sera aux frais des Propriétaires.

Dans le Cas où au Retour du dit Navire, la France se trouvait en Guerre avec quelque autre Puissance et que l'on fit quelque Prise, le Capitaine et l'état Major preleveront Suivant les usages de la Course de St: Malo.

M. Dufresne s'engage expressement de Suivre les Ordres et Instructions que les Armateurs lui remetront pour le Susdit Voyage, tant à l'Orient quoi Nantes ou il doit finir son Armement, ainsi que de se conformer a Leurs Intentions pour l'Armement, Vivres, Rechanges et Equipage, ainsi que pour le Chargement, et de se tenir près pour partir de l'un et l'autre Port, desqu'il en Sera requis au premier Vent favorable.

Moyennant le dit Traitément, il est expressement defendu à l'état Major du dit Navire d'embarquer ou faire embarquer sous tels Noms ou Manières que ce puisse être soit en allant ou au Retour, aucunes Boissons ou Marchandises de quelque Sorte ou Qualité que ce puisse être au dela du Port permis a Peine de payer triple frét pour tout ce qui sera trouvé en Contravention et de perdre la Gratification promise susdite & sans qu'aucun puisse reclamer en Justice contre les Armateurs pour Perte de la Gratification susdite, etant La Condition expresse sous laquelle le present Traitément leur est accordé.

M. Dufresne devra suivre la Route que lui indiquera le Capitaine Americain passager a son Bord, pour entrer dans le premier Port, Havre ou Riviere qu'il lui indiquera dans l'Amerique, et Se guidera d'apres ses Avis des qu'il aura departé les trente Sept Degrés de Latitude Nord et dix sept Degrés de Longitude de Paris a peine de repondre des Evenements.

Fait Double a l'Orient le 10 Xbre 1777

Berard Freres et C:o

Nous Soussignés Capitaine et Officiers composant l'Etat Major du Vau la Brune, accepton, chacun dans nos Qualités respectives le Traitément ci-dessus, tant pour nos Appointemens que pour le Port permis et Gratification qui nous sont accordés, au Moyen de quoi nous promettons Parole d'honneur de remplir nos Engagements, faire le Voyage et nous conformer strictement aux dites Conditions, consentant a etre privés de tout ce qui peut nous revenir du susdit Voyage Si nous y manquons, meme de repondre des evenemens en Cas de Contravention ou de non-Execution du present et ete qui aura autant de force que s'il fut fait devant Notaire, fait Double a l'Orient Le 11 Xbre 1777

J Bérubé Dufraine
Le cullo'ch
N Fautrel
De Livoys fils
Coulas Rozan

Amount of the Muster Roll paid on the Ships outfitted at L'Orient 9 attested Account Decem 1777 three Months advance £5748—0—0./.

True Copy Attest
Jonst Loring Austin (Copy)
W. T. Franklin
Pay and Conditions granted by Messrs. Bérard Frères and Co. outfitters of the vessel la Brune to the officers of the said vessel for the voyage from Nantes to the islands of French America, ports and colonies of English and Insurgent America into one or more of the ports or rivers, to take on a cargo and return to L'Orient or to any other port in France where the vessel will unload and lay up.

Three months advance will be paid before the departure from l'Orient on the emoluments mentioned below.

The outfitters declare that they do not wish to abide by any practice of the India Company, that, on the contrary, they will follow only the practices of the private trade with America and will not pay any heed to any other practice in anything that concerns the voyage of the said vessel.

The outfitters grant to the officers the right to carry goods on their own account and a bonus which will be paid to them two months after the return of the said vessel as specified below, and since the said emoluments are granted only because of the services which they will be in a position to render to the outfitters, if one of the officers were to leave the vessel for any reason whatsoever before its return, he will not be entitled to any bonus, but in case of death only during the voyage the outfitters will make payment of the whole bonus to the heirs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right to carry goods</th>
<th>Bonus</th>
<th>Monthly salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To M. Berubé Dufresne, Captain</td>
<td>One cask going, two returning</td>
<td>£5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To M. Fautrel, Jr., Master</td>
<td>One cask returning</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To M. Livoyes, 1st Mate</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To M. [blank] 2nd Mate</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To M. Coulas Rozan, Surgeon</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They will also be permitted to put into their cabins whatever they choose, and to place in the gunner's store room one trunk apiece, containing effects for their personal use, without any merchandise for trade; this trunk will be of an ordinary weight.

If, on the arrival of the vessel la Brune in America, the owners should desire to keep her trading in the area under their flag or to send her elsewhere, the officers shall be free to accept or to refuse, if the conditions were not to suit them. In that case, compensation for the entire voyage will be due them and their return to France will be at the expense of the owners.

If, on the return of the said vessel, France should be at war with some other power, and if the vessel should take some prize, the captain and the officers will be compensated according to the customs of the privateers of St. Malo.

M. Dufresne expressly agrees to follow the orders and instructions which the outfitters will give him for the said voyage, whether at L'Orient or at Nantes where he is to finish his fitting out; he agrees to conform to their wishes respecting the fitting out, provisions, spare stores, and crew, as well as for the loading, and he
agrees to be ready to leave either port as soon as he is instructed to, at the first favorable wind.

In consideration of the said emolument, the officers are expressly forbidden to load on the ship or to cause to be loaded, under any name or in any other way whatsoever, either on the outward or on the return voyage, any liquors or merchandise of any sort or quality beyond the quantity which the officers have the right to carry on their own accounts under penalty of paying triple freight charges for everything found in violation, and under penalty of losing the bonus promised above, and there is waived any claim to recourse to the courts for redress from the outfitters for the loss of the said bonus, this being the express condition under which these emoluments are granted to them.

M. Dufresne will be required to follow the course which will be indicated to him by the American captain, his passenger,1 to enter the first port, harbor or river which he will indicate to him in America, and M. Dufresne will take his instructions once he has passed a point at thirty-seven degrees of north latitude and seventeen degrees of longitude of Paris, under penalty of being held responsible for what may happen. Done in Duplicate at L’Orient on the 10th of December 1777

Bérand Frères and Co.

We the undersigned captain and chief officers of the vessel la Brune accept, each in his respective capacity, the above emolument, as concerns our salary, the right to carry merchandise to our account and the bonus, as granted, in consideration of which we promise on our word of honor to fulfill our agreement, to make the voyage and to conform strictly to the stated conditions, consenting to the loss of all profit to us from the said voyage if we fail to live up to our promise, and we even promise to be responsible for anything that might happen as a result of violation or non-performance of the present agreement, which will have as much force as if it had been made before a notary.

Done in Duplicate at l’Orient on the 11th of December 1777

J. Bérubé Dufraine
Le cullo’ch
N Fautrel
De Livoy’s, Jr.
Coulas Rozan

Amount of the Muster Roll paid on the Ships outfitted at L’Orient Account Decem 1777 three Months advance £5748—0—0./.

True Copy Attest
Jon'a Loring Austin (Copy)
W. T. Franklin


1. John Green.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO ROBERT MORRIS

Honored and dear Sir; Ranger, Nantes 11th Dec 1777.

As the situation of affairs in Pensylvania, when I sailed from Portsmouth, rendered the conveyance of Letters from the Eastern States not altogether certain, I take
the Liberty of inclosing Copies of those which I had the honor of writeing to you while fitting out.

It is not in my Nature to persist intentionally in an Error, therefore I always wish to take the earliest Opportunity of Acknowledging a mistake; and as it now appears from the Situation of affairs, and more especially from the important Step that was taken in my favor by the Commissioners, in Obedience to the generous and liberal Sentiments and Orders of the Secret Committee, that Congress have had my Honor and Benefit at Heart: I must conclude also that it is not intended to Place me under the Command of Men, who durst not, or did not step forth as soon as myself, in this flattering belief I bid defiance to danger, and enjoy once more the cheerful Ardour and Spirit, which alone can animate and support an Officer in the Performance of his duty: to be continued in the Line wherein I stepped forth, and found acceptance at the beginning was, and is the height of my Ambitions; but for me to fight under Men, who held back, and did not appear in the first doubtful Juncture and who cannot now teach me my duty is impossible, nor will it be expected by Men of Candour and Ingenuity.

When I have the Honor of hearing from the Commissioners, I will return my thanks to the Secret Committee, but what form of thanks shall I render to you? Words are wanting here! I am utterly at a loss, nor know I where, or how to begin. the Obligations I owe to you, are so many, so important, and were so unexpected, that I must be ungrateful indeed did I not feel more than I can express. but I detest Flattery, therefore Must decline the Subject, least I should enrobe fair Truth in that fallacious dress. yes Sir, I feel, by a Prophetic impulse in my Breast, that I shall either manifest a grateful Sense of your Friendship by my conduct in Life, or by meeting my Death in support of the great Cause wherein you have born, so noble and so respected a part.

It gives me Pain to inform you that I found M' F. to be a Person different from what I thought him in America; he is subject to drink even to intoxication, which is at least a weakness utterly incompatible with the Characteristick of a good Officer; however Charity obliges me to think it rather a Habit acquired from disappointment than a constitutional Vice.

The care which France is now taking of her Seaman, ought to have some Weight with America; they have Ships of War stationed in all their Ports to make strict search, and to prevent the departure of French Seamen in foreign Ships. As America must become the first Marine Power in the World, the care and increase of our Seamen is a consideration of the first Magnitude, and claims the full attention of Congress. that our Seamen have decreased is a sad reality. that they will continue to decrease is as certain, unless effectual measures are taken to prevent it. I have seen with Indignation, the sordid Adventurers in Privateers sporting away the Sinews of our Marine: for notwithstanding the many Captures that have been made how triffling a proportion of Prisoners have been brought into our Ports, and given up for Exchange. Publick Virtue is not the Characteristick of the concerned in Privateers. no wonder then that they let their Prisoners go, in such a manner, that they immediately augment the Strength of the Enemies Fleet. their selfishness furnishes them with Reasons for this conduct; were they to keep their Prisoners, their Provision would be the sooner consumed; which might perhaps oblige them to return home before they had sufficiently glutted their Avarice? besides there might be some danger from
insurrections. these and the like are with them all-prevailing motives and bear down every Public consideration.

Were this base Conduct practised by those licensed Robbers alone “I should have found within my Soul one drop of Patience” but to find Individuals in our Navy affected with the same foul Contagion racks me with distressing Passions, and covers me with Shame! One Instance, among many, may be sufficient: the redoubtable Manly went near the Entrance of St. Johns and, disdaining Advantages, made the Enemy a Present of Eighty Seamen at once. Such Conduct on our part, at a time when our cruel Enemies are enforcing an Act of their Parliament, by the indiscrimenatt confinement of our Subjects in English dungeons, not as Prisoners of War, but under the complicated Appellations of “Traitors,” & Pirates & “Felons” whose Necks they wish to destain to the Cord! and whose Hearts they wish to destain to the Flames! is a wonder “passing Strange”! and will be deemed Romance by future Ages. were an examplary Punishment to be inflicted, on all who are thus regardless of the Intrests of America, it is to be hoped that such infernal Practices would cease.—every Prisoner of whatsoever denomination, and however distant when taken, ought to be brought into.

Df, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6667-68.
1. Maj. John Gizzard Frazer, Continental Army, to whom Jones had given passage to France.
2. Othello, act 4, scene 2: “I should have found in some part of my soul/A drop of patience.”
3. The incomplete draft ends here.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO WILLIAM WHIPPLE

Honored Sir,

Ranger, Nantes 11th Dec 1777.

I think it my duty to give you some Acc of my Passage from Portsmouth to this place, as this may perhaps find you at home in the Bosom of domestic happiness. I had passed the Western Islands before a Sail appeared within our Horizon from the Mast head; but this Halcyon Season was then interrupted, and changed into continued alarms Night and day till the Ranger cast Anchor here the 2d. Current this afforded me excellent Opportunities of exercising the Officers and Men especially in the Night, and it is with much Pleasure that I assure you their behaviour was to my entire Satisfaction. I fell in with an Enemies Fleet of Ten Sail off Ushant, bound up Channel, but notwithstanding my best endeavours, I was unable to detach any of them from the strong Convoy under which they sailed. I fell in with and brought too a number of other Ships and Vessells none whereof proved to be British Property except two Brigantines with Fruit from Malaga for London which became prize, the one is arrived here, the other I am told in Quiberon Bay. The Rangers sailing does not answer the general expectation, oweing in a great measure to her being too deep, very foul and over masted, her Ballast laid too high, on account of its improper quality, for a Ship of this construction, this with the extraordinary weight of her lower Masts ocasioned her being very Crank, I am paying my whole Attention to remedy these inconveniences as much as Possible, I am shortening the lower Masts, shifting the Main Mast further aft, and Mean to ballast with Lead; as that Article will stowe under the lower tier of Water the less quantity will be sufficient, of course the Ship will be so much the lighter, and Sail so much the faster, and we shall
then, I hope, be able to stow the Cables under the Platform. Tho' I have yet received no Letter from the Commissioners, I understand that they had some time ago provided for me one of the finest Frigates 3 that can be imagined, calculated for Thirty two, Twenty four Pounders, on One deck, and longer than any Ship in the Enemies Fleet, but it seems they were unfortunately under the necessity of giving her up on Account of some difficulties which they met with at Court, however I esteem the intention as much as tho' it had succeeded. as I shall always cherish the grateful remembrance of the Honor which Congress hath conferred on me by this and every other instance of their generous Approbation, I shall be the happiest of Men if a Life of services devoted to the Intrests of America can be rendered instrumental in securing it's Indepedance.

My particular thanks are due to you Sir, as one of the four Members of that Honorable Committee to whose generous intention, and Approbation I more immediately owe this great and unsolicited Obligation, but I hope for Opportunities of proving by my Conduct the deep sense I entertain of that favor.—

The inclosed Letter, and it's consequences hath given me real concern. Malice is a stranger to my Nature. I hate domestic broils, or misunderstandings, and would do, or suffer much, as a private Person to prevent them. But as an Officer, honored with the Approbation of Congress, and conscious of having at no time exceeded even in Thought the delicate line of my duty, or express letter of my Orders; I am in the highest degree tenacious of the respect due to my Signature: and I bid the most contemptuous defiance to the insinuation of any Man out of Congress. 4

I have been informed in Portsmouth that the four Oar'd Boat which attended the Ranger was built for the Portsmouth Privateer, and after being rejected as miscon- structed and unuseful for that Ship, was Assigned over to the Ranger; be this as it may, I will boldly affirm that she was the worst constructed & most unserviceable Boat that I ever saw, belonging to a Ship of War, for tho' a Man stepping on her Gunnel, would bring it down to the Waters edge, yet was her Weight equal, or nearly so to that of the Cutter, which I planned and had built, capable of carrying 40 Armed Men. had I been able, which I was not, to stow the two Boats, which I found provided for the Ranger; I must have been reduced to the Alternatives of throwing them overboard, or striking the TopMasts several times, on the Passage to prevent oversetting the Ship. I mention this matter to you in confidence as a Friend, declaring on the Honor of a Gentleman that I wish on my part to give it to Oblivion.

I have the Pleasure to hear that Captains Thompson and Hinman are well at Lo- rient of which please to inform M". Thompson. I shall endeavour to procure the Articles mentioned in M". Whipples Memorandum, 5 I hope to live in the remembrance of the few acquaintances I have in Portsmouth, and I have the honor to be [&c.]

Jn" P Jones

1. H.M.S. Invincible, Capt. Hyde Parker, Sr.
2. George and Mary.
3. Indien, building at Amsterdam.
4. This refers to Jones’s dispute with John Langdon, Continental Navy agent in Portsmouth, N.H., over the expense of a yawl. See William Gardner to Jones, 10 Oct., and Jones to Langdon, 11 Oct., above.
5. On the verso of John Wendell to Jones, 29 Oct. 1777, DLC, is a memorandum in Jones’s hand to procure in France for Gen. Whipple’s wife various items of cloth, lace, ribbon, gloves, and tea.
JOURNAL OF H.M.S. PELICAN, CAPTAIN HENRY LLOYD

1777 Decbr
Thursday 11

Castro bore S [illeg.]

First & Middle parts Moderate & Squally, Latter part fresh Breezes & Clear. at 7 AM Tack'd Ship saw two Sail in the SE Quarter out all Reefs and maid sail & Chaced at 9 spoke two Spanish Vessels, at 10 saw two Briggs in Shore gave Chace

Cape S & Andero SSE 4 Leagues
Fresh Breezes & Cloudy, still in chace set Studing Sails. fired a Gun to bring too a french Brig. Fired a Gun & made the Signal for the Sprightly Cutter to Chace to the SW. fired two Guns to bring too 2 Briggs in Shore 1 Hoisted the Boat out & sent her on board with an Officer who found none of their People on board saw their Boats full of Men go on Shore. took possession of them & brought them to Our Ship they having American Collurs on board. fired a Gun & made the Signal for the Sprightly Cutter to Chase to the Northward. at [illeg.] PM fired a Gun to bring too a french Brigg from S & Andero to Cadiz

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/710.
1. Prizes to Massachusetts privateer brig General Mercer, James Babson. See James Babson to Benjamin Franklin, 14 Dec., below.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. BEDFORD, CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO

1777
December
Thursday 11

Cape Finestere EBS Dis 3 Lea*

Fresh Gales and Cloudy Weather

Cape Finestere NEB[.] Dis 5 or 6 Leagues

D[e] Weather at 4 PM Cape Finestere bore SE ½ E. Dis 5 or 6 Lea* at 8 Saw and gave Chace to a Sail in the SW Q at 9 fir'd [a shot] and spoke with the Chace found her a Brig from Virginia bound to S' Celestians, 1 sent a Petty Officer and 9 men on board her

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/94.
1. Nancy and Hannah. Pennsylvania Packet, 1 Apr. 1778.

December 12

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON), FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1777

The Mary, Ashweek, of Dartmouth, from N. foundland to a Market, was taken by the Hawke 1 Privateer; the Crew were landed at Torbay the 1st Inst. by the Vrouw Elizabeth, Heeling.

1. Massachusetts privateer schooner, Jeremiah Hibbert.
To the Right Hon. Lord North, First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Principal Minister of the King of Great Britain.

My Lord,

"From motives of duty, and an earnest desire of mitigating the calamities of war, we proposed, near a year since, to the king of Great Britain's ambassador here, an exchange of prisoners in Europe. The answer we received must have been made known to your lordship, and the world will judge of its decency.\(^1\) It would have been honourable for that noble lord, and happy for thousands, who have since suffered unnecessarily, if he had considered that moderation is a mark of wisdom, and humanity an ornament to the highest station. These are the sentiments at least which have governed the congress and people of the United States. They have wished that this war, into which they entered with reluctance, might be distinguished by the humanity with which it was conducted; and that compassion might heal the wounds that were inflicted. The records of congress, my lord, are filled with proofs of tender care and attention, not only to the wants, but to the comfort and accommodation of their prisoners.

"We have wished in vain to find such instances in the acts of the British governments, for unhappily all we have seen on this subject is, the public declaration of the governors and general who was chosen to commence this war, that the American officers and soldiers should be treated with equal indignity, and all devoted, without distinction, to the most ignominious fate, in terms too low for us to repeat. We have never heard of this proceeding, having been censured by the government from which he derived his authority. Neither has the invitation to the Indian savages, at a public treaty, to drink the blood and feast upon the body of those whom you called your subjects, been ever disavowed.\(^2\)

"It is an universal complaint, that the practices of those in authority under you, have been conformable to the principles of these public acts.

"Col. Parker, a gentleman of rank, was thrown into a common gaol in Boston, covered over with wounds, where he perished unpitied, for want of the common comforts which his situation and humanity required.\(^3\)

"Colonel Ethan Allen was dragged, in chains, from Canada to England, from England to Ireland, from Ireland to Carolina, and from thence to New York; at a time when the officers taken from you, in the same expedition, were treated not only with lenity, but every possible indulgence.\(^4\)

"The barbarous treatment of Mr. Lovel, in Boston, has no parallel.\(^5\) Of the prisoners made in Fort Washington, two thirds of them perished by the unexampled cruelty and rigours of their captivity. Even in England, the severities which the American prisoners suffer, are, according to the testimony of every one we have seen, of the most grievous kind. Stripes have been inflicted on some, to make them commit the deepest of all crimes—the fighting against the liberties of their country. Numbers are now groaning in bondage in Africa and India, to which they were compelled by menaces of an immediate ignominious death; as contrary to every rule of war among civilized nations, as to every dictate of humanity.

"It is with the greatest regret we mention these cruelties. For the honor of humanity we hope they will not be committed again. Your lordship must know, that it
is in the power of those we have the honor to represent, to make ample retaliation upon the numerous prisoners of all ranks in their possession; and we warn and beseech you not to render it their indispensable duty. Upwards of five hundred British seamen have been generously treated, set at liberty by our cruisers in these seas, and sent at the public expence to their country. We trust, you will think yourselves bound to dismiss an equal number of seamen taken in the service of the United States.

"We also desire, that a person appointed by us, may have permission to furnish the subjects of the United States, who are in your prisons, with the necessaries they may want from time to time; and that a general cartel may be immediately settled, by which the unfortunate on both sides may be relieved as soon as possible from the miseries of imprisonment.

"We must beg a speedy answer, that we may transmit, without delay, the determination of your court to our constituents. We have the honor to be

Benjamin Franklin.
Silas Dean
Arthur Lee.

"Commissioners Plenipotentiary from the Independent and United States of America."
Passi, near Paris, December 12, 1777.  

1. NDAR: 734–35.
3. Lt. Col. Moses Parker, wounded and captured at Bunker Hill, died in prison after his leg was amputated. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 275.
4. See Ethan Allen, A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen’s Captivity, From the Time of his being taken by the British, near Montreal, on the 25th Day of September, in the Year 1775, to the Time of his Exchange, on the 6th Day of May, 1778 (Philadelphia: Bell, 1779).
5. James Lovell, charged with spying after the Battle of Bunker Hill, was transferred from Boston to Halifax, and from there to New York, before being exchanged.
6. The newspaper entry continues as follows. "The answer received from government the 3d of January, 1778, on the subject of the American prisoners, is to the following effect: ‘His majesty’s servants do not approve of the proposal of inspectors. They understand the establishment of the prisoners to be what is usual and proper in such cases; if there has been any neglect, they have given strict orders to have it rectified, and they will always be ready to redress any complaints that shall be made. The prisoners shall be permitted to receive, under proper regulations, any charitable donations in their favor. Besides this, government are disposed, and have it in their intentions, as opportunity shall offer, to exchange them in America against British prisoners there. If any complaints are made through the hands of M. H——y, or through any other proper channel, they will be taken into consideration, according to the case, and redressed.‘"

Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L’Orient

à Versailles le 12. Xbre. 1777.

Jay reçu, Monsieur, vos trois lettres du 3, de ce mois, l’une en réponse à ce que je vous avois mandé le 29. du mois d’octobre au sujet du Corsaire américain le Portsmouth qu’on disoit passé du Bordeaux à l’orient, et dont vous me marquez n’avoir pas encore eu connaissance, une autre par laquelle vous me rendez compte de ce qui s’est passé de la part d’un matelot de St. Malo qui vouloit se débarquer du navire la Brune;
et la 9me au sujet de la lettre que vous avez ecrite à M. De Bouilhac, et de la réponse que vous avez reçu de ce fermier Gnal au sujet des 46. Bariques de Taffia—réclamés par les Captnes des frégates le Raleigh et l'Alfred, et qui ont été saisies par les Employés des fermes, faute d'avoir, par ces Captnes, rempli les formalités prescrites, j'aprouve le parti que vous avez pris par rapport au matelot de St Malo qui voulait se débarquer, et à l'égard des 46. Bariques de Taffias confisquées, j'écris à M. De Bouilhac pour l'engager à en ordonner la remise, attendu le cas particulier, et pour ôter aux deux Capitaines anglo-américains tout prétexte d'éluder l'exécution des ordres qui leur ont été donnés de sortir promptement du Port. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

I have received, Sir, your three letters of the 3d of this month, one in reply to what I informed you on the 29th of last month concerning the American privateer Portsmouth which was reported to have left from Bordeaux for Lorient, and of which you informed me of not yet having had knowledge, another by which you reported what occurred concerning a sailor of St. Malo who wished to disembark from the vessel La Brune, and the third concerning the letter you wrote to M. de Bouilhac, and of the reply that you received from this farmer-general concerning the 46 casks of rum claimed by the captains of the Frigates Raleigh and Alfred, and which were seized by the employees of the farms, for want of having, on the part of the captains, fulfilled the requisite formalities. I approve of what you did with respect to the sailor of St. Malo who wished to disembark, and with respect to the 46 casks of confiscated rum, I am writing to M. de Bouilhac in order to have him promise to order their handing over, seeing that it is a special case, and to remove from the two American captains any pretext for their eluding the carrying out of the orders which have been given to them to quit the port promptly. I am, Sir, [&c.]

de sartine

LIEUTENANT DE VEAU

CHEVALEYER DE GOUZILLON-BELIZAL TO FRÉDÉRIC-JOSEPH GUILLOT

Copie de La lettre Ecritte par monsieur Le chvr de Gouzillon Belisal Lieutenant de vaisseau du roy a Monsieur Guillot Commissaire de la marinne a St malo

Je suis surpris Monsieur de La fanfaronade du Captn du Brick de 14 ou 16 C. Corsaire de Grenzeey, il faut qu'il aye la memoire Bien Courte pour ne pas se ressouvenir que dans plusieurs chasses que je luy ay appuyée en 8me. il a toujours fuy toutes voilles de hors et que meme Le lundy 27 dudit mois d 8me, a 4 h. du soir Lorsque je le rencontray au vent a moy sous la pte a Canon de Belleisle, d'un grand frais de NE. venant a ma rencontre Basbord amure a petites voilles, etant fort prés, je luy Criay sans porte voix et fis signe avec La main de me venir parler, il me repondit en son françois, oui monsieur, mais je fus fort surpris de le voir tenir le vent et mettre son grand foc, voille d'Ztay et Larguer des ris, pour Lors, je n'hezitay point a tirer dessus, Luy envoyoy sept Coups de Canon chargés a Boulets et mitraille et cinq a Boulet rond
desquels douze Coup. jestime qu'il n'en a reçu que trois La Grosse mér nay Empechant de Bien pointer, je le chassay jusqu'à la nuit mais sa marche toujours supérieure a la mienne, m' empecha de le joindre il avoit touses ses mats haut son Beauprès navoit pas Lair avarié, et je le crois trop Bon marin pour du temp qu'il faisoit chargér ses mats de toille sils avoient été endomagés, tout cecy sest passer a la vué de 4. Bat\textsuperscript{em} nantois et des habitants de Belleisle.

Faitte L'usage que vous vouderiez de Cette Lettre je vous en laisse le mnaire Flatez que cet evenement me procure Le plaisir de vous assurér de Lattachement que je vous ay voué et avec Lequel jay Lhonneur detre [&c.]

Brest a Bord de la Curieuse
le 12 X\textsuperscript{bre} 1777

[Translation]
Copy of the letter written by Monsieur the Chevalier de Gouzillon Belisal, Lieutenant de Vaisseau of the king, to Monsieur Guillot Commissaire of the navy at St. Malo.

I am surprised, Sir, by the boast of the captain of the brig of 14 or 16 guns, privateer of Jersey.\textsuperscript{1} He must have a rather short memory not to recall that in the several chases that I gave him in October he always made all sail to escape and that even on Monday, the 27th of the said month of October, at 4 o'clock in the evening when I met him to the windward of me under Canon Point of Belle Isle, in a strong breeze from the northeast, coming to meet me on the port tack, under short sail. Being very near, I called to him without hailing distance and signalled with my hand to come speak to me; he answered in French, “Yes, Monsieur,” but I was very surprised to see him keep the wind and set his standing-jib, staysail, and let out reefs, upon which I did not hesitate at all to fire on him, firing seven cannon loaded with ball and grape, and five with cannon balls, of which twelve shots, I estimate that only three hit him, the high seas preventing my aiming well. I chased him until nightfall, but his speed being always superior to mine prevented my catching him. His upper masts and his bowsprit did not have the appearance of having been damaged, and I believe him to be too good a sailor in that weather to have stressed his masts with sail if they had been damaged. All this happened in view of four vessels of Nantes and of the inhabitants of Belle Isle.

Make what use you wish to of this letter, I leave it up to you. I am pleased that this event gives me the pleasure of assuring you of the attachment I have sworn to you and with which I have the honor to be [&c.]

Brest, on board la Curieuse
12 December 1777

Chevalier Gouzillon de Bélizal,
Lieutenant de Vaisseau commanding
the royal corvette La Curieuse of 12
Cannon of 4 pounds and of 6 swivels of \textfrac{1}{2} pound

Monseigneur

Monsieur L’intendant vient de me faire part d’une Lettre du Commissaire de la marine de Saint Malo par laquelle il lui marque un trait de fanfaronade relatif à moi qu’a fait a Gerzey Le Capitaine du Corsaire sur lequel je tirai le 27 Octobre et dont je suis bien persuadé Monseigneur que vous ne Douter pas de la vérité du Compte que je vous rendis lors, je me Crois obligé n’étant pas Connu à St. Malo, d’y faire passer un précis de ce qui m’est arrivé dans ma dernière Croisière. En Consequence je l’adresse au Commissaire il en fera ce qu’il voudra Le fera même passer si vous le demandez. Ce qui m’est égal

Jay aussi L’honneur Monseigneur de vous en s’envoyer une Copie et soyez persuadé que si dans l’une des mes Croisiers je le trouve, malgré monseigneur qu’il ait 14 ou 16 C. de 6. et que je n’en ay que douze du Calibre de 4. je Continueray, s’il vient trop près de nos Cottes, à agir comme je l’ay déjà fait à la dernière Croisière.

De me recommande toujours a sa Bonté pour Le Commandement d’une frégatte et serois flatté que vous m’accordassier le privilège de celles de St. Malo, vu ce qui marrive dans ce moment avec M. Guillot relativement a ce Corsaire.

attendant donc tout de L’honneur de votre protection Je suis [&c.]

Chevalier de Gouzillon Belizal.

Brest le 12 Xbre. 1777

My Lord

Monsieur the intendant has just told me about a letter from the Commissioner for the Navy at Saint Malo in which he notes a boastful reference regarding me that the captain of the privateer made in Jersey. I had fired on his ship on the 27th of October and I had the honor, my Lord, of making a report to you on 2 November when I returned to Brest.

Although I am sure, my Lord, that you do not doubt the truth of the report that I made to you, I felt compelled, being unknown in Saint Malo, to forward there a summary of what had happened to me during my last cruise. Accordingly, I forwarded it to the Commissioner; he will do with it as he sees fit, he may even send it to Jersey. It makes no difference to me.

I also have the honor, my Lord, of sending you a copy of it and be assured that if, during my cruises, I come across him, and my Lord, whether he carries 14 or 16 six-pounders and I have only 12 four-pounders, I shall continue, if he comes near our coast, to act as I did during my last cruise.

I refer always to your bounty for the command of a frigate. I would be flattered were you to grant me the privilidge of commanding one of those at Saint Malo, in light of what is happening to me at this moment with M. Guillot with regard to this privateer.

Relying on the honor of your protection, I am [&c.]

Chevalier de Gouzillon Belizal

Brest, 12 December 1777
December 13

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

13th [Dec.]* Saturday Pleas of weathc All the Prisoners Examined to see What Clothes they Stand in Need of.

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO MIGUEL LAGOANERE AND COMPANY

Mære Lagoanere

Sir Notwststading [Notwithstanding] the Certainty of everything being Concluded, this Governour, will not or Cannot See it he Says that General O. Neal has not mentioned one Circumstance relative to the prise, I see plainly that between the two the[y] are at points, and this man heare I see plainly will not resolve on any thing without it is as plain as A. B. C. I must beg you will gett the General to be a little plainer and willing to this Govc and Send the Coppy of the Verdict inclosed to mære Lambey [Lembeye]—

I leave the prize master and A boy heare to the prize is Done with and then to proceed Down to you to Stay my return, in Respect of the Brig with you. I am Confident all will be Done for the Best and the Money of those two Brigs Lay with you for Some time as at the fardest. I Shall not Stay Out more than 3 weeks. if An Accident Should happen in this Case it Should lay at the Disposal of Mære L. Capt fonlet is heare and I belive will Go Down to you to make A proposal/—


1. Most likely the Syren, James Renolls.
2. Syren, James Renolls, and Dispatch, Emanuel Le Geyte.

December 14 (Sunday)

JAMES BABSON TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mære Beniamen Francklin S' antones Decem't th 14—1777

Sir this may Enform you that I Sailed from Bilboa Novm' 20 with my pore Nacked Crew by a favuor of Mære Gardoquis & Sons that Trusted me with one hundd Pound Sterling to Buy a Little provishiing I fell In with Six fish Versells from NFoundland after a Little Dispute Tuck them all & Carred them Into S' andero I oared
them to Bilboa but on their pasague they fell In with a friget & a Cutter three of them they Retuck & Carred of my peple Escaped on shore the outhers air Saft In port—Sir I have hear Nothing of my afair with my prise I Left In Nant Should Esteem it as a favour if you would favour me with a Line Consaning the prise you may Depend that I Shand Trouble the french flag &

James Babson


2. Clarendon.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

Copia

Exmo Sr.

Mui Señor mio; Con fecha de 12 del corriente repite V.E. sus quexas sobre la Proteccion que supone lo gran en los Puertos de España los Corsarios Americanos, y como las ofertas que he hecho en nobre del Rey han sido sinceras y dictadas por su deseo de acreditar su Amistad y escrupuloso procedimiento á S.M. Bretanica, debo participar á V.E. que al Comandante de Galicia se le encarga de nuevo el cumplimiento de las ordenes que le están dadas, se le previene providencia que el Corsario Cunningham entreque a su disposicion el marinero Ingles de que V.E. me habla, y zele que en lo succesivo no se violente a volver abordo a los Marineros Ingleses, ó de otra Nacion que se refugien á tierra desde los Vaxeles Americanos, ni se consienta que sean tomados p¿ fuerza, y se le advierte informe, (con remision de los Procesos) sobre todas las preses que V.E. me cita en su papel de 12. y hayan entrado en aquellos Puertos, como acerca de todo lo ocurrido en la venta de sus Cargazones, depositando el importe de ellas hasta nueva Disposicion.

Las mismas advertencias se hacen al Gobernador de Santander y Castro, mandandole detenga en este ultimo Puerto el Navio Elizabeth, que dice V.E. fue tomado a medio tiro de Cañon, y remita los Autos para que aqui podemos enterarnos del hecho.

Crea V.E. que todos los inconvenientes que V.E. representa ahora se habrian evitado si V.E. hubiese tenido á bien ejecutar (lo q¿ le propuse en mi ultimo papel) pues de esta omission proviene sin duda la repeticion de las quexas de V.E.

Pero asi como el Rey se presta por pura amistad y buena correspondencia con su Corte de V.E. á los actos de condescendencia y equidad que dexo enunciados, se promete S.M. no tardara aquella en remediar los desordenes q¿ los Corsarios y Marina Inglesa cometen en los Mares de America contra los Navios Españoles con infraccion del tenor de los Tratados, pues sobre los Excesos anteriores ocurren en el dia dos casos que se expresan en la adjunta Nota, respecto á los cuales solo pide S.M. justicia, prometiendose que la Satisfaccion sea completa, y las ordenes tan efectivas que de resultas de ellas no se abuse mas de la prudente tolerancia del Rey y de sus Oficiales y Comandantes.

Deseó se haya VE. restablecido de su Indisposicion, y ratificandole mi obsequio ruego á D¿ guarde á V.E. m¿ a¿

Aranjuez á 14 de Dic¿ de 1777. &c¿ &c¿.

El Conde de Floridablanca.
Most Excellent Sir:

Sir; Your Excy repeats in your's of the 12th. Ins1 your Complaints upon the Protection which you imagine that the American Privateers receive in the Ports of Spain; and, as the Offers which I have made to your Excellency in the King's Name have been sincere & dictated by His Desire of confirming his Friendship & his scrupulous Proceeding towards His Britannick Majesty, I am to communicate to your Excy, that the Commandant General of Galicia receives fresh Instructions to comply with the Orders which had been given, he is directed to take care that Cunningham delivers up to his Disposition the English Sailor whom your Excy mentions to me, & to be observant for the future that no Violence be offered to oblige any English Sailors or of other Nations, who shall take refuge on Spanish Ground, to return to his Ship, nor is he to consent to his, (Cunningham) taking any by Force, & the said Commandant is further instructed to give me Information (Together with the Documents relating to them) of all the Prizes which your Excy speaks of in your Office of the 12th and which have come into these Ports as well as of all that has happened relative to the Sales of their Cargoes, depositing in the mean while the Produce of them 'till further Orders. The same Instructions are sent to the Commandants of St. Andero & Castro directing that the Ship Elizabeth, which your Excy says was taken at half Gun Shot from the latter, be detained there, & the Proceedings thereupon be sent here that we may judge of them.

Your Excy may be assured, that the Inconveniences which your Excy now complains of might have been avoided if your Excy had thought proper to execute what I proposed in my last Office, & doubtless from that not having been done has arisen The repetition of your Complaints.—But as on the one hand The King out of pure Friendship & good Correspondence towards your Court acts with Equity & Condescension which I have set forth, His Majesty on the other hopes, that your Court will not delay giving a Remedy to the Disorders which the English Privateers & Navy commit in the American Seas against Spanish Ships, infringing upon the Tenor of our Treaties, for besides the former Excesses, two Cases have just arisen which are described in the annexed Note, with regard to which His Majesty only asks for Justice promising himself that He shall receive complete Satisfaction, & that such efficacious Orders shall be given, as shall not give more exercise for the prudent forbearance of His Majesty, His Offices & Commanders.

I am very desirous that your Excy should recover from your Indisposition, & confirming my Obedience to you I pray for a long Continuation of your Life &c.

Count Floridablanca

Aranjuez 14th. Dec 1777.

[Enclosure]

Copia

La Fragata Correo del Rey Catolico nombrado el Colon, su Capitan Don Mateo de Urcallo, salio de la Coruña el dia 2o de Agosto con los pliegos del Real Servicio para la Isla de Cuba. En las inmediaciones de las Islas de Sto. Tomas y La Tortola fue acometido por dos Balandras Inglesas, que despues de haber la disparado varios tiros con bala enviaron gente armada á su bordo, que reconocio toda la carga, y aun se atrevio á abrir uno de los caxoners de la Correspondencia habiendo puesto grillos á parte de la tripulacion Española, y tratadola como á enemiga, por mas que se la representó el respeto
14 DECEMBER 1777

Note annexed to the Office.

Translation.

The Frigate Colon, a Packet Boat of His Catholick Majesty's, commanded by Don Manuel de Urcallo, sailed from Coruña the 2nd of August, with Letters upon the Royal Service for the Island of Cuba: Being near the Island of St. Thomas and Turtle Island she was attacked by two English Sloops, who after firing at her several Times with Ball sent some armed people on board, who looked over the whole Cargo, & even dared to open one of the Chests of Papers, chained part of the Crew, treating them as Enemies, notwithstanding Representations made of the Respect due to a King's Packet Boat, & the Peace existing between the two Crowns: And altho' the Frigate Colon was afterwards allowed to proceed on her Voyage, she was interrupted & detained a long Time; all this Trouble being given without any Respect to the Flag which She bore. Altho' the Names of the English Sloops which committed this Outrage are not known, yet we know that the Captain of one of them is called Tillet, & the second Pilot Fills.

The Packet Boat belonging to His Catholick Majesty, called the Prince of Asturias, being in the Misissipi, 17 Leagues from New Orleans, was attacked by an English Privateer, who fired several Times at her, & whose Crew at last boarded her Sword in Hand, committing Outrages by Word & Deed, & breaking out in violent Abuse of the Spanish Nation.  

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GIBRALTAR. DEC. 14.”

“The Enterprize frigate, commanded by Sir Thomas Rich, Bart. on this station, hardly goes out on a cruise but she returns with a prize, and most of them of great value. Not long since she brought in a French ship on suspicion of being bound to America. Sir Thomas had the art to sift the secret out of the crew, and she has been condemned as a legal prize in our Court of Admiralty here. We have three other frigates also cruising about here.”

New-York Gazette, 6 Apr. 1778.

December 15

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAINS THOMAS GRAVES, HERBERT SAWYER, AND GEORGE BOWYER, R.N.

By &c

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command without a moments loss of time & proceed & Cruize between Ushant & Cape Clear for the protection of the Trade of His Majestys Subjects & diligently to look out for &C to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of No. America.

You are to continue upon the above Station for one Month after passing Ushant & then return to Plymouth Sound & remain there until you receive further order; sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c 15th Dec 1777

Sandwich
Palmerston
H Palliser

Captn Graves—Conqueror
" Sawyer—Boyne
" Bowyer—Burford

Plym

By &c PS

By Express at 9 P.M.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 73. Corunna 15th Dec 1777.

My Lord.

The St Pascal of 74 Guns, and the Soledad Frigate are sailed from Ferrol but whither is not known.

Cunningham is returned to Ferrol from his third Cruize having besides the two vessels which in my last I had the Honor to acquaint Your Lordship he had sent in here taken several others and sent them to different Ports of France and Spain. The Hawke Privateer Jeremiah Hilbert has also made great Havock among our Newfoundland Ships bound to Bilboa, and Santander, more than half of which have been taken by the Rebels since the Convoy under Admiral Montague left them. None of His Majesty’s Ships appear on this Coast to protect a Trade so extremly beneficial to the Nation, nor have any been seen by the American vessels that have lately arrived here from Virginia and other Parts of North America. I therefore most humbly beseech your Lordship will be pleased to take in Consideration what I had the Honor to write on this Subject in my Letter No. 66, I humbly conceive a Cutter of equal Force with Cunninghams would render effectual Service if that method was observed.

This Pirate is still in Ferrol and continues to receive every Encouragement that can be given him. his two last Prizes which were taken within Cannon Shot of the Coast have been declared legal, and he is now waiting for Leave to sell them: the most false Representations have been sent to Court for that end, and there is no Doubt they will be attended to.
Great rejoicings have been made by the Americans in this Port at the News propagated by a vessel just arrived from Northampton in Virginia, of General Howe's being totally defeated and driven from Philadelphia on the first of October, and of the total loss of General Burgoyne's whole Army, a report which I flatter myself deserves no credit. I have the honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.


1. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 5 Dec. 1777, above.
2. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 8 Oct. 1777, above.
3. For the American perspective, see Gustavus Conyngham to the American Commissioners in France, 4 Dec. 1777, above. See also Gustavus Conyngham to Lagoanere and Company, 13 Dec. 1777, above.

December 16

F. Steward to the Earl of Sandwich

My Lord Waymouth Decr 16. 1777.

As the following description of the two rebel frigates who engaged the Druid, & went into Port L'Orient, was given me by a Gent: of the strictest veracity, who left that Place the fourth Ins: when they were fitting out, & expected to be ready for sea in a for'tnight, intending as they gave out for the S'w' to intercept the Indiamen, but as he supposed from the information of the Stores he saw go on board, they meant a winter cruise to the N'd or to go directly for Boston I have taken the liberty to lay the same before your L'dship for the information of the cruisers under your command—At the same time the Amphytrite from America lay in the outer road with a valuable cargo for St. Maloes as he believes they said for Nantz—I am [&c.]

F Steward

[Enclosure]

The Rawleigh the Comm' (Thompson a Scotchman) is a fine looking ship in size & built like the Kings frigates of 28 Guns, but carries 13 twelve Pounders on her Gun-deck & they say (for they were not mounted) 12-six pdr on her quarter deck & forecastle beside swivells & 280 men, but he believes they exaggerate in this particular, the crews mostly English & Irish, who appear tired of their masters—The officers have most of them been employed in small trading vessels, & now swagger in blue uniforms turned up with red and Anchor Buttons.—She is low abaft, with a square stern & quarter Gallery, a figure head—is painted white & black with a red & white streak along her Qua' her sides well scraped, her Bend blacked rather higher up than usual, & her bottom very white, her Nettings fore & aft filled with Hay or Cotton Bags at present clean & white, she is both square & taunt rigged with very long flagstaff or rather royall Masts painted black has a whole mizen yard, & a Pole Mizen topmast the head of which is very long, her stern Lanthorn larger than general & painted white, they say sails extremly well, especially upon a wind, & has the look of it—. The Alfred was formerly a Merchantman is about 275. or 300 tons at most, pierced for 20 Guns 9 Pdrs. & carries 6-four-Pounders on the Qr Deck & forward. the Cap't An American, she they say has 160 men, & is better officered than the other, but sails dully.—Her appearance when her Guns are housed & ports lowered down has very little of the ship of war, she
is square sterned, without quarter Gallery or Badges, has a figure head painted yellow with a remarkable large Plume of feathers on his helmet painted white. The ship is painted plain black & yellow with a white bottom is very taunt but not square rigged, her royall Masts & pole mizen topmast head more out of Proportion than the Rawleigh's has a Gaff Mizen, Top Armour & Quarter Cloths Blue with 13 white Stars ye same as in the upper Corner of their Colors. neither have their Names in the Stern they have with them a small Bermudian Sloop with four Guns—

L, UKLPR, Adm. 1/1838/13, 64.

JOHN ROSS TO SILAS DEANE

The Honble Siles Deane Esqrc. Nantes 16 Decem' 1777

Dear Sir

By a letter I took the liberty to write the Honble. Commissioner's last Wednesday, advising of the Henriettas Safe arrival from Hambg.—You'd see thereby I was then at L'Orient. The conduct & inconsistency of my Correspondent Mr Berrard, carried me thither at a few hour's notice from Green, and I am Satisfied had I not made my appearance (very unexpectedly to him indeed) he would Retard the dispatch of my Vessels, without the least cause, except the Suspicions of his own heart, that I had become disgusted with his Management—My Presence changed the Scene, and I now look for the Ship with the first fair wind, having fallen down to Isle Groye before I left L'Orient. Nevertheless, as no accounts are Rendered as Yet, can’t say any thing of this Gentleman’s management former delays & neglects on his Part has accumulated the expence, nor have I any remedy for what I may suffer in that respect, but to gaurd against him in future.—

On my return here, I received your Sundry favours of the 1st. 2nd. & 8th Inst: all which being now before me shall Reply to each in their order.—Respecting the first, Mr Moylan will set out in a day or two for L'Orient to have a converseation with Mr Gourlade, & hope his personal presence may accomplish his wishes to the Satisfaction of all parties.—We want a friend at the place of his intended Residence, to pay some Attention to our Interest, the impositions of our present Factors being too Glaring to escape Notice 2

Particulare attention shall be paid to your instructions in Regard to what you Recommend concerning Your Interest in the Ship L'Brune, in case she gets Safe to America, and will expect (as You Propose) Your Sentiments further on the Same Subject Previous to her Sailing—As fast as possible her Cargo will be put on board, when compleated will be able to ascertain the Freight, and then advise for Your government, and do for you in every Respect as for my Self.—3

I come now to reply to that of the 2nd addressed to Mr Hodge and me, in consequence of What you proposed on the Score of the two Cutters.5—Am Satisfied to accept of the property in both between him and me, belonging to the public,—to be assigned over to us at the first port (or ports) the Order from you may reach the Captain, or agent You employ, taking an Inventory of the hull & materials, with a Specification (Signed by the Captain & Officers) of the condition in which they may appear when Delivered—Leaving it finally thereafter, to Setle the Value of the public Share's with Congress (or Committee of Congress) in America. And to whom Mr Hodge and I, shall
pay, on Account for Same, when ascertained with the Honble. Members of Congress, by either of us, or by those whom we may empower to bring it to a speedy Settlement.—You know my motives in this engagement, are principally to oblige Mr. Hodge who has lost much of his time in prosecuting this line of business to Serve the Public & himself without any material private Advantage, Besides, his determination to Risque himself, in case I assumed part of the direction as an Owner, was no Small inducement to listen to Your proposal tho I never had any concern of the kind heretofore.

I shall not incommode Mr. Williams, until the Men engaged & now onboard the Small Cutter⁵ are ordered in Some other vessel, I Shall Receive her so soon as it Suits him to dispense with her, & Push her off to a Station clear of those Seas, which am to fix with Mr. Hodge previous to his departure—She is only fit to carry about Sixteen hands with a couple of months Stores, any distant voyage, consequently of no use as a Packet or Merchant Vessel from hence to America. She may nevertheless Answer as a consort for the other in certain cruizes

The day before I set out for L’Orient, I received a letter from the Honble. A: Lee, From which, have copyed a paragraph, in said Epistle to me, Respecting the Bargain of the Cutter between You and me, And my Answer thereto, being likewise copyed on same piece of Paper, I send it herewith for Your perusal, that You may Judge of it, & act as to you may Seem best.⁶ At same time, from this correspondence with me, Woud you not think it adviseable to get the two other Gentlemen Commissioner’s, to Join You in the Assignment of those Cutters to Mr. Hodge & me? Circumstances & my own observations, lead me to see it necessary for you, to Act as much as possible with consent & approbation of your Colleagues, least your own Seperate distinct Service’s, for the public in Your present Station (however well intended) may be misrepresented, or misconstrued—If any of the Honble. Gentlemen, should have any objection to the terms of our agreement, I freely disclaim any Pretension’s to the Bargain.—Mr. Hodge Sets out tomorrow for Spain, therefore, in case of any Alteration from a prospect of greater advantages to the Public by keeping the Vessels, Write in Course to Mr. Hodge, that he may Return, or forfit what may occur for the benefite of the present Owner’s—

On the other hand, if mutually approved of, and that the Assignment are Sent me, Shall transmittle the Obligation you want in Course, corresponding with our Agreement, that every thing May appear fair to bear examination, happen what will

Your Last (had not the Property arrived Safe,) woud Puzzle me much haveing no instruction’s, or any descretionary Power from the Committee of Congress to Effect Insurance,⁷ I wished to Receive the Commissioners answer to that Letter, in justification of my self, & as a prove of my Attention in consulting them. It may still be proper I have it as the most Regulare mode of doing business, and beg You may Procure it for me, to Serve in future for my government—What occurred to you Respecting the Ranger,⁸ Occurred to me at the very instant I was writeing Mr. Lee, and mentioned it to him in particular, hope You may be able to Possess me of Private instructions for Jones, that I may manage to join all the force I can, unobserved, to take their departure together.—None can be more Conscious then I am, to get the Goods Sent off, it is of consequence and a Vulluable Property collected here safe from Russia & Germany on the best term’s.—Believe I wish nothing so much as to have all at Sea, & off my hands. Pray God they may all get Safe.—I am [&c.]

Jno. Ross
NB. Am uneasey & anxious for the unhappie Situation of Philad. Much do I Long to hear from the Southern Parts of our Country—The Northern very fortunatly Secured their Peace, on which I heartely congratulate You & all our Country Men. I Suppose Bankcroft coud Scarsely speak a Sentance for a week after the News Reached You ComplimB. to the Doctor—

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.
1. Deane’s letter of 1 Dec. is above; that of 2 Dec. in Deane Papers, 2: 263–64; and that of 8 Dec. in ibid., pp. 268–69.
2. Ross and Jonathan Williams, Jr., had agreed on recommending James Moylan, an American merchant in Le Havre, as American commercial agent at L’Orient. Moylan was going to discuss a possible connection with L’Orient merchant Jacques-Alexandre Gourlade, whom Williams had originally favored for the agency. Ross to Silas Deane, 25 Dec. 1777, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.
3. See Silas Deane to John Ross, 1 Dec. 1777, above.
4. Continental Navy cutters Revenge and Dolphin. Deane gave Hodge and Ross the option of purchasing the United States’s half interest in the Revenge, one quarter then belonging to Hodge and one quarter to Ephraim Cunningham & Co., or acting as agents for the Congress in management of the vessel. Deane Papers, 2: 263–64.
5. Dolphin.
7. Deane left the matter of insurance entirely to Ross’s judgment. Deane Papers, 2: 268–69.
8. Deane suggested that the Ranger convoy Brune. Ibid., 269.

JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE

Dear Sir

Nantes 16 Decemr 1777

I received both your esteemed favours of the 1st. & 12th. Inst: (the Latter only this moment.) I am pleased to Learn you expect to accomplish a concurrence of the Arrangement proposed for the Ranger.—I shall make every possible preparation, nor do I doubt but I’ll be able to manage as soon as she can be in readiness for Sea—

At present there is a fleet of English Cruizers off here & in Sight of Bele isle to watch American Vessels. almost in Soundings to the disgrace of the Libertys & Power of France—Since my last, and in my Absence, M’ Hodge arrived here, possessed of order’s from M’ Deane in consequence of what is concluded on Respecting the Cutters—Today I wrote M’ Deane, advising, I had communicated my Sentiments to you on the subject, And being disposed only to finish with the Mutual Approbation of the Honble Commissioners. I beg you may Join in the assignation proposed, if approved of, or give me Your Opinion that I may Act to gaurd against every dispute & reflection—Permit me to request my Complim be presented to your Brother. Am indebted to Sundry of his, to which shall reply by next Post. I have the honour to be

Jn in 


JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honble Gent—

(No. 102) Nantes Decemr 16. 1777.—

My last to M’ Dean in answer to his of the 8th informed you that I intended to go to Painbeuf to give you a fuller acco of the Lion, but various affairs have prevented.—I have now ordered every article that relates to that Ship to be collected
and sent on board with the utmost dispatch and by the end of this Week I intend she shall be compleat in everything except Poultry Vegetables & such Provision as spoil by keeping, the same Lighter will also carry down the last Bale or Cask that is to go on board her.—You know her Situation, her sailing therefore will depend on what passes with you, for all I can say on this Subject I refer you to my last.¹—Let appearances be as rigourous as they please, if they give but a private indemnification We will rub through all the Forms; or what will be better, please to obtain a private permission to dispense with the late orders.—

As to M' Montieux Vessells I have sent a lighter load on board of each, the Chalotais is almost full when she & the Lion are compleat the Mercury shall take all the remainder,—but here we are again in Difficulties and if you don't succeed in some way or other we shall be obliged to unload both these Ships to take the Arms out.—I have already mentioned the Ranger and the manner in which M' Morris has arranged matters with me. This Ship will want many Supplies particularly Ballast, for which I propose Lead instead of Iron tho' more costly. my Reason is because Iron is to be had in many parts of our Country, & lead is not, therefore at any future Period the Ranger may afford a timely supply & taking Iron in return, not injure herself. I beg you will please to say in answer to this whether or not I am to give these Supplies and apply to you for what surplus Funds may be wanting. I doubt not your answer will be in the affirmative, tho' I think the course of Business requires me to ask the Question. This Ship is now striped and will in a few days be carreeneed.

I send you inclosed the weight of several Bales of M' Monteus Cloathing, I could not weigh an equal quantity of M' Sabatiers to make the Comparison they being almost all on board & of the few Casks that remains none have the different Sizes distinguished: The weight of the Bales was taken in presence of M' Peltier.—I have the honour to be yours,

Jon[a] Williams J

¹. Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France, 6 Dec., above.

CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honbl Gentlemen

Nantes 16th Decr 1777

I received Yours of the 2d ins¹ from M' Maylon along with the Dispatches for Congress—which I will Secure readey for Sinking in Case of danger according to Your Orders—when the dispatches came to hand I was all clear for Sea and now onley wates for a favorable oppertunity—Ther is certen information of Seven Saile of Englih Cruizers off Bil:isle—for eyre vessel Latley come into port being spoake with by one or more of them—the Judge of the Admiralty here was Pleased to Communicate this intelligence to Me—and Belive they are Ordered on purpouse to Cruise off so near to watch the Frigates at L.Orient and other American vessels ther at Lorient, and now in this harbour—You May depend I shall lose no time consisting with the safty of the vessel under my commmand—and purpousing to remain in pot [port] till I receive further information of those cruizers which My force cannot Engage if
you should think proper to send down aney more Dispatches & they should come to hand before I should have an opportunity to saile I will take care to put them in the same leadend box with the rest, I have The honnour to be [&c]

Jno Young


1. Above.

**December 17**

**AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES**

Sir Passy, near Paris Dec. 17 1777.

We received your several letters from Nantes & Portsmouth. We shall be glad to see you here, as soon as is consistent with your Affairs, in order to consult with you on the Matters mention’d in your Instructions from the Congress, &c. We are [&c.]

B Franklin

Silas Deane

Arthur Lee

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 667-72. Addressed: "To/John Paul Jones Esqr/Nantes." Docketed: "Paris Decr 17'11 1777/From the hon"ic. the/Commissioners./No.l."

**COMTE DE BROGLIE TO LOUIS XVI**

[Extract]

Plan de Guerre

Contre L’Angleterre, Rédigé par les ordres du feu Roy dans les Années 1763, 64, 65, et 1766. Par M. Le Comte de Broglie, et Refondu et adapté aux Circonstances actuelles Pour être mis sous les yeux de Sa Majesté à qui il a été envoyé le 17. décembre 1777. . . .

Second Mémoire

Mémoire militaire Relativement à notre Situation actuelle avec L’Angleterre

Il en est de la Guerre comme de toutes les Entreprises, point de Succès Sans plan, c’est ce qui nous a manqué essentiellement dans la dernière Guerre, et ce qu’il est bien à désirer qui ne nous manque pas dans celle dont nous Sommes menacés, on Seroit d’autant moins excusable, que jamais Guerre ne s’est approchée d’une manière moins Soudaine. Depuis 2. ans, les deux Nations Sont dans un état de Guerre Cairet et dans un appareil d’armement ouvert. Aujourd’hui la crise paroit plus prochaine que jamais: le plus léger événement, un pas, un mot, un mal entendu peuvent nous mettre aux prises; jamais donc il n’a été plus nécessaire de former un plan, il est vraisemblable que le Gouvernement eu a un, et si l’on de mettre celui ci sous les yeux de S. M. ce n’est qu’un hommage de Zèle qui peut cependant la mettre en état de comparer la conclusion du mémoire précédant, Sur la situation politique de la france envera L’Angleterre, à été que, vû l’aveuglement qui a jusqu’ici égaré les Anglais, et la possibilité quoique peu vraisemblable qu’ils y persistent, il falloit ne point commencer la Guerre, mais seulement s’y pré-
parer, de maniere à pouvoir entrer en action au premier moment où elle Seroit nécessaire, d'apres ce resultat, il s'agit de tracer un plan Général qui defensif pour le moment actuel, soit susceptible de devenir offensif aussitot que la Guerre clatera.

Cette discution est trop importante pour n'etre pas traitée avec toute la methode et la profondeur qu'elle exige, ainsi on commencera par répondre plusieurs questions preliminaires qui y ont rapport leur Solution deviendra ensuite la base du plan qu'on doit former.

Situation de Notre Marine Comparée
à celle des Angleisa, et de la Maniere de l'employer

On n'entrera dans aucun detail sur le materiel de notre Marine compare à celui de la Marine Anglais. Le Gouvernement doit savoir a quoi s'en tenir Sur ce parallele, il a le Secret de notre Situation Réelle, celui de nos Chantiers, de nos arsenaux, de nos magasins, et il doit de même s'etre procuré celui des Anglais, un Sebornera donc ici à quelques resultats appuyés sur les faits passés et sur des vérités reconnus, pour tacher ensuite d'en insérer le plan d'opération qu'il paroit le plus avantageux d'adoptu pour notre Marine.

Cette branche de nos forces à fait depuis deux ans d'immenses progrès, et chaque jour ils s'acroissent, l'Esprit d'émulation et d'activité y a Succeedé à celui de Langueur et un de�espirance, c'est l'habitude de la Marine, qu'elle auroit pu couvrir tout, et sur les quels ils se sont compromettre, qui les compromettront, qui les morceleront nos forces, qui les battus, ou dans des Combats particuliers, ou dans des Stations difficiles, c'est l'art de passer et de tenir partout, enfin au milieu de beaucoup d'officiers, de grande esperance, c'est d'en avoir qui ayant commandé des Escadres et des flottes.

Dans cette Situation toute specie de Situation ne convient sans doute pas à notre marine, il paroit qu'on doit éviter toutes celles qui morceleront nos forces, qui les diviseront, qui les compromettront, ou dans des Combats particuliers, ou dans des Stations périlleuses, ou dans des Expeditions de longue halene, l'experience de deux derniers Guerres n'a que trop confirmé ce principe, on a voulu faire force partout, couvrir tout, et partout faible, partout inférieur en force ainsi qu'en manoeuvres et peut eètre en Capacité; on a été partout battus, ou force de regagner ses Ports, ce qui revient au même, puisque par la Les operations ont été nulles. Aprés trois Compagnes on a voulu a retenir au Sistema, réunir Ses forces, et il n'était plus tems. L'Escadre de Toulon, ainsi qu'il arrivera toujours, toutes les fois qu'on ne prévendra pas les Anglais, n'a pas pu joindre la flotte de l'océan, celle ci à peine égale à la flotte Anglais tandis qu'elle auroit pu être Supérieure, Si la jonction s'etoit faite, à [illeg.] sortir, on Sait le Sort de ce combat, et depuis notre Pavillon n'a pas osé Se montrer. Ainsi n'en usa point Louis XIV. pendant Les deux années de triompe, ou il eut l'Empire de la mer, il eut de Grosses flottes, et il les tint ensemble; S'il essuyat un grand échec à la Hogue, c'est mal a propos qu'on dit que cette bataille fut le Tombeau de la marine, car l'année d'apres il mit en mer une flotte de 80. Vaisseaux. Ce qui fit tomber sa marine, c'est qu'elle n'etoit point alimentée par une navigation considérable, c'est qu'elle n'étoit par consequent que factice et un effort ephemere de la puissance; c'est qu'enfin les circonstances l'ayant force de porter toutes Ses depenses et son attention aux Guerres de terre, elle fut peu à peu, et ensuite tout a fait négligée.

Point de petites Escadres; point d'Expeditions Soustaines, de Grosses flottes, tous nos forces dans une Seule mer,—une Bataille Navale dans ce début; mais don-
nécu à propos et dans un grand objet, une Guerre vive et courte, voilà le Système qu'on proposera pour notre Marine. Dans l'état actuel il seroit dangereux pour nous de croire pouvoir défendre nos Colonies, et protéger notre Commerce pendant la Guerre avec des Escadres. 6. Vaisseaux français envoyés dans les mers d'Asie, en même temps que 6. Vaisseaux Anglais, au bout d'un an se trouveroient dans un état Sempiternellement inférieur à ces derniers, par le désavantage qu'à notre marine sur la leur dans les Croisiers longues, difficiles et eloignées.

En rassemblant la plus grande partie de nos forces à Brest, nous protégeons bien plus efficacement notre Commerce et nos Colonies, car nous obligeons les Anglais à garder dans l'océan et dans la Manche des forces non Seulement égales; mais même Supérieures, ils ne doivent pas en effet commettre au hazard d'une Bataille donnée avec égalité le Sort de l'Angleterre, dont l'invasion deviendroit facile, S'ils venoient à la perdre; enfin s'il est un opération que nous puissions et devions tenter, c'est cette Bataille, car d'une part elle peut terminer la Guerre d'un seul Coup, de l'autre en la perdant nous n'avons pas les mêmes risques à courir, et ce Jeu est par conséquent tres inégal pour les Anglais.

Une grande raison milite encore pour nous faire préférer des opérations décisives à toutes celles qui pourroient faire traîne la Guerre en longueur, c'est que notre Marine n'étant point encore assez consolidée, n'ayant point à son appui, comme celle des Anglais, des magasines, des arsenaux pleins de moyens de rechange, ne pouvant pas avoir Sans cesse comme eux des vaisseaux frais à Substituer à ceux que nous perdons, où que la mer aura fatigée, étant moins à portée qu'eux de tirer du Nord tous les matériaux de remplacement, nous nous asserblisons nécessairement par la durée de la Guerre, ils ont de plus pour eux la chance que des événements étrangers viendront détournir notre attention et nos moyens, et comme à force de Subsider, de négociations et d'intrigues, ils sont habites à les faire naître, cette ressource ne leur à malheureusement jamais manqué.

Il reste enfin pour appuyer le parti de faire débuter notre Marine par de grands coups et de ne point se laisser consumer par les détails et par le temps; Les Raisons tirées du caractère de la Nation, tout ce qui est affaire de constance la rebute, la fatigue, la décourage même à longue, pour tout ce qui porte le caractère de la hardiesse et de la Vigueur, L'élève et lui en communiqu...
an act, a word, a misunderstanding—may bring us into open conflict. Never has it been more essential, therefore, to devise a plan. It is probable that the Government already has one; and we presume to offer this one for His Majesty's consideration only as a mark of our eagerness to serve, and to provide His Majesty with a basis for comparison. In our preceding memoir on the political situation of France with respect to England, we concluded that in view of the blindness which has thus far led the English astray, and of the possibility, however slight, that they may persist in their folly, we should not start the war but only prepare for it, so that we shall be ready to go into action the moment it becomes necessary. Accordingly, a strategy should be devised which is defensive for the time being, but is capable of turning to the offensive as soon as war breaks out.

This discussion is so important that it deserves to be treated with the utmost thoroughness and care; so we shall begin by answering some preliminary questions relating to it. These answers will then form the basis of the strategic plan to be devised.

Situation of our Navy as Compared to that of the English, and How it Should be Employed

There will be no detailed discussion here of the materiel available to our navy as compared to that of the English navy. The Government must know how these matters stand. It has all the inside information on the present status of our shipyards, dockyards, magazines; and it must also have secured similar information about the English. Therefore we shall confine ourselves here to some conclusions based on past events and established facts, then try to deduce from them the operational plan which it seems most advantageous for our navy to adopt.

This branch of our armed forces has made tremendous progress in the past two years, and this is still continuing. A new spirit of competition and activity has replaced that of listlessness and even defeatism formerly widespread in our navy. But it is at sea that we must meet the English in decisive conflict. Our shortcomings, the points where they are perhaps still superior to us, are experience in navigation; experience with and inurement to long cruises and difficult patrols; the art of getting through and holding fast everywhere; and finally, a large and very promising corps of officers, among them some who have commanded squadrons and fleets.

Under these conditions, of course, not every kind of situation is advantageous for our navy. It is clear that we should avoid all those situations which will break up and divide our forces and will commit them to individual combat, cruising on dangerous stations, or long distant expeditions. The experience of the last two wars has confirmed this principle all too well. We tried to exert our strength everywhere, to cover everything; and being weak everywhere, inferior everywhere in strength as well as in maneuverability and perhaps in skill, we were beaten everywhere or forced to return to port, which amounted to the same thing since it nullified our operations. After three campaigns we tried to go back to our original system and to reunite our forces, but it was too late. As will always happen so long as we fail to beat the English to the punch, the Toulon squadron was prevented from joining the ocean fleet. The latter, barely equal in strength to the English fleet instead of superior as it could have been if the junction had been made, came out to give battle. The outcome of this encounter is well known, and since then we have not dared to show our flag. This is not at all the way Louis XIV operated during his two years of triumph, when he had control of the seas. He had large fleets and kept them together. Although he did
suffer a serious setback at La Hogue, it is not correct to say that this battle sounded the death knell of his navy; for the very next year he sent to sea a fleet of 80 ships. What did cause his Navy to decline was the fact that it was not nourished and supported by substantial maritime activity, and that consequently it was only factitious and an ephemeral manifestation of his power. When circumstances forced him to concentrate all his resources and attention on land warfare, his navy fell into neglect, gradually at first and then completely.

No small squadrons, no long-distance expeditions, large fleets, all our forces in the same waters; a naval battle at an early but well-chosen moment and for an important objective; a short, hard war: This is the doctrine we propose for our navy. In the present circumstances it would be dangerous for us to think that we can defend our colonies and protect our commerce in wartime with squadrons. Six French ships sent into Asian waters at the same time as six English ships would find themselves, in a year's time, definitely inferior to the latter because of their navy's advantage over ours in experience with arduous cruises extending over long periods of time and great distances.

By keeping most of our forces assembled at Brest, we are protecting our trade and our colonies much more effectively; for we are obliging the English to keep forces just as large or even larger in the Atlantic and in the Channel. They dare not risk the safety of England on the outcome of a battle in which the odds are even, for invasion would become easy if they were to lose such a battle. Therefore, this kind of battle is the one operation which we can and must attempt to bring about; for on the one hand it may end the war at one blow, and on the other we are not running any comparable risk if we lose. This makes the prospect very uninviting for the English.

There is still another factor which makes decisive action preferable to any which might tend to prolong the war. Our navy is by no means sufficiently consolidated as yet and is not backed up, as is that of the English, by magazines and dockyards well stocked with replacement materiel. Unlike them, we cannot always have new ships to replace those which are lost or battered by the sea. Not being so well situated geographically as they are for procuring strategic materials from the north, we are inevitably at a disadvantage in a long war. Also in their favor is the chance that events abroad may divert our attention and our resources; and since they are very clever at creating such events by subsidies, diplomacy, and intrigue, this advantage is one which they seldom fail to exploit.

In support of the recommendation that our navy begin hostilities with large-scale action and not let itself be nibbled away by time and minor skirmishes, there are other arguments based on the character of our people. An enterprise which demands tenacity and perseverance becomes tiresome and boring to them, even discourages them in the long run; while one which bears the stamp of boldness and vigor lifts their spirits and calls forth those same qualities in them in response.

D, FrPNA, Marine B4 132, fols. 13, 28–30; the entire text runs to fol. 59. For a war plan submitted by the Marquis de Bouillé, concentrating on the West Indies, see ibid., fols. 163–68.


3. Naval battles off Point Barfleur and la Hogue roadstead, in Normandy in northwest France, 19–23 May 1692, in which the French were defeated by combined Dutch and English fleets.
17 DECEMBER 1777

LORD STORMONT TO
LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

Private

My Lord.

... I am informed that Carmichael Frankins former secretary and Capt. Nicholson will leave Paris this Week. They go to Nantz and will embark there for North America on board one of those frigates the French have built for the use of the Rebels. I do not yet know what Port in America they will attempt to make but imagine it will be some Port in New England. I dare say the other two frigates will follow—Notwithstanding all my Representations and all the fair answers I have received. It is I think of infinite Importance that we should take Every Measure to intercept them and that we should in general be as active as possible in preventing the Rebels from receiving any sort of succours during this Winter. I know that this is what their best friends here chiefly dread. I know that some of them have said that if this is done, if our cruisers are properly stationed and are as vigilant as they ought to be, the Rebels notwithstanding all their boasted and most unexpected good Fortune will find themselves in great Distress. It is not to be doubted My Lord, that the French will continue to send them every possible clandestine succour, no Remonstrance that can be made will prevent or check to any Degree this fraudulent Practice. I am sure My Lord, I have been as explicit as possible and said as much to the French Minister on the subject as could be said without carrying things to Extremities, and driving them to the wall, which my Instructions do not authorize me to do, and which in the present crisis might perhaps not be expedient. I am [&c.]

Stromont.

"EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM
LORIENT, DATED DECEMBER 17"

"A frigate is stationed at the entrance of every commercial port in the bay of Biscay, to prevent all intercourse with American privateers: The Rawley and Alfred remain still in that harbour under frivolous pretexts, but the true cause is the influence of fear, though they have been frequently summoned in a faint friendly manner (by order from Court) to depart.—The French Agents B—d and G—de have most egregiously abused the confidence of their new constituents; they have gained 60,000 livres on one prize only; made advance charges on all goods furnished for the use and for the cargoes of these privateers, who are heavily laden; besides the impudent advantages they have taken in becoming purchasers of prize-goods at an under-value."


December 18

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN THOMAS GRAVES, R.N., AND ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE

Navy Board 18 Decr 1777

Sir

I am commanded by my Lords Commiss' of the Admty to send you herewith the descriptions of the Raleigh and Alfred two Rebel Privatiers now at Port L'Orient, and to signify their direction to you to furnish the Capt'n of the Romney Albion with a Copy thereof, as also any other of His Maj.' Ships going to the Westward. I am &c. PS

Capt'n Graves Sen' Officer at Plymouth
The like Letter to Sir Thos Pye, at Portsmouth Romney with this Postscript added.
P.S. Their Lordships have ordered a Copy of the above Intelligence to be Sent to Capt'n Hood of the Courageux & to the three other Ships that are to be under his Command—He will find it in the sealed Packet when he opens it—

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/556, 255–56. Notation in the margin: "Send Intelligence of two Rebel Privatiers."

QUESTIONS PUT TO LORD MULGRAVE AND SIR HUGH PALLISER

December 18th 1777.

Q. Would not the business be better carried on for distressing the enemy if there was a separate station to the southward, if a proper place can be possessed for such station?
A. Certainly it would.
Q. Can a fleet be stationed to the southward to any good effect without a safe harbour, and easy of access to refit in, and where provisions and refreshments can be found?
A. Certainly not.
Q. Can such harbour be of use unless possessed and protected by troops and fortifications or by the friendly disposition of the inhabitants?
A. It cannot.
Q. Would it not be advisable that a command of frigates and small vessels should be fixed near the Bahama Islands for the security of West Florida and the trade passing the Gulf?
A. If a proper place can be found, such command would be very useful for the purposes mentioned.
Q. Should not there be a central station with a naval establishment for the careening and refitting ships of any burthen?
A. To be sure there should.
Q. Should there not also be a northern station for Nova Scotia and the River St Lawrence?
A. Yes.
Q. Can Halifax, and the naval establishment there, be effectually secured without a large body of troops and additional works for its defence?
A. Halifax cannot be secured without a large body of troops; and it is even doubtful whether it can be secured with troops if attacked by an army.

Q. Will the 42 ships of the line now in commission at home admit of our making proper detachments for the security of our distant possessions?

A. According to the accounts we have of the force of France and Spain in Europe, it would be unsafe to make detachments from the 42 ships.

Q. How many ships of the line may be ready for service by April or May if they were immediately commissioned?

A. Seven, including the Victory.

Q. How many ships of the line may be got ready for service from the first of Jan. 1778 to the first Jan. 1779?

A. About 25.

These questions were put to Lord Mulgrave and Sir H. P. at a meeting of the Cabinet Council, December 18th 1777, and were answered as above. There were present at this meeting:

- Lord Chancellor
- Lord Gower
- Lord Dartmouth
- Lord Sandwich
- Lord George Germain
- Lord North.

Lord M. and Sir H. P. were also asked what port to the southward would in their opinion be the most useful to a fleet and fittest for a naval establishment. They desired not to be considered as giving a decisive answer to this question, as it would require much consideration and enquiry from persons well acquainted with the coast; but at present they thought that Norfolk in Virginia or Port Royal in South Carolina might answer the purpose.


AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

[Extract]

Gentlemen, Paris, Dec. 18. 1777

... Our Vessels laden with Supplies have by various Means been delay'd, particularly by Fear of falling into the Hands of the English Cruizing Ships, who swarm in the Bay and Channel. At length it is Resolv'd they shall sail together, as they are all provided for Defence, and we have obtain'd a King's Ship to convoy them out of the Channel, and we hope quite to America. They will carry we think to the Amount of £70,000 Sterling and sail in a few Days. . . .

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

L, DNA, PCC (M332, roll 3, fols. 164–70). For the entire dispatch, which gave news of the agreement in principle between the commissioners and the French government to enter into a treaty, see Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 305–9.
Mr Ross  

Sir

We Recd yours giving an Acc of the Arrival of the Goods on which we had not made any Insurance. from the Situation of your Affairs when you wrote Us last, we presume that Your Ship, Capt Green 1 is ready for sailing, Capt Nicholson 2 will also be ready in a few Days, We have therefore to propose to you that They go in Company as Cap Nicholson will be joined by one or Two more Ships of Force which will prove a Convoy sufficient against any common encounter. You will arrange this matter, as to The place of their Rendezvous, with Cap Nicholson, who will wait Our final Orders which shall be sent him by the Time he will be ready for sailing—We depend that You will remember the Sum advanced You, by Us, out of the first remittances which may come to hand, as We are really in want, and that You will in Your Letters to the Com. of Congress, mention it as a Reason for their hastening their remittances if not already on the Way. We have to Assure You that We are [&c.]

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

1. The Brune, John Green.
2. Lyon, subsequently Continental Navy frigate Deane.

Lieutenant de Vaisseau de Kergariou to Gabriel de Sartine

[Extract]

Monseigneur

j’ay eu l’honneur de vous rendre Compte que L’eloignement ou jetais de painbeuf m’avait determink avant L’arrivke de M de Rozily, de prier M dunerat commandant Le Courtier de Reclamer un matelot deserteres du navire marchand Le pacifique et Engager pour Servis abord de Bricq insurgent L’indépendance; 1 dans La visite qu’a fait M dunerat abord de ce Bricq il n’a pas trouvk ce matelot, mais un autre matelot francois et un italien ont Reclamés sa protection, il Les En a Retiré, et me Les a Envois. Le matelot francois que j’ay interroge, ma donne pour Raison, que il Etant Engage pour travailles au Rearmement de ce Briq il n’avait jamais En L’intention d’y faire campagne mais que Le travail fini on L’y Retenoit de force: L’italien provenait d’une prise que ce Briq avait fait dans Sa traversé, et qu’on y Retenait de force comme Etranger pour faire partie de L’équipage. j’ay Renviré Le matelot francois a M de Rozily pour verifier Sa déposition tres douteuse Le connaisant pour un Sujet tres Leger. et En outre pour qu’il Le fit paier des La Solde qu’il a du gagner pendant le temps qu’il a travaillé abord de cet insurgent Cel que Le prescrit Lordonnance. quand a Litalien, j’ay jugé que Sa plainte devoit Regarder Lamirauté et En consequence je Lay Renviré a mettre Sa plainte devant ce tribunal, me Renfermant dans mes instructions qui ne sont mention que des matelots francais; mais, Monseigneur, il me Seroit Essentiel d’avoir vos ordres pour ce qui
concerne de tels prisonniers même Les nationnaus de La vieille angleterre que Les Batiments de guerre amériquains retiennent a Leur bord et que La visite que vous m’avez prescrit dy faire me met aportée de découvrir: Le commissionnaire anglois pour ces deux batiments du commerce Rendus a Sa nation 2 a desja voulu men parler a litre de Reclamation; il En fera Le Raport a la fregatte angloise que vous m’annoncer devoir Entrer En Riviere, Le capitaine fera vis a vis de moi toutes Les demarches qu’il Sera Engagé a faire; jay Eludé La plainte du Commissionaire En lui Repondant que je ne croirois pas aux prisonniers de guerre que dans nos ports il ne Sagissait que de Commerce et que je devois penser que ces hommes detenus aux fers faisaient partie des Equipages, [illeg.] qu’on punissoit [s’etans?] mal conduits, que c’était une police interieure des Batiments et que je Lessai aux Etrangers La liberté de L’exerces chez Eux-mêmes.

Jay a ce mouillage dans ce moment un batiment insurgent purement de commerce, qui se propose de partir, mais Lannoncer des fregattes angloises Linquiete, il Est venu pour Reclamer deux hommes de son Equipage, qui sont malgaches d’origine, qui lui ont deserté, il Les croiait abord des batiments anglais. je Les ay fait chercher et on ne Les a pas trouvé, ces hommes En partant ont voler plusieurs Effets a leur Capitaine Samuel Smith capitaine de ce navire de boston nomine L’adams 3 de 300 tonnés.

Jay ay a ce mouillage dans ce moment un batiment insurgent purement de commerce, qui se propose de partir, mais Lannoncer des fregattes angloises Linquiete, il Est venu pour Reclamer deux hommes de son Equipage, qui sont malgaches d’origine, qui lui ont deserté, il Les croiait abord des batiments anglais. je Les ay fait chercher et on Ne Les a pas trouvé, ces hommes En partant ont voler plusieurs Effets a leur Capitaine Samuel Smith capitaine de ce navire de boston nommé L’adams de 300 tonnés.

Jay ay a ce mouillage dans ce moment un batiment insurgent purement de commerce, qui se propose de partir, mais Lannoncer des fregattes angloises Linquiete, il Est venu pour Reclamer deux hommes de son Equipage, qui sont malgaches d’origine, qui lui ont deserté, il Les croiait abord des batiments anglais. je Les ay fait chercher et on ne Les a pas trouvé, ces hommes En partant ont voler plusieurs Effets a leur Capitaine Samuel Smith capitaine de ce navire de boston nommé L’adams de 300 tonnés.

Jay ay scu qu’il y avait une auberge a painbeuf ou Les insurgents Entrenaient et nourrissaient plusieurs matelots francais, quils se proposaient de prendre a la mer devant Les faire Sortir de la Riviere sur des barges du pays, j en ay donné avis a M. Louvel 4 et de plus Loin du depart de ces insurgents armée En guerre, Si je ne puis appareiller nesimême pour Les veilles a Leur sortie je Les seray suivre par le Lougre et je Lui Recommenderay de ne Lesser accoster ces batiments par aucune Barge.

Permettes moi, Monseigneur de vous representer que cette recherche de nos matelots tres advantageuse dun coté, peut Rebuter Et Eloingner de nos ports tires Les navires ameriquains, qui pour Le moment nous prouer une commerce tres utile; lexpulsion des prises est desja une perte Considerable et je pense que votre intention devoir de tolérer quelques abus autant qu’il seroit possible de ne pas S’en apercevais. je voudroit bien meriter votre confiance et Recevoir vos ordres particulier a ce Sujet. . . .

a Bord de la danaé a St nazaire ce 18 Xbre 1777

Kergariou

[Translation]
My Lord

I had the honor of reporting to you that the distance I was from Paimboeuf made me decide, before the arrival of M. de Rozily, to ask M. Dunerat commanding Le Courrier to claim a seaman who deserted from the merchant ship Le Pacifique and was hired to serve on board the insurgent brig Independence. M. Dunerat did not find this seaman on board the brig when he inspected it, but another French seaman and an Italian requested his protection; he did remove them from it and sent them to me. The frenchman that I questioned explained that he had engaged to work on the outfitting of the brig without any intention to sign on for a cruise, but that when the work was completed, he was forcibly retained. The Italian came from a prize made by the brig during its crossing and was forcibly detained as a foreigner to be part of the crew. I have sent the French seaman back to M. de Rozily
in order to verify his very dubious deposition, knowing him to be a very thought-
less subject, and in addition to have him paid the balance due him, earned during
the time he worked on board the insurgent ship, as prescribed by ordinance. As to
the Italian, I decided that the Admiralty should hear his complaint, and in conse-
quence I sent him to place his complaint before that tribunal, referring to my in-
structions that only mention French seamen. But, My Lord, it appears to me to be
essential that I have your orders affecting such prisoners, even the nationals of old
England which American war vessels hold on board, and whose discovery is made
possible by the boarding and inspection you prescribed for me. The English com-
missoner for the two merchant vessels returned to his nation has already wanted
to speak with me about a reclamation. He will report about it to the English frigate
that you informed me should be entering the river. The captain will make towards
me all the approaches that he will be engaged to make. I have dodged the com-
plaints of the commissioner by responding to him that I do not believe that there
are any prisoners of war in our ports. He only knew of those of commerce, and I
should think that those men detained in chains were part of crews being punished
as malcontents; that that was a policing within the ships, and that I left to foreign-
ers the liberty to exercise it among themselves.

At this time I have at this mooring a purely merchant insurgent vessel which is
readying to depart, but news of English frigates makes them anxious. [The master]
came to reclaim two Madagascar-born crewmen who deserted, and whom he believes
are on board English vessels. I had a search for them made and they were not found.
In departing, these men stole several personal belongings from their master, Cap-
tain Samuel Smith of this vessel from Boston, the Adams of 300 tons.

I learned that there is an inn at Paimboeuf where the insurgents are lodging
and boarding several French seamen, whom they intend to pick up at sea by having
them go down the river on local barges. I have informed M. Louvel of it and fur-
ther of the departure of the armed insurgents. If I am unable to sail, or even to watch
them at their sailing, I will follow them with a lugger, and I will recommend to him
not to allow any barge to have access to them.

Permit me, My Lord, to remind you that this search for our seamen which is on
one hand very advantageous could repulse and keep away from our ports the Amer-
ican vessels, which are at this time procuring us a very profitable trade; the expul-
sion of prize vessels is already a considerable loss and I think that your intention
would be to tolerate a few abuses so long as it is possible to keep them unseen. I de-
sire to merit your confidence and to receive your private orders on this subject....

On board la Danaé, St. Nazaire,

18 Dec. 1777

Kergariou

L, FrPNA, Marine, B4 129, fols. 263–64. Notations: “La Danaé freg.”; “Renvoi du 29. Xe 1777”; “accuser simplement la réception. ne rein changée. adresser à Brest”; “La reponse n’a pas été signée.” “The Danaé frigate”; “Returned 29 Dec. 1777”; “simply acknowledge receipt. Nothing changed. dated at Brest”; “the answer has not been signed.” The final portion of the letter, not printed here, concerns provisioning and
health on board Danaé.

2. The Jamaicamen Clarendon and Hanover Planter.
3. Massachusetts merchant ship Hancock and Adams.
4. Jean-Pierre Louvel, commissaire des classes in Paimboeuf.
JACOB BENNET, TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ADMIRALITY OF NANTES

Extrait des Registres du greffe du Siege Royal de lamirauté de Nantes

L’an mil sept cent soixante dix sept le dix huit de decembre Devant nous mes- sire philippe vincent Roger conseiller du Roy lieutenant général civil et criminel commissaire enquêteur examinateur et garde de Scel du Siege Royal de lamirauté de nantes Present Monsieur Landays dupé procureur du Roy a Comparu le Sieur Jacob Bennet commandant cy devant le Brigantin nommé L’amitié de Senepuxent du port de cent trente a cent quarante tonneaux monté de quatre canons de quatre livres de balles, quatre pierriers et de douze hommes d’équipage lui comparant compris assisté de maitre pierre Boudet interprété Juré des langues étrangeres par lorgâne duquel il nous a déclaré qu’il partit dudit lieu de Senepuxent dans le maryland le vingt six du mois d’aouit dernier pour venir a Nantes chargé de cent dix toneaux de tabac soixante barils de farine et six mille pieces de merrein a l’adresse et a la consignation des Sieurs pliarne penet et compé negociants de cette ville que pendant sa traversée il a été chassé par differents Batiments, mais que s’en etant heureusement échappé il arriva sous Bellisle le quatre octobre suivant vers les huit heures du matin; que lui etant venu un pilote du dit lieu a son Bord vers midy pour le conduire en la Riviere de loire; ils firent en conséquence route pour y entré; que vers les deux heures et demi etant a environ deux lieues du croisic les vents regnants de la part du N.O. le Pilote dit a lui declarant qu’il n’étoit pas possible d’entrer en cette Riviere; et qu’il falloit relâcher dans la Baye ou ance du Croisic afin d’y passer la nuit pour en appareiller le lendemain et suivre leur Route pour ce port; que se rendant en la ditte Baye ils appercurent un Brigantin a distance deviron une lieue et demie du croisic, qui lui donna chasse sur les quatre heures de L’apres midy; que voyant alors lui Sieur —— déclarant que c’étoit un Batiment ennemi que ne s’attendoit pas de trouver si près des côtes de france, il fit son possible pour faire coste sur la pointe du dit lieu du Croisic etant la plus proche de luy; mais que le dit Batiment enemi le Joignit et se mit entre la terre et lui, et le força de se rendre etant a distance d’un mille ou tiers de lieu de la ditte pointe du croisic, ou il etoit pres de faire coste voyant Du monde sur le Rivage; qu’il apprit alors que ce Ba- timent se nommoit la revenge de Jerzey corsaire monté de quatorze canons et denvi- ron soixante dix a quatre vingt hommes d’équipage commandé par le capitaine Noël gautier qu’il croit francçois, qui le conduisit dans le port de Jersey ou ils arriverent le huit dudit mois d’octobre, auquel endroit le dit sieur comparant fit son protest contre le dit Sieur Gautier devant James hemery notaire public audit endroit le dit Jour huit octobre; qu’il a appris qu’il y avoit Longtemps que ce corsaire croisait entre fisle du may et cette de hedic et le four; qu’il présume que son Pilote devoit en etre in- struit vu qu’il a Scu que d’autres pilotes avoient dit le Sçavoir; qu’ayant trouvé occa- sion de passer a Saint Malo, il est venu dela en cette ville, et fait la presente declara- tion qu’il affirme veritable parservient aprés lecture et Linterpretation que luy en a faite son dit interprete pour valoir et servir ce que de raison, et a signe et le dit maitre Boudet ainsi signes Jacob Bennet Boudet Landays Dupé et Roger
collationné

Bernard
commiss Jure
Extract from the Registers of the Records Office in the Royal Headquarters of the Admiralty in Nantes

The year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven, the eighteenth of December before us, my Lord, Philippe Vincent Roger, the King's Counsellor, Civil and Criminal Lieutenant General, Investigator and Examiner, Commissioner, and Keeper of the Seal of the Royal Headquarters of the Admiralty in Nantes, also present M. Landays Dupé, the King's attorney, appeared Sieur Jacob Bennet, commander of the former brigantine Friendship from the port of Sinepuxent of between one hundred thirty and one hundred forty tons burden, carrying 4 four-pounders, 4 swivel guns and a crew of twelve men who appeared with the captain. He was accompanied by Master Pierre Boudet, a sworn expert in foreign languages through whose voice Jacob Bennet stated he sailed from the aforesaid port of Sinepuxent in Maryland on the 26th of last August to come to Nantes laden with 110 casks of tobacco, 70 barrels of flour, and 6,000 barrel staves directed and consigned to the Sieurs Pliarne Penet and Company, merchants of this city; that during the crossing he was chased by various ships but fortunately having escaped from them he arrived off Belle Ile on the 4th of the following October at about 8 o'clock in the morning; a pilot from the aforesaid place came on board around noon to take the ship into the Loire River; consequently they set a course to enter the river. In the course of two and a half hours, having reached a point two leagues from the Croisic point, with prevailing winds from the northwest, the pilot told the captain that it was impossible to enter the river and it was necessary to drop anchor in the bay off the Croisic point to spend the night in order to prepare to get under way the next day and continue their course to that port; while going into the aforesaid bay they saw a brigantine at a distance of about a league and a half from them who was leaving the bay, and who gave chase to them at 4 o'clock in the afternoon; that then seeing Sieur — declaring to him that it was an enemy ship which he did not expect to be so close to the French coast; the pilot did his best to run ashore on the point of the aforesaid place of the Croisic, it being the land closest to him. The aforesaid enemy ship, however, joined him and stationed itself between him and the land, and forced him to surrender. He was then at a distance of a mile or a third of a league from the aforesaid Croisic point where he was preparing to run ashore, and saw a crowd of people on the shore. The captain then learned that the ship was called the Revenge out of Jersey and a privateer carrying 14 guns and a crew of somewhere between 70 and 80 men, under the command of Captain Noël Gautier, whom he believed to be French, who took him into the Jersey port where they arrived on the 8th of the month of October. It was in that place that the gentleman appearing before us made his protest against the aforesaid Sieur Gautier before James Emery, a notary public in the aforesaid place on the aforesaid day, the 8th of October. He learned that this privateer had for a long time been cruising between May and Hoëdic islands and le Four. He assumed that his pilot must have been aware of it, since he knew that other pilots had said that they were. Having found an occasion to go to Saint Malo, he came from there to this city and made the present statement, which he affirms on oath to be true, persevering after reading it and the translation his aforesaid interpreter had made for him, to be used as thought proper, the captain signed it. The aforesaid Master Boudet did likewise. Signed: Jacob Bennet, Boudet, Landays Dupé, and Roger.

Verified

Bernard

Clerk of the Court
December 19

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ON BOARD THE SMYRNA GALLEY, 
ARRIVED IN STANDGATE-CREEK, DEC. 19, FROM SMYRNA."

"On the 1st inst. about 80 leagues N.N.W. of Cape St. Vincent's, we were taken by an American privateer called the Sturdy Beggar, which took two bales of silk out of us and some other trifles, and ordered us for Bourdeaux, but on our way thither, off Cape Ortegal, on the 9th, we fell in with the Resolution of 74 guns, which retook us. Our cargo was computed to be worth near 80,000l."


LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Sir—Painbeuf Dec. 19th. 1777—M³ Williams deliv’d me your favor, inclosing the Letters from l’Orient—the Sails, Cordage &C are spoke for by Mr Odea, to be made here—M³ Williams does not appear pleased that the sails shou’d be made at Painbeuf, however M³ Odea and he it seems will settle that matter—

The Ship’s masts are shortened the mainmast twenty inches farther aft, shrouds set up and every matter about them secure—have employed eight french caulkers this day on the main deck—Shall make all dispatch possible—Four of the prisoners have entered for the Independence two for our Ship one of which is Bulfinch,—The dutchman, have delivered to Capt’th Smith,¹ and taken his receipt—The frenchmen wou’d not quit their Lighter on any Account, therefore have the two Masters and one Mate as prisoners on board the Ship, Mr Robertson ² being unwilling to keep them any longer in the Brig—Our people from the prize ³ have been return’d to the Ship, these two days past except Mr Green,⁴ who tarry’s to see her unloaded—Everything is quiet, and good order on board the Ship, which I shall endeavour to keep up—and Am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

As to Slops there are only 28 Jackets 8 frocks on board not one Shirt—Several of the people have only one shirt, many of them, not a pair of drawers, or breaches—I shou’d suppose that woolen trowsers and Great coats will be necessary—there are 6 pairs of shoes on board
250 Stout, Seamen’s upper Jackets
250 under Jackets—
300 Shirts or more, as you may think proper—
200 flannel or other Woolen drawers & breeches,
200 pair of Trowsers some woolen, the other strong stuff.
30 doz. mill’d Caps—
40 Great Coats—
150 pair of Shooes—
150 pair of Mill'd Gloves, or Mittens—
Some Cotton hankerchiefs
A parcell of Seamens knifes [knives?].
Some Dutch Caps—
2 doz. Strong Chest locks,
Some Strong Shooes buckles—
20 hammocks are very much wanted—
Beg Leave to refer you to the memorandum of provisions &C Expended and on hand—

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6673–74.
1. Master of the George, Rungo's prize.
2. Probably Samuel Smith, Massachusetts merchant ship Hancock and Adams.
3. John Robertson, Ranger's boatswain.
4. Brigantine Mary.
5. Continental Navy midshipman Joseph Green, Mary's prize master.

December 20

Philip Stephens to the British Navy Board

Gentn. 20 Dec' 1777

Lord Vis[e]. How Command[e] in Chief of His Maj'ty's Ships in No. America having in his Letter of the 5th June last¹ taken notice of the long absence of the Flora, which he had sent to Antigua to be refitted, not by way of censuring the retardment, but in a light that may effect the service of the ship carreening in the West Indies; and his Lordship having Proposed as an expedient if necessary in future (for facilitating the timely Repair of his Cruizing Ships) to apply to Comm[e] Arbuthnot for a Part of the Artificers to be sent from Halifax to be employ'd at New York during the season of the year which will not admit of sending Ships to be refitted at that Port; I am commanded by my Lords Commiss[es] of the Admty to send you herewith an Extract of so much of the said Letter as relates to the subject & to acquaint you that they have signified to his Lordship their Approbation of his proposition; and I am to signify their direction to you to give the necessary orders to Comm[e] Arbuthnot to send to New York from time to time such number of Artificers belonging to the Yard at Halifax as Lord Howe may inform him will be requisite for carrying on the service above-mentioned as well as to encrease the present establishment of Artificers at Halifax if it shall be found necessary to enable him to do so. I am &ca.

PS

EUROPEAN THEATER

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD

Gent\textsuperscript{a} 20 Dec\textsuperscript{e} 1777

Vice Adm\textsuperscript{b} Young Commander in Chief of His Maj\textsuperscript{b} Ships at the Leeward Islands having in his Letter of the 12\textsuperscript{th} June last \textsuperscript{1} inform'd My Lords Comm\textsuperscript{rs} of the Admty that the \textit{Otter} Sloop, which was Just refitted, was the tenth of the American Fleet that had been refitted at Antigua, a greater number than can be refitted at that Yard on its present Establishment, without retarding the refitting the Leeward Island Squadron; I am commanded by their Lordships to send you herewith an Extract of so much of the said Letter as relates to the Subject, and to signify their direction to you to cause such an addition to be forthwith made to the Present establishment of Artificers at Antigua as you conceive to be necessary for carrying on the service with expedition & despatch: And I am at the same time to signify their Lordships direction to you to encrease the present Establishment of Artificers at Port Royal in Jamaica in like manner, and for the like purpose if you Judge it to be necessary; letting their Lordships know the Augmentation you make to each of the said Establishments. I am &c\textsuperscript{e}

PS

LB, UkLPR, Adm. 2/556, 262. Addressed at foot: "Navy Board." Marginal notation: "Directed to Augment the Number of Artificers in His Maj\textsuperscript{b} Yards at Jamaica & Antigua."

1. NDAR9: 100.

LOUIS XVI AND GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU CHEVALIER DE BERNARD DE MARIGNY

20\textsuperscript{e} Xbre. 1777

Mémoire du Roi
pour servir d'instruction particuliere au S\textsuperscript{e} Ch\textsuperscript{e} Bernard de Marigny Lt\textsuperscript{e} de Vaux,
Command\textsuperscript{t} la frég\textsuperscript{e} de Roi La Belle Poule.

Sa M\textsuperscript{e} ayant fait choix de S\textsuperscript{e} Ch\textsuperscript{e} Bernard de Marigny Lt\textsuperscript{e} de son Vaux, Commandant sa fregate la Belle Poule, pour une Mission particuli\textsuperscript{e},\textsuperscript{1} Elle va lui faire connoître ses intentions par la présente instruction, tout sur l'objet général de la d\textsuperscript{e} mission que sur la conduite qu'il aura à tenir suivant les circonstances.

Quoiqu'il ait été ordonné au S\textsuperscript{e} Ch\textsuperscript{e} Marigny par la 1\textsuperscript{e} Instruction qui lui a été adressée pour la meme date que la présente,\textsuperscript{2} de se rendre aux îles de S\textsuperscript{e} Pierre & Miquelon, il ne Cherchera pour ces îles; mais il dirigera sa route et sa manoeuvre de maniere à arriver en droiture à Boston ou à tel autre Port de la nouvelle Angleterre, occupé par les insurgens, où il lui sera plus prompt et plus facile d'aborder.

Si à l'atterage, il rencontroit quelque frégate ou Corsaire anglois qui lui demandât de motif de son apparition sur la Côte de la nouvelle angleterre; il prétexteroit la contrariet\textsuperscript{e} des vents qui lui ayant refusé l'accès des îles de S\textsuperscript{e} Pre\textsuperscript{e} et Miquelon pour lesquelles il étoit destiné, l'ont jetté sur cette côte; et que se trouvant dans le besoin d'eau & d'autres raffraichissemens, il cherche un mouillage pour s'en procurer.

Sa M\textsuperscript{e} connoissant la prudence et la sagesse du S\textsuperscript{e} Ch\textsuperscript{e} de Marigny, croit inutil de lui recomandier de mettre la plus grande honnêteté dans ses propos & dans ses procédés envers les anglois, s'il en rencontre; de n'être pas le premier à com-
mettre aucune hostilité, et de se contenter de repousser la force par la force, si l’on
osoit l’employer contre lui.

Lorsque le Sré Chér de Marigny sera arrivé dans un port de la nouvelle Angleterre,
il laissera aux Passagers qu’il aura reçus à Bordeaux, la liberté de se débarquer: et
afin de se procurer à lui même l’occasion d’y faire quelque séjour, pour y prendre
des connaissances de la situation du Pays, de la disposition des esprits, de l’Etat des
affaires et des augures qu’on y forme pour la suite de la guerre; il s’annoncera comme
chargé de retirer ceux des matelots françois qui se trouveront sur le Pays. Il recevra,
en effet, à son bord tous ceux qu’il pourra rassembler et les ramenera en France. Il
doit observer à ce sujet, qu’il n’est pas probable que le Gouvernement de la Province
où il abordera, lui prête main forte pour contraindre à s’embarquer sur la frégate
du Roi, les matelots français émigrés: il n’en fera pas l’instance; mais il emploiera tous
les moyens de persuasion pour les engager à revenir, en les assurant même de la part
du Roi, qu’ils ne seront pas recherché et punis pour cause de cette évasion.

Le Sré Chér de Marigni évitera de fè règne dans le Port de la Nbre. Angleterre où il aura abordé: il ne s’y arrêtera que le tenir absolument nécessaire pour
faire reposer son Equipage, et se procurer les connaissances & renseignements qu’il
lui fera possible de recueillir.

Il aura la plus grande attention pendant son séjour; de tenir son Equipage dans la
regle la plus stricte et sous les loix de la discipline la plus exacte. à cet effet, il ne per-
mettra point à ses gens de descendre à terre: et lorsqu’il sera dans le cas de com-
mander une Chaloupe pour le service de sa frégate, il y fera toujours embarquer un
officier à qui il prescrira de ne point quitter la Chaloupe et d’empecher que les
matelots ne s’en écartent. Il aura soin de composer l’Equipage de son Canot, des
gens les plus surs qu’il aura à son bord, et sur la Sagesse et l’exactitude desquels il
puisse compter; tant pour éviter toute contestation avec les habitans du Pays, que
pour prévenir la désertion; et engager même par des assurances de pardon et des
invitations, les matelots français émigrés à revenir en France.

Si le Sré Chér de Marigny venoit à apprendre que la paix est faite ou prête à se
conclure entre l’Angleterre et les États unis de l’Amérique, il reviendroit aussitôt en
France pour en apporter la nouvelle.

Le Sré Chér de Marigny naviguera avec les plus grandes précautions en faisant son
retour en France: il évitera le plus qu’il pourra de se mettre à portree des Bâtiments
d’une force supérieure aux siennes; mais il fera en sorte de joindre ceux qui lui
paroîtront inférieurs, afin de se procurer des nouvelles. Si dans sa traversée, il n’apprend rien qui puisse lui faire soupçonner l’interruption de la tranquillité publique en
Europe, il fera son retour directement à Brest: dans le cas contraire, il prendra le 1er Port de France ou d’Espagne où il pourra aborder.

Il ne communiquera la présente Instruction à qui que ce soit, par même à aucun
officier de son Etat major—elle doit être surete et pour lui seul.

Sa Mme ne pouvoit donner au Sré Chér de Marigny une marque plus distinguée de
la confiance qu’Elle a dans ses talents et son intelligence, qu’en lui confiant l’exécution
des ordres contenus dans la présente Instruction: Elle est persuadée qu’il sentirait toute l’importance de la mission dont il est chargé; et Elle ne compte pas moins sur sa prudence, sa sagesse et sa discretion, que sur le zèle et la fermeté dont il Lui a donné des preuves.

Fait à Versailles le 20 Xbre. 1777. Signé Louis, et plus bas, de Sartine.
20th Dec. 1777

Memorandum from the King to serve as special instruction to the Chevalier Bernard de Marigny Lieutenant de Vaisseau commanding the royal frigate La Belle Poule

His Majesty, having chosen the Chevalier Bernard de Marigny, Lieutenant de Vaisseau commanding the frigate Belle Poule, for a special mission, he will communicate his plans in these instructions on the general object of the said mission and on the conduct to be followed, depending on the circumstances.

No matter what the Chevalier de Marigny was ordered to do in the 1st instructions sent him for the same date as these instructions, to proceed to the St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands, he shall not search for these islands, but rather direct his course and maneuvers in such a way as to reach Boston or some other part of New England occupied by the insurgents, where it will be faster and easier to arrive.

If upon his landfall, he meets some English frigate or privateer that asks him why he is there on the coast of New England, he must make the excuse that the winds had prevented him from reaching St. Pierre and Miquelon, his original destination, and threw him up on that coast, and that needing water and other provisions he was looking for a place to anchor so he could obtain these things.

His Majesty is well aware of the Chevalier de Marigny's circumspection and wisdom and knows he does not have to remind him to maintain civility in his conversation and in his dealings with the English, if he meets any, not to initiate hostility, but merely to deflect blow for blow any attack which they might dare make against him.

When the Chevalier de Marigny arrives at a port in New England, he shall allow the passengers he picked up in Bordeaux the freedom to disembark, and so that he himself might take the opportunity to travel a bit and scout for information on the situation of the country, the general mood, the state of affairs, and indications that one might gather concerning the results of the war, and he shall announce that he is responsible for bringing back French sailors he finds in that country. He will then in fact take on board all those he can gather together, and bring them back to France. Realize in this matter that the provincial government where he arrives is unlikely actually to try to bar the émigré French seamen from boarding his Majesty's ship: he must not insist, but rather use all means of persuasion to get them to return, even assuring them on the part of the king that they will not be tracked down and punished for their evasion.

The Chevalier de Marigny shall avoid staying long at the port in New England where he puts ashore; he must stay only as long as is necessary to rest his crew and obtain whatever information and intelligence he can gather.

During his voyage he must take great care to keep his crew in strict order and under tight control. To achieve this, he must not allow his men to set foot on the ground, and when the need arises to take a ship's boat out for the service of the frigate, he must man it with an officer under orders never to leave the boat alone and to make sure the seamen do not stray. For this ship's boat, he must assemble a crew from among the most reliable men he has on board, whose discretion and punctuality he can trust, both to avoid any conflict with the inhabitants of the country and
20 DECEMBER 1777

If the Chevalier de Marigny learns that England and the United States of America have made their peace or are about to make it, he must return as soon as possible to France to report the news.

The Chevalier de Marigny must navigate carefully returning to France, avoiding to the greatest extent possible putting himself within range of ships stronger than his own, but arranging to join those ships that are weaker, in order to get news. If during his crossing he learns nothing that would lead him to suspect an interruption of public peace in Europe, he must proceed directly to Brest; if the opposite is the case, then he must land at the first place he can find, in France or Spain.

He must not communicate these instructions to anyone at all, not even his officers; the instructions must be locked up, accessible only to him.

His Majesty could not give the Chevalier de Marigny a more distinguished token of his great confidence in his skills and intelligence than to bestow on him the responsibility of carrying out the orders contained herein: His Majesty knows that the Chevalier de Marigny is aware of the critical nature of this mission he has been given, and is counting no less so on his circumspection, wisdom and discretion, as well as his vigor and reliability, of which qualities he has given the king demonstrations.

Written at Versailles on 20 December 1777, Signed Louis, and underneath, de Sartine.


2. The first instructions ordered Marigny to St. Pierre and Miquelon in order to bring all the seamen there back to France. They also instructed him to open the enclosed packet—that is, the second, true instructions—when 80 or 100 leagues at sea, and to sink that packet if attacked by a superior British force. FrPNA, Marine B’r 134, fol. 423.

3. The passengers were Simeon Deane, bearing the American Commissioners’ dispatches, and Anthony Knapp, a privateersman from Newburyport, who was to act as a pilot on the American coast. The American Commissioners in France to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, 20 Dec. 1777, in Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 320.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentm.

Lorient Decr 20th 1777

This Letter is design’d for the particular purpose of giving my Opinion respecting the Ship Duras which Mr. Berard wrote to you about when I was in Paris—

She is a large old East India Ship in want of very considerable repairs, which I think would be very expensive & after all be an old Ship not very fit for our use in her present position; If she was cut down as was propos’d I hardly think she would make a good Frigate; her Guns would not be a of sufficient heighth from the Water, at most but five feet; she has the Name of a fast sailor—in my opinion it would not be safe to meddle with her until she was overhall’d & fit for the Sea—she is really a
cheap Bargain as she now stands, could she be got to America at any reasonable ex-
pence & with dispatch, her Military Stores would be worth more in America, than
the Sum they now ask for the Ship—If they would engage to fit her out with dispatch & at a known Sum, I believe she would Answer, provided you could put a Cargo of
Light Goods in her & send her to Boston in the Month of March—put every Gun
she would carry on both Decks—when out strike the lower Deck Guns into the
Hould—let the rest of her Cargo be Hemp & Yarns ready tarr’d, fitting to lay into
any kind of Cordage—After all I have said I cannot advise you to embark in any of
those old Ships without much circumspection & good Information—as they are tick-
lish matters; more especially as they must be left to the management of French Houses
Your most Obed' Serv'
Tho. Thompson

NB. The Mem° of Anchors given to M° Arthur Lee of 77w° is a mistake as they are
much too large for a 74 Gun Ship.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honble Gentlemen

Nantes Decem° 20. 1777.—

In expectation of hearing from you I have only at present to inform you that I
am just returned from Painbeuf & have had the pleasure of seeing as fine a Ship 1 as
any of her size in any Navy.—I am in expectation of seeing Capt Nicholson soon and
if our obstacles are removed I shall soon Finish the Expedition; the Ship is all rigged,
Guns mounted & everything fitted. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jon° Williams J

By the Schooner Tabby Capt° Hodges 1
Russia Duck 119 peices
Tent cloth 42 Do°
Sewing twine 252 lb
Sail Needles 400

By the Alexander Capt° John Williamson 2
Shirting 185 peices
8 Anchors 109 hund. wg°
Cables 5 from 8½ to 18½ Inches
Cordage 17 Coil of all dimensions 342 hundred weight

By the Charlotte Capt° Wilm° Sinclair 3
Shirting 100 peices
Tent cloth 30 Dö.
Russia duck 24 Dö.
8 Anchors 199 hund. wg.
Cables 4 from 9 to 18½ Inches
Cordage 119 Coil all dimensions
   By the Lydia Cap' Will'm. Andrews
Blue Cloth 27 peices
Shirting 331 Dö.
Blankets 12
8 Anchors 102 hhd wg.
Cables 7 from 9 to 18½ Inches
Cordage 234 Coil, all dimensions.
   By the Success Cap' Gerris
Salt 757 farricks
Anchors 16. wght 238 hhd
Cables 3 from 16 to 18½ inches
Hawser 3
Cordage 234 Coyl all dimensions
Shoes strong 2247. pair
Shirts made 2532
Stockings 243½ doz.
Hatts 1500
Kettles large 18
Blanketts large 2186
Shirting 28 peices
2 Small Cases & a Barrel with Jesuits Bark, Rhubarb, Ipecacuanha, Tartar Emetic, Mercury Subclimate, Purging Salts, Opium.
   By the Schooner Marblehead Cap' Sam'l Duggard
Salt, Duck & Tent Cloth. quantity unknown.

Arthur Lee

True Copy from Messrs. Gardoqui's Invoice Paris Dec' 20th. 1777.

1. John Hodges, "who sail'd the 24th of March 1777 from Bilbao." From a similar, undated list, also enclosed in Lee to the Secret Committee, 10 Feb. 1778, p. 133.
2. Who "sail'd from Dö April 25th 1777." Ibid.
3. Who "sail'd from Dö 25th of April 1777." Ibid.
5. Who "sail'd 14th Dö." Ibid.
6. With his letter of 10 Nov. 1777 to Francis Lewis, William Lee enclosed a similar list with the following minor differences: In the Alexander, 3 cables, not 5; in the Lydia, 237 coil of cordage, not 234. In addition, William Lee listed supplies received "From our friends in [France]—3,000,000 Livres in Money—but 1,000,000 £ to be repaid in Tob—Ship’d in the Amphitrite, Mercury, Seine & Flammand, 200 four pound Brass Cannon with Carriages Compleat, 91515 Cannon Balls, 27, Nine Inch Mortars Compleat; 56 Brass four pound Cannon compleat, 3852 Bombs—33,000 Fuzees Compleat with Bayonets. 1230 Fuzees for light horse.—30,000 Gun Locks—3,000000 Gun Flints.—100 Ton of Lead.—10,000 P. Worsted Hose for Officers; 3,000 Blankets for Officers; 10000 Silk Hkfs.—50,000 linen Hkfs; 2000 Artillery tools 50000 lbs Sulphur, 26 Brass, 6 lb Cannon mounted on the Flammand." ViHi, William Lee Letter Book, pp. 81–82.
My Lord,  

Hussar in Bull Bay,¹ December 20th 1777.

I take the liberty of writing to you to acquaint you of my arrival here in company with his Majesty’s sloop Alert, whose mainmast is sprung in two places (and span-shackle broke) owing to the badness of the stick; and having had a survey on it find it can be sufficiently fished to carry her to England, I have therefore thought it prudent to come into port with her, as our rudder is damaged and we are in want of water, as the Alert can have the assistance of our carpenters and armourer. I am sorry to inform your Lordship we had an unsuccessful cruise, having been off Cape Finisterre on information of an American brig and Conyngham’s cutter having been seen off there 2 days before (20 ultimo). This intelligence I gained from the master of a letter of marque just come out of Oporto. On the 4th inst I fell in with his Majesty’s ship Medway, who had met with nothing; and on the 6th with the Asia, who had likewise been unsuccessful. We lay all night in company with her, and next morning saw two sail, one of which the Asia and we chased, and the Alert the other; we came up with our chase about 2 P.M. and sent our boat on board, she proved a brig from Mounts Bay to Venice. About 11 that forenoon the Alert fired a gun, and some time after another, which was perceived from our tops, on which I sent the 2nd lieutenant up with his glass to see if he could distinguish any signal the sloop had out; but could observe none nor her chase in sight, which was the cause of my not hauling my wind to join her, as I supposed something was the matter with her mast or rigging and that she could easily join me after I had brought to our chase. About 4 P.M. she joined us, and informed me the vessel she chased proved to be a Philadelphia-built ship of about 24 guns (which Captain Bazely supposed to be an American cruiser) with a spar deck, whole mizen yard, clean white bottom, quarter badges, and a figurehead which stood far back. On the Alert’s hoisting an American ensign she hoisted a plain blue flag at her ensign staff, which signal not being understood by the Alert she hauled it down and hoisted Spanish colours. About 5 P.M. made sail to the south-east in hopes of falling in with her; and about 9 the Asia tacked and stood to the northward. The next morning made Cape Finisterre and stood to the southward, calling off Oporto for intelligence, but could gain none from the consul. I run down that evening off the Burlings, and next day fell in with his Majesty’s sloop Martin, who came out from Lisbon on a ten day’s cruise, by order of Captain Moore of the Exeter, in quest of a Bermudian-built American brig privateer of sixteen guns without a head and black sides. The day after I fell in with the Egmont, who I find has been equally unsuccessful as ourselves. In the afternoon gave chase to a brig from Bilbao to Setubal. The owner informed me that he had been six weeks at Bilbao, waiting for the departure of the American privateer then in there; and he very justly observes it is out of the power of our cruisers to catch them, as they never come out from the land and on the appearance of a vessel of force they run into port. These privateers have people employed to look out from the hills who make signals to them when anything appears in the offing, so that they slip out and take them; but on the contrary if any of our cruisers appear off, they have signals to acquaint them therewith, so that they continue quiet till our ships are off the coast. On the 14th I chased a snow and brought her to; and whilst we were hoisting our boat out, she wore and ran foul of our stern, carrying away the ensign staff, stern lantern, and damaged the rudder, which our car-
penter informed me he should be able to repair provided the ship was anchored in smooth water. I have therefore carried her up to Bull Bay, as likewise the Alert, which I hope will meet your Lordship's approbation. I have the pleasure to inform you that the Alert and Hussar go nearly alike and do equal credit to their bottoms, though the Alert being rigged as a cutter has the advantage of being more weatherly. The Bay by no means agrees with her at this season of the year, as she, dabchick like, is frequently under water; and after a gale, many of which we have met with, she is not able to set her mainsail till the sea is down for fear of springing her boom; and I am happy to think no accident has happened to her in all the bad weather we have had, as the defects in her mainmast did not appear till this day (the 16th). Her people, though constantly wet, are healthy, which is not the case with ours, as we have had from 16 to 25 sick ever since we have been out with colds and fevers and now we have 30; and the only cause that I can attribute for the Alert's people continuing so healthy is that she has her galley between decks, which though disagreeable in some respects is of great benefit to the ship's company, as I have always observed in the West Indies, when ships have been unhealthy and have had their galleys below, that the cooks and people who lay near it seldom or ever caught the infection. I am sorry to say our rigging is so badly fitted that it wants overhauling entirely, being rigged by contract; and from my not being allowed the men who were volunteers for the ship I may venture to say I have not 30 good seamen on board—however, I hope I shall be able to complete my deficiency before I return to England. Our upper works are so leaky that her sides and deck will require fresh caulking all over: I have therefore to request your Lordship will be pleased to order the ship into Hamoaze on our return, that I may have an opportunity of getting my rigging lifted and put to rights, which I am sorry to say has not been in my power to do since she left the River. I propose putting to sea again as soon as I have repaired my rudder and completed our water, which I hope will be in a few days. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Ell£ Salter


1. The Hussar and Alert anchored in the Tagus River on December 19. UkLPR, Adm. 51/51.

December 21 (Sunday)

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU LE BRETON DE RANSANNE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

Les Capitaines des deux bâtiments 1 americains qui sont ici, viennent de m'in-struire que vous aviez ordonné que le rhum qu'ils avaient acheté & qu'on Leur avait saisi, Leur fût rendu. Il n'y a plus que La Crainte de trouver Leur Ennemi En force à La Côte, qui puisse retarder Leur départ. Le nommé Jacques Mandret, maître de La barque La marguerite de Bonne alliance, De L'Isle-Dieu, vient de me rendre Compte qu'Étant parti de Bordeaux Le quatorze de ce mois pour venir à L'orient; Il avait rencontré Le 19 à huit heures du matin, à La vuë de La pointe Sud-Est de Belle-Isle...
Deux frégattes de vingt-six à vingt-huit Canons. Comme Je ne crois pas que nous En ayons deux Ensemble dans ces parages, Il y a Lieu de Croire que Ce sont des bâtiments anglais qui sont venus Croiser pour attendre Le Départ Des americains qui sont à L'Orient. Si vous voulez, Je sortirai avec Eux & les Conduirai au Large. J'attendrai vos ordres pour Cela. . . . J'ai L'honneur d'Être [&c.]

le breton De Ransanne

A bord De La Sylphide En rade Du port-Loïs
Le 21 Decembre 1777.

[Translation]

My Lord

The captains of the two American ships 1 which are here have just informed me that, as you ordered, the rum they had bought and which had been taken from them, has been given back to them. There remains only the fear of finding their enemy in force on the coast which may delay their departure. The man called Jacques Mandret, master of the boat La marguerite de Bonne alliance, from L'Isle-Dieu, just reported that after leaving Bordeaux the fourteenth of this month for Lorient, at eight o'clock on the morning of the 19th he encountered in sight of the southeast point of Belle-Isle two frigates with twenty-six to twenty-eight guns. As I do not believe we have two of these together in these waters, I have reason to believe they are English ships come to cruise in expectation of the departure of the Americans who are at Lorient. If you like, I will leave with them and lead them out into the open sea. I await your orders on this. . . . I am [&c.]

le breton De Ransanne

On board La Sylphide in the harbor of port-Louis
21 Decembre 1777.


LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Capt'n Jones

Sir

Jack 1 arrived this morning, am extremely happy that matters on board are to your satisfaction — Shall duly observe, and comply with the contents of your Letter— Am Sorry to inform you, that the Ice came down last night very swift with the Ebb, and pretty thick, the frenchmen are much alarm'd at it, Mr Odea informs me the consequence may be bad unless the Ship is hawled in shore, which I do not think my self Authorised to do, without your order—especially when so nigh as to advise and hear from you in so short a time—Some of the people have this morning applied to me for liberty to go on Shore, which shall not grant them without your approbation—

The Ship is still in good order, on Friday employed eight french caulkers from the shore who altogether did not do as much as we of our own did yesterday, therefore did not send for them again—The Officers Join in their respects I am [&c.]

Thom Simpson
Shou’d be glad to hear whether there has been any word of the George Shou’d esteem it a favour if you’ll please to forward the Letter to M^c Shores

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6675.

December 22

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE


The Independence being still in this port—it is my Duty to acquaint You that I yesterday received a letter from the Commissioners requiring my Appearance at Paris.—I hope the present situation of Affairs will enable them to furnish me with some Additional Force—but should that event be protracted for any considerable Space of time I will make my stay at Paris very short and on my return will proceed to Sea with the Ranger in the intrem.—You may rest Assured that I will endeavour to transmit to you the most regular accounts of my proceedings, being in the Grateful sincerity of my Heart Gentlemen [&c.]


PIERRE-ANTOINE MASSIE AND OTHERS TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

22. xbre. 1777

Nous capitaine pierre Antoine Massie de Marseille commandant Le navire Le Bon pasteur party du Fort Royal Isle Martinique Le 4 octobre 1777 pour marseille notre destination, officiers major, passagers et Equipages d’iceluy, certifions et attestons que Le 21 Decembre meme année Sur les 4 heures du soir nous trouvans par le travers du cap de Gatte distants 4 Lieux avec un vent D’ouest fraix, un navire portant pavillon anglais et marchant Superieurement a nous, vint jusques par notre travers a demy lieu loin et nous tira un coup de Canon a boulet qui nous passa fort pres, nous mimes tout de Suite notre pavillon, menames tout de suite nos bonnettes hauttes et basses et cargammes nos deux basses voiles, ayant mis a travers tout de Suite Sous nos deux hunniers, il nous fut sous peu a la portee de La voix. il nous cria d’ou nous venions que nous n’avions qu’une Lourde chaloupe tres embarrassée qui demandaient au moins trois quarts D’heures pour etre mise a la mer et que La nuit S’avanaçait il repondit qu’il allait mettre le sien, en Effet il L’envoya a notre bord avec Six hommes armés de deux paires de pistolet et un Sabre chaques, ils disaient etre officiers de La fregatte, il fallut ceder ses Six hommes armés monterent a bord, firent embarquer de force le capitaine en luy ordonnant de La part du leur de porter avec luy tous ses papiers ayant mis le pistolet Sur la gorge du timonier ils S’enparerent du gouvernail et du commandement du Navire Le dit...
1136 EUROPEAN THEATER

S'étant embarqué dans Le canot et ayant abordé à bord de La dite frégate, ils le firent dessandre dans La grand chambre où le dit capitaine était avec un passager qui parlait français et Son Chirurgien il luy fit demander tous Ses papiers, il luy remis une balle de fer blanc renfermant L'expedition de L'amirauté, Le congé de Monseigneur L'amiral, Le rôle d'Equipage et L'expedition du domaine qui constatait Le chargement, il ne Daigna pas meme ouvrir la boette ou ils Étaient renfermis il fut La mettre tout de suite dans Son bureau; il me fit dire pour lire par cet homme qui parlait Francés et qui nous servait d'interprète qu'il était tres persuade quij ne venais pas de La martinique et bien de La nouvelle Angleterre, que mon chargement devait être composé du Tabac, du Ris, du bled et autres denrees provenant de ce pays, et qu'il était dessiè de me mener à Mahon pour faire La visite Exacte et decharger mon Vaisseau. il fit passer tout de suite Douze de Ses matelots armés dans mon bord, nomma un capitaine de prise et mon navire fut totalement à Sa discretion ayant donné tous Ses ordres, il redessendit dans La chambre où j’avais resti tout Etonni de cette scene. je luy Representai Qu’il n’avait qu’a faire verifier tous mes papiers et qu’il verrait que je viens reellement de La martinique et bien de La nouvelle Angleterre, que nous venions reellement de La martinique chargis des denries coloniales & que nous n’avions Relachi en aucun port depuis notre depart. tout cela ne satisfesait pas ce capitaine qui voulait absolument nous conduire a Mahon il poussa La violence jusqu’a vouloir le retenir dans son bord en otage 2 la fin a forces des sollicitations et des prieres il Le fit Reconduire a Bord du bon pasteur Deux soldats deserteurs qui étaient embarques par ordre du gouvernement furent pareillement mandés a son bord et furent interrogés hors de ma presence; Enfin apres m’avoir fait bien des reproches de ce que les françois favorisaient ouvertement les nouveaux anglois et autres mauvais propos, sur Les 11 heures du Soir il me fit dire qu’il allait me rendre mes papiers et me faire conduire a mon bord, m’offrant si j’avais besoin de quelques vivres de me les ceder en payant ayant deja 78 jours de navigation et les vivres commençant a me manquer, je le priaï de me vendre 2 quinteaux biscuit, une barrique d’eau, 12 poules, et un petit Cochon, il me fit envoyer en reciproque 25 livres caffi, 12 bouteilles Sirop, 6 bouteilles Vin de
22 DECEMBRE 1777

Bourdeaux et 2 bouteilles Rumb. toutes ses provisions étant embarquées Dans le canot il my fit Embarquer moy meme et conduire a mon Bord en me souhaitant bon voyage. j’arrivai a mon bord, où je trouvai tout dans une Confusion extreme, le capitaine de prise et ses matelots ayant mis mon navire dessus dessous et visité autant qu’il fut possible de toute part. Le sieur Gautier mon capitaine en second luy ayant représenté pareillement que nous faisons beaucoup d’eau, et qu’ils eussent Soin de faire pomper, ils ne voulurent jamais le faire ni permettre qu’on Le fit et répondirent ironiquement s’il avait peur de couler bas, enfin tous ces gens La se debarquèrent et je me trouvai sur les 11 heures du soir maitre dans mon navire.

Cette fregatte s’apelle The Westmoreland armée de 22 pieces de canons de 8 et beaucoup du monde, commandée par capne Michel party de Londres depuis 15 jours sans avoir Relaché en aucun port, allant a Mahon et de La a Livourne.

Fait a bord Du navire Le Bon pasteur le 22 Decembre 1777

Pre Massié Capne.

Gautier

Le maitre nocher Contre maitre et
Calfat et Canonier ne Sachant Signer

D. albiasl
Le Bn. d’arbaud passager sur
le dit navire
Chomet Des Beaumes
Rayet
Martin Passager

X croix Du maitre
X croix Du contre maitre
X croix Du Calfat
X croix Du cannonier

je Soussigné pierre antoine Massié capne Du navire Le bon pasteur et au nom de messieurs Ventre & Pascal mes armateurs, Proteste De tous Depens, et Domages provenant tout Du Deffaut de la pompe qui peut m’avoir avarié plusieurs Barriques de sucre a mon premier Rang que du Retard occasioné injustement, Reservant a mes armateurs tous leurs droits pour former telles plaintes qu’ils avi Seront Bon etre leurs interets Lors que Le Domage Sera Reconnu a Bord Du bon pasteur Le 22 Decembre 1777

Pre Massié—

[Translation]

We, Captain Pierre-Antoine Massie of Marseilles, commanding the ship Bon Pasteur; having sailed from Fort Royal in the Island of Martinique on 4 October 1777 for Marseilles our destination, senior officers, passengers and crew, as here below, certify and attest that on 21 December of the same year, at 4 o’clock in the evening, we came abreast of the Cape de Gata at a distance of 4 leagues; with a strong breeze from the west, we came upon a ship flying an English flag, and sailing at a speed faster than ours. She closed on our beam to within a distance of half a league and then fired a gun, the shot passing very close to us; we immediately hoisted our flag, immediately took in our high and low studding sails and furled our courses; having immediately come abeam under our two topsails; she shortly came within hailing distance and shouted to us from where we were coming and where we were going; we answered we were coming from Martinique and going to Marseilles; she then ordered the captain to come immediately by boat to the ship; having explained to him...
through one of our sailors who spoke English that we had only a heavy rowboat in very bad condition, which would require three quarters of an hour to put in the water and that it was getting dark, the captain answered he would put his own boat in the water; as a matter of fact he sent it to our ship with six men each armed with two pairs of pistols and a sword; they said they were officers from the frigate; we had to allow the six armed men to board us; they forced the captain to get into the boat while ordering him, on behalf of their captain, to bring all his papers; while holding a pistol against the helmsman’s throat, they took control of the tiller and the command of the ship. The aforesaid captain, having embarked in the boat and having gone aboard the aforesaid frigate, was forced to go down to the great cabin where the captain was with a passenger, who spoke French, and his surgeon; the captain was asked for all his papers, which he handed over in a tin box containing the Admiralty’s sailing orders, my Lord Admiral’s authorization, the muster roll, and the customs clearance confirming the nature of the ship’s cargo. The frigate’s captain did not bother to open the box in which the documents were enclosed. He had it immediately put in his desk; he had me told, through the man speaking French and who served as an interpreter, that he was certain I was not coming from Martinique but rather from New England, that my cargo had to contain tobacco, rice, grain, and other produce coming from that country, and that he had decided to take me to Mahon for a thorough inspection and to unload my ship. He then sent immediately twelve armed men from his crew to board my ship, appointed a prize master, and now my ship was completely at his disposal; having issued all his orders, he went down again to the cabin where I had remained completely stunned by this scene; I put it to him that he had but to have all my papers checked, he would then see I really did come from Martinique and my cargo was made up entirely of produce grown in that colony. As his only answer, he had me told he would take me to Mahon and it would be decided there, still without trying to look over my papers. Seeing his determination, I told him that, having had to give in to a show of force, I was as of that moment protesting against all damages and any delay as well as the safety of my ship and its cargo. I also stated that, having met up with bad weather, I was leaking at a rate of 28 inches an hour during good weather and calm sea, and when the ship was laboring I had trouble keeping the pumps working, and since he had seized my ship, it was up to him to order precautions. This man then became furious, and I could see myself being put in irons. He wanted at all costs to make a fine prize of me and for me not to say a word.

Baron d’Arbaud de Jouques, Major General of Martinique, one of my passengers, was also summoned on board and was subjected to an interrogation, suggesting to him that he would be given half the cargo if he would admit that we had goods from New England. All of this was accompanied with violence and nasty behavior. The baron did his best to make the aforesaid captain understand that we were truly sailing from Martinique laden with colonial produce and that we had not anchored in any port since our departure. None of that satisfied the captain who was intent on taking us to Mahon; he continued with his violent behavior to the point of trying to hold him as a hostage on board the ship. Finally, after many entreaties and pleas, the captain had the baron returned to the Bon Pasteur.

Two soldiers, who had deserted and had been put on board the Bon Pasteur by order of the government, were likewise ordered on board the captain’s ship and were
interrogated outside my presence. At last, after having upbraided me about the French openly favoring the New Englanders, and other nasty remarks, at eleven o’clock at night he had me told that he would return my papers and have me taken back to my ship and offered, if I needed any provisions, to let me have them for a price. Since I had already been sailing for 78 days, provisions were getting low, I asked him to sell me 2 quintals of biscuit, a cask of water, 12 chickens, and a small pig. After I had paid him 4 guineas, he gave me, in addition, half a barrel of lard, half a cheese, and 4 or 5 pounds of butter, without wanting any payment. In return I had sent to him 25 pounds of coffee, 12 bottles of syrup, 6 bottles of Bordeaux wine, and 2 bottles of rum. After having all his provisions loaded into the rowboat, the captain had me get in and had me rowed back to my ship, wishing me a good voyage. On arriving on board my vessel, I found everything in extreme confusion. The prize master and his sailors had ransacked my ship, having gone into every nook and cranny. Sieur Gautier, my second in command, likewise had pointed out to him in protest that we were leaking badly, and that they would have to see that the pumps were worked; they never attempted to do it, nor did they allow anyone else to do it; they scornfully responded whether he was afraid of sinking. At last, those men left the ship and, at 11 o’clock at night, I was master of my own ship.

The frigate is called the Westmoreland, carrying 22 eight-pounders and a lot of men, under the command of Captain Michel. They had sailed two weeks ago from London and, without dropping anchor in any port, were making their way to Mahon and then from there to Livorno.

Done on board the ship Bon Pasteur on 22 December 1777.

Pte Massie, Captain

Gautier

Massie, the younger

D. albiall The master pilot, the master’s mate,
Baron d’Arbaud, passenger on the said ship
Chaumet des Baumes
the boatswain, and the gunner were unable to write and made their marks below
Rayet

X Master pilot’s cross
Martin, Passenger
X Master’s mate’s cross
X Boatswain’s cross
X Gunner’s cross

I, the undersigned, Pierre Antoine Massie, captain of the ship Bon Pasteur, and in the name of Messers Ventre and Pascal, the owners of my ship, do solemnly protest all damages and expenses resulting from the failure of the pump, which may have spoiled several large barrels of sugar in the bottom rank in the hold, as well as the delay which it unjustly caused, reserving to the owners of my ship their right to file such claims as they believe to be in their interest when the damages have been determined. On board the Bon Pasteur, 22 December 1777.

Pte Massie—

[Extract]

[1140 EUROPEAN THEATER]

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

Madrid 22d Decemb. 1777.

No. 67.

My Lord,

I have received the Honour of your Lordship’s No. 31 and shall pay very particular Attention to the Contents of it.¹

I enclose to your Lordship Copy of an Answer, and its Translation, to my last Office to the Spainish Minister,² the Professions of which are very plausible. I have seen him since I received it, and have pointed out to him that nothing had been wanting on my part towards the prevention of the Complaints which I made, for that I had given Notice to His Majesty’s Consuls to make Protests in all Cases of Prizes brought in to Spanish Ports & that besides, the Cases which I complained of had happened before the Time, on which he had promised that stricter Orders for Impartiality in attending to these Matters should be issued, and therefore that it was not fair to attribute any part of the Conduct of the Spanish Governors to their not having received Information.³

Besides the Promises which the Office holds forth, I received from him very direct Assurances, that he had given Orders to have Cunningham forbidden to enter into any of the Ports of Spain. The execution of which, tho’ merely agreeable to the first Measures which were promised to be taken, cannot but have a good effect, in shewing the Governors, especially the Commandant of Galicia, that this Court is more in earnest, than it has hitherto appeared to be in this Business.... I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham


1. Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 28 Nov. 1777, above.
3. Floridablanca told Grantham to instruct the British Consuls to gather the necessary evidence before filing a protest, as unsupported claims could not be effectively dealt with. See Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

December 23

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO FRÉDÉRIC-JOSEPH GUILLOT

A M Guillot

Commis des Ports et Arsenaux de M× à S. Mâlo—
Vbre. Le 23. Xbre. 1777.

J’ai reçu, M. Votre Lettre du 5 du ce Mois par laquelle vous m’informez de l’intention annoncée publiquement par le Captn du Bât’² La Revanche, desattaquer à la 1re rencontre la Corvette La Curieuse. J’ai mandé en conséquence, à M Le C× d’Orvilliers de faire passer cet avis à la frégate qui est à Nantes afin que le Bât’m Anglois soit observé. Je vous suis gre aussitot De votre exactitude à me l× part de tout ce qui peut interesser la service du Roi. Je suis [&c.]
[Translation]

To M. Guillot
Commissary of the Ports and Arsenals of the Navy at St. Malo.
Versailles, 23 Dec. 1777.

I have received, sir, your letter of the 5th of this month by which you inform me of the intention announced publicly by the captain of the ship Revenge to attack on the first encounter the corvette La Curieuse. I have sent, in consequence, to Messieur Le Comte d'Orvilliers to have this information passed on to the frigate that is at Nantes so that the English ship might be watched. I am pleased with your exactitude in informing me of all that can interest the king's service. I am [&c.].

Lb, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 134, fol. 428.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Capt'n Jones—

Sir

I wrote you yesterday of the Ice, since which time, we have not been troubled with any, of consequence—The Captain of the French Frigate has been on board, I believe from some application of our french people, in respect of cloaths, (which indeed they much want as well as the englishmen, and americans on board) the entry book hath been produced to him, he begs they may be well treated but at the same time, acknowledges he cannot take them, without some order peculiar for that purpose—I am desired by him to write you, to know the time, you fix for sailing, of which he says, he must have some fixed period, and that Mr Odea, from me will inform him, (all this I believe, finesse)—The Ship's masts, rigging &c—are pretty fonward, and our Ship's company orderly—as soon as the tides rise shall hawl on the ways to do the bottoms; unless any order from you to the contrary—the Lead is come down which shall put on board the last Gabard—Doctor Green has given me a memorandum of medicine, which I inclose—I must beg leave to press you for the slops in mem'o. sent you, the people being absolutely in want—The Officers tell me frequently, they want money, and that their exigences require a speedy remedy—Mr Odea has supplied us with three tierces and one barrel of beef—Mr Robertson has the Stores, the money you delivered me, shall retain in my hands—The Officers present their compliments—I am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

Jack ² is very unwell—

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6677.
1. John Robertson, Ranger’s boatswain.
2. Johnny Downes, apprentice on the Ranger.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Nantes December 23rd 1777.

Your esteemed favor of the 17th I have received.—I wish to leave the Ranger in such a situation as to expect to find her nearly ready for Sea on my return—
as I think it will be for the interest of the Service that I should then proceed with her alone. Unless an Additional force can be very soon procured—should circumstances admit—an Additional force may be prepared, in my absence, without any foundation for suspicion.—These sentiments I submit to you with becoming deference to your Superior Wisdom. I shall have the honor of paying you my personal respects soon after the appearance of this—therefore shall only add that I am [&c.]

Jno P Jones

L, MB. By courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO SILAS DEANE

Honble Sir

Nantes Dec: 23d 1777

I arrived Saturday Night last, was much surprised to find every thing in regard to my ship, just as I left them, no contrary orders from the minister, so that I am afraid to take my people on board her yet. She is all loaded ready for sea, only to take on a few stores &c. It is a great fortification [mortification] to me not being permitted to go on board my ship, with my people; two English frigates, one 74, cruizing off here, I am [&c.]

Sam Nicholson


1. Lyon, subsequently Continental Navy frigate Deane.
2. Gabriel de Sartine.

JOHN ROSS TO SILAS DEANE

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Nantes 23 Decem 1777

... Hodge set out on Sunday, very unwell. Poor fellow! So heavy could not write you from hence, he intends it however so soon as he gets to Bourdeaux—At same time, he drew on you in my favour for £3000 Tournois @ 15 d/d. which is in consequence of the credit he had from Mr Morris (or committee of Congress) on you. The bill is forwarded today to Gerardot Haller & Co & doubt not it will prove good.—

The ship La Bruné arrived here last friday from L’orient & look for Green soon when you may depend on the utmost to get forward for his departure—You may expect to hear from me by Capt: Jones—time only Permit me to Add at present, that I am [&c.]

Jno: Ross

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: “The Honble Silas Deane Esquire.” The portion not printed here concerns an intended meeting with Simeon Deane to discuss a proposed business deal.
Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France

[Extract]

Honble Gentlemen. — (No. 105) Nantes Decem’ 23. 1777—

Cap’ Nicholson is gone to Painbeuf to see his Ship, I inclose a Letter he has written to M’ Dean, since which I find the expected orders are arrived and we are now to meet no Difficulties. . . .

I shall make a calculation of what will remain after loading the three Ships, and shall then take up the first good Vessel that offers.

I have just met with 9 americans who are arrived from Dunkirk & 10 arrived yesterday from S’ Malo’s, these I shall take on board the Frigate & supply them with necessaries. . . . I have the honour to be [&c]

Jon’a Williams J

December 24

Lieutenant Boux to the American Commissioners in France

Messieurs

Vous voudrês bien prendre en récommandation qu’Jai quité Le service du roy auquel Jetois attaché pour entrer à celui des Etats de l’amerique septentrionale. Je me suis rendu en Conséquence à vos ordres, et relativement au grade de lieutenent de Vaisseau dans la marine de Etats unis; En hollande pour y diriger La construction d’un Vaisseau qui vous y faisies faire, que maintenant je suis à paris par une suite de vos ordres pour me rendre ou votre service m’appelera.

Ma fortune et mon metier, ne me permet pas de faire isy un long séjour, permettez qu’en Conséquence je vous réetiere mes prieres, pour déterminer ceque je dois faire, et si vous ne pouvez pas dessider dans ce moment La mission que vous voudriez me donner. Je vous prie de me permettre de partir pour lorient, ou Jai quelques affaires qui demende ma presence.

La Jattendrai vos ordres, et serai toujours disposé à suivre avec zelle le service des Etats. Je suis [&c.]

a Paris le 24 X’bre. 1777. Boux Neveu

[Translation]

Gentlemen

Please consider that I left the service of the king to which I was attached in order to enter that of the States of North America. I went, in consequence, at your orders, and relative to the rank of lieutenant de vaisseau in the navy of the United States, to
Holland, where I directed the construction of a ship which you were having built; and that now I am in Paris, by your orders, to place myself where your service will call me.

My fortune and my vocation do not allow me to visit here long. Permit me, in consequence, to repeat to you my request that you determine what I ought to do, and if you are not able to decide this moment the mission that you would want to give me, I request that you allow me to depart for Lorient, where I have some business that demands my presence.

There I would await your orders and would be always disposed to follow with zeal the service of the States. I am [&c.]


Boux Neveu


1. Indien, building at Amsterdam.

ARThUR LEE TO JOHN ROSS


D'r Sir

Chaillot Dec'r 24th 1777.

“I received your favor of the 16th. It is a suite of that Conduct, which has confused every thing that M'r Deane assumes to himself, the right of giving orders without the Knowledge or Concurrence of the other Commissioners. The orders you mention were never communicated to me, nor any part of the proceedings at Dunkerque, by which I can judge whether it is proper to concur or not. I have spoke to M'r Deane on the Subject, who promises to shew me M'r Hodges acc’s; when I have seen that & Know the specific Terms on which, & the Reasons why, the Cutters are now to be sold, I shall be able to give you a satisfactory Answer.”


December 25

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

25th. [Decr] Thursday fine w Over head; but Extreamly Muddy in the Yard—Served with Mutton & Turnips to keep Christmas with. White bread Likewise; a Rarity indeed—

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, COMMISSARY OF MARINE AT L'ORIENT

A Versailles, le 25. Xbre. 1777

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, vos lettres des 12. et 19. de ce mois; par la premiere, entr'autres choses, vous m'annoncéz l'arrivée de la Corvette la Silphide, dans la rade du
Port Louis, et vous me faites part des observations que vous avéz faite à M. Le Breton de Ransanne, commandant cette Corvette, sur la manière de faire fructueusement la visite à Bord des Bâtiments Étrangers pour en retirer les Matelots Français qui pourroient s’y trouver; vos observations à ce sujet me paraissent fort justes.

Par votre lettre du 19., vous me faites part de ce que M. De Bouilhac, fermier Général, vous a écrit qu’il accordait la main levée des taflias réclamés par les Capitaines du Raleigh et de l’Alfred; ce fermier Général m’a informé des ordres qu’il a donnés à ce sujet, et de leur exécution; au moyen de quoi ces deux Capitaines n’ayant plus aucun prétexte de prolonger leur séjour, je compte qu’ils auront satisfait à l’ordre qui leur a été donné de partir. Je suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 25 December 1777

I have received, Sir, your letters of the 12th and 19th of this month; by the first, among other things, you announced to me the arrival of the corvette La Silphide, in the roadstead of Port Louis, and you sent word to me of the observations that you made to M. le Breton de Ransanne, captain of the corvette, about the manner of successfully visiting foreign ships in order to remove the French seamen who might be found on board; your observations on this topic appear to me to be very proper.

By your letter of the 19th, you report that M. de Bouilhac, farmer-general, wrote you that he was granting the withdrawal of the rum claimed by the captains of the Raleigh and Alfred; this farmer general had informed me of the orders that he had given in this regard, and their carrying out. As a result, these two captains having no longer any pretext to prolong their stay, I expect they will comply with the order given for their departure. I am [&c.]

de sartine


ARTHUR LEE TO CONDE DE ARANDA

Mons' a Challot le 25° Decembre 1777

Je vous prie d’avoir la bonté d’expédier a votre Cour la requête que je l’honneur de vous envoyer. Une prise faite par un Corsair américain etoit saisie, dans le Port de St. Sebastian, l’Equipage mis en prison, tous les Papiers de le Commandant américain emportés, lui même condamné sur sa propre confession, qu’il etoit obligé de faire et de signer dans une langue dont il n’entendoit pas un mot.1 Le personne qui etoit envoyé par le Capitain de le Corsair de montrer leur Commission du Congrés et prier leur relachement a recu cette reponse—No viene el exm° Sen° Comand° Gen° en condescender con lo que solicita en su instancia Marston Watson primer Ten° de la Goleta Corsaria nombra el Hawk.

J’espere que la grace et la justice de votre Cour me donnera le moyen par un relachement le plus prompt de prevenir les mauvaises effets que fera cet événement inopiné sur les esprits de mes Compatriotes, parmi lesquelles je souhaite que le respect et l’amitie pour la Nation espagnole dureront toujours. J’ai l’honneur d’etre [&c.]

Arthur Lee
[Translation]

Sir,  
Chaillot 25 December 1777

I beg you to have the goodness to dispatch to your court the request that I have the honor of sending you. A prize made by an American privateer was seized in the port of St. Sebastian, the crew put in prison, all the papers of the American commander taken away, he himself condemned on his own confession, which he was obliged to make and to sign in a language of which he understood not a word.1 The person who was sent by the captain of the privateer to show their commission from the Congress and to beg their release has received this response: His most excellent Señor Commandante General will not comply with that which Marston Watson, first lieutenant of the privateer schooner called the Hawk, requested in your case.

I hope that the favor and the justice of your court will give me the means, by a most prompt release, to prevent the bad effects that this event will have on the minds of my countrymen, among whom I desire that respect and friendship for the Spanish nation will endure for ever. I have the honor to be [&c.]

Arthur Lee

1. Brig Britannia, Wood, master, John Allen, prize master, captured by Massachusetts privateer schooner Hawk, Jeremiah Hibbert.

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Monsieur  
25. Xbre. 1777

Il est de mon Devoir d'informer Votre Excellence que les Corsaires Américains Le Raleigh, l'Alfred et Le Randolph,1 qui devoient partir il y a Longtemps sont encore à l'Orient, et quoi qu'ils soient bien en état de mettre à la Voile, ayant trouvé abondem- ment toutes sortes de Secours; on leur permet de rester sous les pretextes les plus frivolес Ils sont chargés de Canons d'armes et de Munition de Guerre; qui leur ont été fournis dans Vos Ports, en Violation directe, des Traité que Lient les deux Nations, et des Ordres reîtères émanés de cette Cour. Je tiens tous ces détails M le Cef d'un Temoin Oculaire. Je suis persuadé qu'il suffit de les mettre sous les yeux de Votre Excellence, et je ne puis pas doutez un Moment que cette Cour, trop Jalouse de sa propre Gloire pour n'être point fidel aux engagemens les plus solemmele n'envoie d'abord les Or- dres positifs pour faire partir sur le Champ les trois Corsaires mentionés ci dessous, et pour les obliger à décharger les Canons, Armes, et Munitions de Guerre qui Leur ont été fourni d'une Maniere fraudulense, dans un pays ami de la Grande Bretagne, et en- gagé par des Traités a ne jamais fournir a ces Enemis de pareils Secours.2

Je viens d'apprendre de Bordeaux que Monsieur Barton 3 un Negotiant Anglois et un des plus Considerables, et des plus Considerés qu'il y ait dans cette ville, à été insulté publiquement à la Bourse par un Nomme Walke Capitaine, d'un Vaisseau American qui a traité de la Maniere la plus insolente non seulement Mons' Barton, mais tous les Negotiants Anglois qui étoient presents. Ils auoirien bien chatié son Audace s'ils n'avoient point respecté les Loix du pays. En Consequence des plaintes portées par Mons' Barton Le susdit Walke a été mis en Prison mais au bout de Vingt Quatre heures. Il a été relâché par les instances du S' Delap Soidiant Agent des Re- belles. Je suprime les Details de cette Affaire ayant lieu de Croire que Mons' le Comte
de Fumel 4 en a fait Rapport. Je suis persuadé que V\textsuperscript{e} Excellence trouvera une punition aussi Legere bien peu proportionnée à une pareil Outrage.5

Le Sieur DeLap a trouvé Moyens de vendre un Vaisseau Anglois pris par les Rebelles et Conduit à Bordeaux. Il a vendu presque publiquement ce Vaisseau avec toute sa Cargaison et Il dit hautement qu'il vendra de même tous les Vaisseaux Anglois qui seront pris par nos Rebelles et que lui seront adressés pour cette effet.

Je m'interdis toutes Reflexions M. le Comte en écrivant à un Ministre aussi éclairé que V\textsuperscript{e} Excellence elles seroient bien Superflue. J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c.]

Paris ce 25 Xbre: 1777

Stormont

[Translation]

Sir 25 Dec. 1777

It is my duty to inform Your Excellency that the American privateers the Raleigh, the Alfred, and the Randolph, which should have left long ago, are still at L'Orient and although they are quite fit to sail, having found abundant aid of all sorts, they are allowed to remain under the most frivolous pretexts. They are laden with cannon, arms, and munitions of war, which have been furnished to them in your ports, in direct violation of the treaties which united the two nations, and the reiterated orders issued by this court. I have all these details, Monsieur le Comte, from an eye-witness. I am persuaded that it will be sufficient to bring them to Your Excellency's notice, and I cannot doubt for a moment that this court, too jealous of its own glory not to be faithful to the most solemn engagements, will at once send positive orders to cause the above-mentioned three privateers to depart immediately and to oblige them to unload the cannon, arms, and munitions of war which have been supplied to them in a fraudulent manner in a country which is friendly toward Great Britain, and engaged by treaties never to furnish such aid to these enemies.

I have just heard from Bordeaux that Mr. Barton, an English merchant, and one of the most important and respected in that town, has been publicly insulted at the Bourse by a certain Walke, captain of an American vessel, who treated in a most insolent manner not only Mr. Barton, but all the English merchants who were present. They would have punished well his audacity, if they had not respected the laws of the country. In consequence of the complaints made by Mr. Barton, the above-mentioned Walke was put into prison; but at the end of twenty-four hours he was set at liberty at the instance of Sieur Delap, who calls himself an agent of the rebels. I suppress the details of this affair, having reason to believe that Comte de Fumel has reported them. I am persuaded that Your Excellency will consider so light a punishment quite out of proportion to such an outrage.

The Sieur Delap has found means to sell an English vessel captured by the rebels and taken to Bordeaux. He sold this vessel almost publicly with its entire cargo, and he openly says that he will sell similarly every English vessel which may be captured by our rebels and sent to him for that purpose.

I deny myself all reflections, Monsieur le Comte, in writing to so enlightened a minister as Your Excellency they would be quite superfluous. I have the honour to be [&c.]


Stormont

L., Sieurs's Fascimiles, vol. 20, no. 1799. Addressed at foot of first page: "S: Ex\textsuperscript{e} M le C\textsuperscript{e} de Vergennes." Notation: "Extraits envoyé de cette lettre, tant à M. Bertin qu'à M. de Sartine, le 28 Xbre. 1777." "Extracts of this letter sent both to M. Bertin and M. de Sartine, 28. Dec. 1777."
1. The British Admiralty received intelligence dated 13 Dec. stating that Alfred and Raleigh were going to sail from L'Orient on 19 Dec. to join the frigate Randolph at Nantes. UKLPR, Adm. 2/1334.

2. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: “Representations Sur le Sejour à l'orient de 3 Corsaires Americains”; “Representations as to the stay of three American privateers at L'Orient.” On 28 Dec. Sartine instructed the commissary of marine at L'Orient to investigate the basis of the complaint. FrLAL, Series 1, E4 80, fol. 278. That same day he wrote to Vergennes that he doubted Alfred and Raleigh were still at Lorient, since the commander of the king’s frigate stationed there had ordered them not to delay their departure. He was having Randolph, if it were indeed in that port, ordered to sail, issuing orders about the embarkation of arms and munitions, and investigating a reported prize sale at Bordeaux. Sartine to Vergennes, 28 Dec. 1777, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, 375-76, printed in Stevens’s Facsimiles, vol. 20, no. 1808.

3. John Barton, an Irish merchant at Bordeaux.

4. The Comte de Fumel was commandant of the Chateau Trompette, a fortress guarding the harbor of Bordeaux. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 26: 246.

5. Delap told the American Commissioners that Captain John Walke, of Virginia, “had been imprisoned at the suggestion of some of Lord Stormont’s agents, who had seduced some of his sailors, and tampered with others.” Richard Henry Lee, Life of Arthur Lee, LL.D., 2 vols. (Boston, 1829), 1: 369. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: “plaintes contre un americain qui a insulté M. Barton à Bordeaux”; “complaints against an American who has insulted Mr. Barton at Bordeaux.”

6. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: “vente a W. d’un v.” “sale at Bordeaux of an English vessel captured by an American.”

Most Confidential  

Paris Thursday Morning Decr 25. 1777  

M. de Maurepas assured a friend of mine last night upon his Word of Honor that France had made No Treaty with the Rebels and that no such Measure was in Contemplation. This solemn assurance joined to all that M de Maurepas & M. de Vergennes said to me seems to destroy the Credibility of the Report & inclines me to believe that France will, in the present Moment at least till the final Event of the campaign in America is known, (which Event some of the Ministers have I am told declared she ought to wait for) confine herself to that plan of insidious Policy which she has so long pursued, take no open Part in favour of the Rebels, but give them every secret support. There is too much Reason to believe that Many french ships laden with Every thing the Rebels stand in need of are preparing to sail for North America, & that the Project of sending these ships in Fleets under Convoy of the american Privateers that are in the French Ports and of those Ships of War built in france for the use of the Rebels that will have french and american captains, is by no means laid aside tho in consequence of the Intelligence we had got the place of Rendezvous is changed They no longer mean to rendezvous at Bilboa but in or near some port of France, What Port I do not yet know

There certainly never was a time when it imported us more that our Cruizers should be active and Vigilant and particularly attentive to all that passes on the Coast of France

Your Lordship may remember that M. de Vergennes in one of our Conversations on the subject said that this Project of sending ships in fleets was not only unjustifiable, but Tres mal adroit as by that Means they would more easily fall into our Hands. I hope My Lord that his Prediction will be accomplished. such captures must certainly appear justifiable to every Reasonable and impartial Man whatever Lettres de Mer the ships may carry whatever colours they may hoist occasionally the being under Convoy of american Privateers would alone make them legal Prize. If such suc-
cours should reach America it is but too plain that they would be a great & effectual support to the Rebels. I am [&c.]

Stormont


CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentn

Besides the general Letter which I wrote you respecting our Business with Gourlard, Berard & D. Montplesire, I cannot in Justice to M’ Berard (to whose particular management all the Business which concerned the Raleigh was left) omit giving this particular Letter—He has transacted every matter to my entire satisfaction like a Man of Honour, a Man of Business, & an able Merch’ setting aside Dispatch which was not in his Power to Command owing to the Customs of the Port—from his proceeding with us I have no reason but to recommend future Business to his House should you have occasion to transact any at L’Orient, which Port I must recommend as a Safe Harbour & Easy of Access, & were it to be much frequented by Americans, Business would become more Easy and Expeditious—The Business of the Alfred was left entirely with Messr Goulard & D. Montplasier of whose management Cap’ Hinman can give you the best Accot. I am [&c.]

Tho’ Thompson


December 26

LLOYD’S EVENING POST AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1777

London.

His Majesty’s ship Royal Oak, Captain Faulkner, is arrived at Portsmouth from a cruize, and has brought in with him the James, Capt. Hopkins, from South Carolina to Nantz, with 100 barrels of rice, 50 ditto of indigo, and 20 hogsheads of tobacco.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

[Extract]

A londres le 26 decembre. 1777. . . . M. le Chevalier Pinto m’a fait dernièrement une Confidence que je me crois obligé, Monsieur le Comte de vous transmettre. Il m’a dit que Sa Cour avoit dans ce moment-ci quelques intérêts à démêler avec les Américains; que les Députés qui étoient à Paris avoient envoyé le mois dernier un Mémoire à Lisbonne que ce Mémoire avoir été le résultat d’une Résolution prise par le Congrès dès le mois de Jui-
let; que l'objet étoit de demander au Ministère Portugais la révocation de l'Edit rendu par le feu Roi de Portugal pour fermer aux Américains les Ports de ce Royaume. La réflexion par laquelle M. le Chevalier Pinto a fini, est qu'une pareille démarche mérite toute l'attention de sa Cour, parce qu'il est très important pour elle de ne point se brouiller avec les Américains, et que d'un autre côté la révocation d'un Edit aussi récent feroit ici un Eclat qu'il faudroit tâcher d'éviter. Je lui ai répondu que la prudence de Sa Cour surmonteroit encore de plus grandes difficultés; mais que s'il me permettoit de lui parler avec la même franchise qu'il m'avoit montrée, je lui dirois que s'il y avoit des inconvénients à révoquer l'Edit, il pouvoit s'en trouver moins à ne point le faire exécuté rigoureusement. . . .

Le M de Noailles

[Translation]

London, 26 December 1777.

. . . M. the Chevalier Pinto recently entrusted me in confidence with a secret, which I feel obliged, My Lord, to pass on to you. He told me that his court had at this moment some interests to work out with the Americans, that the deputies, who were in Paris, had sent a memorandum last month to Lisbon, and that this memorandum was the outcome of a resolution passed by the Congress as early as the month of July; that the purpose was to ask the Portuguese minister for the revocation of the edict issued by the late king of Portugal to deny the Americans access to the ports of his kingdom. The comment by which the Chevalier Pinto ended was that such an action deserved the full attention of his court, because it is most important for the latter not to quarrel with the Americans, and that from another point of view, the revocation of the edict, so recently issued, would cause a scandal that was to be avoided. I said to him in response that his court's discretion would overcome even greater difficulties; however, if he were to allow me to speak as candidly as he had to me, I should tell him that if there were difficulties in revoking the edict, he might find fewer of them by not strictly enforcing it.

The Marquis de Noailles

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526. Marginal notation: "Confidence de M. Pinto Sur la revocation proposee en Portugal par les deputes du Congres a Paris de revoquer l'Edit qui ferme aux Americains les Ports du Portugal," "M. Pinto's communication made regarding the revocation in Portugal brought up by the deputies of the Congress in Paris to revoke the edict that closes Portuguese ports to the Americans."

1. For the American Commissioner's memorial, see "The American Commissioners to the Marquis de Ponte de Lima" [before July 16, 1777], in Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 24: 321-22. On 1 May 1777, the Continental Congress had appointed a committee to investigate whether the Portuguese edict violated the laws of neutrality. NDAR 8: 886.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

26th [Dec 31 Friday] Clody weather St Stephens's Day Mr Tolcher (Grand father to the Mayor of P[lymouth]) made a Present of 100 d Loves to the Boys

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.
We beg your Excellency’s Permission to make an appeal from the Judgment of the Admiralty, at Nantes which ordains a confiscation of two Prizes (British West-india Ships) taken legally on the High Seas by two American Privateers,¹ and that Your Excellency will be pleased to request his Majesty to suspend the Departure of those Prizes, and their Cargoes, until the justice of our appeal shall have been regularly decided by the proper Tribunal.

The great value of the prizes in question, the distressed situation of their Captors, and the discredit which has fallen upon the cause of our Country by the disposition which was made of the ships after their Confiscation, as well as by the indecent exultation of our Enemies on that subject, all unite in making it our Duty to trouble your Excellency with this request and to Pray that you will favourably represent it to the King.² We have the honor to be [&c.]

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

---


2. The same day Silas Deane wrote similarly to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, arguing further that the original owners could not object to an appeal from a judgment of Admiralty, “a Court from which Appeals may be regularly made.” ⁴ Stevens’s Fasimiles, vol. 20, no. 1802. The next day Deane wrote to Jonathan Williams, Jr., urging him to do what he could to help see that the two prizes were detained for the appeal and stating that “to save if possible these two ships, after all that has passed, will be a master stroke and give me pleasure as long as I live.” Deane Papers 2: 286.

---

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Dear Sir

L.orient Decr 26th 1777

ICongratulate you on your safe arival in this Kingdom, and more particularly as you bring good and agreeable news—I took it a littl unkind I must Confess at not hearing from you on your arival as you came directly from a Place where every thing near and Dear to me resides—however a letter from a Friend is at any season welcom; I read it with pleasure until I came to the two last lines which Contains an unesesary and unseasonable Complement and gave it the appearence of a Letter design’d to discharge a supposd Deibt rather then a Letter of Friendship and information—You do me a sensible pleasure in your attention to M's Thompson shoes you will please to make that Commison agreeable to your distination—Capt Nichalson’s acct of our Court Junt, I dare say was Entertaining, told no doubt, with a few of his Embelishments—I hope you will Enjoy much Satisfaction in the Pleasures which paris afours—particularly in appearing at every Public place where you Can mortify the English and agrandize the States—Cap’ Hinman presents his best Comps—we should have been happy, to have meet you in Paris Your most Hble Ser’

Thos. Thompson
LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Capt'n Jones

Ranger 26th. December 1777.

Sir

Your favors by Capt'n Young and M'r Chandler 1 received the evening they came down; no person hath asked leave to go on shore, since I wrote you—Every decent and proper line of conduct, shall be duly attended to, in my power; however shou’d any thing to the contrary happen (tho' I don’t expect it) cannot think myself responsible, unless it be thro’ my neglect of duty—if you'll please to order down cloathing it will be of infinite service, several of the people have had colds, and others infested with Vermin—the men are at present, in perfect peace, and I dare say if properly cloathed it will continue, at which I am sensible you will be very happy—I have taken the liberty since you left the ship, to serve the people one gill of brandy each, in the morning at turning out, and the other gill mix’d in Grog at dinner, which gives universal content, and they seem very thanful for the indulgence. Intend Graveing the ship immediately after the holiday, if the weather permit—the Carpenters on shore will not work till monday next—The magazine is lowered fourteen inches, and will be finished this evening—two hands are on shore, plaining the plank for the quarters—expect to raise the Orlop tomorrow if possible—Capt'n Young says he is afraid to take prisoners, on account of his crew, and even wants me to take his man that is under confinement—I cou’d wish you to prevail with Capt'n Nicholson to take the prisoners, when he takes charge of his ship 2—Have nothing to add, but my wishes for your pleasant Journey to Paris, the Compliments of the season, in which the Officers Join me, and am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

1. Samuel Chandler, of Cape Ann, Mass., was discharged from Mill Prison “as being a Passenger & a man of Liberal Education” in June. By October he was in France, receiving aid from the American Commissioners and seeking passage home. NDAR 8: 831, 9: 417; Deane Papers 2: 201, 202, 228, 241.

2. Lyon, subsequently Continental Navy frigate Deane.
Samuel Kirkman Commander, and in lat. 35° N. long. 14° W. in the Atlantic Ocean, we fell in with an American frigate and brig,\(^3\) which had left Nantz a short time before. As we were by no means able to contend with the rebels, they soon boarded and took us. They treated us very roughly, and detained us for several days during their cruise off the Madeiras; they dispatched the Scipio for Boston, and put us on shore at Teneriffe, where I am now waiting with impatience for some favourable opportunity of conveyance home.”


1. The date of capture was more likely 5 Nov. See note 3, below.

2. The sloop Fly was libelled in Massachusetts Maritime Court, Middle District, on behalf of Capt. William Coles, Massachusetts privateer brigantine Oliver Cromwell, in late December. *Independent Chronicle* (Boston), 1 Jan. 1778.


**December 27**

**Silas Deane to Vieus and Morrell**

Gentlemen,

It is some time since I did myself the honor of writing to you as I concluded Mr Grand informed you of what passed here. I sent him the other day a letter from Capt Cunningham & one from his hostage to be forwarded to you, which I hope came duly to hand & that no further disputes will arise about the ransom money. The hostage owns that he is well treated. (I wish we could say as much for our prisoners in England.) That he will have his liberty on the money being paid—the rules & customs of nations at war in such cases are well known, by them we shall regulate our conduct in this affair & it is to no purpose for the agent to expect any other mode of proceeding the whole affair is exceeding simple, the hostage is held for a certain sum that sum paid, he shall be at liberty to dispose of himself as he pleases, but to give other security is out of all rule & the demand to say no more of it is extravagant. I can but hope the affair will be settled without further difficulty. I am extremely sorry for the trouble given you on this occasion & wish it could have been avoided. I shall ever be happy in hearing of your welfare, my brother has left Paris & I am not certain of his returning before he sees America, he as well as myself have a grateful sense of your civilities to him during his stay at Dunkirk—I am [&c.]

Silas Deane.

---

**John Ross to Arthur Lee**

The Honble Arthur Lee Esqr

Dear Sir—

I received both your esteemed favours of 17 and 24th. Same being now before me, do note the contents—permit me to thank you for the early information: you have been so obliging to honour me within the first, am in hopes to be in readiness
in proper time, but from a letter of mine, lately to the Commissioner's. You would see thereby, a necessity of adopting Secressie in Your measures. 1—It gives me pleasure the business of the Cutters comes under your consideration, and that am to expect your Answer on that Subject soon.—I want nothing in the line of my Purchases, but what will bear the Strictest Scrutiny, & the particulare approbation of the Honble Commissioners in this of Mr Hodges & mine.—

This will be handed to you by Captain Jones of the Ranger, a Gentleman of Abilities & knowledge in his profession, capable of giving you a very Satisfactory account in such matters as have come under his notice, & in his department.—You will I know be pleased in his conversation, haveling nothing assuming in his deportment.—From the Instructions he is possessed of, he seems to have some dependance on getting a Vessel of some considerable force in Europe, to be provided for him by the Commissioners.—in the Service of the United States.—If anything of this kind are concluded on, & to be Accomplished with expedition, Probably the present favourable disposition of the French Court, might lead them to make sale to the Commissioners privately, of one of those New constructed large Ships, intended to carry heavy metal on the plan of Frigates 2—Coud any such scheme be brought about, am not under apprehension, but Jones, (an interprizing officer, disposed to Signalize himself in the Service of his Country) would give total Satisfaction which might be expected from such confidence and Mark of Favour.—Secressie in Such plan merit every attention, therefore would Recommend a vessel purchased in this way, out of the Kings Yards, to be compleated for Sea, and contracted for to be delivered at a certain distance at Sea with a certain Complement of Men, & liberty granted to Captain Jones to transfer his own Officers & Men from the Ranger to this New Vessel

The Commissioners Securing such Vessel, would have no occasion to make themselves Acquainted with her destination neither assume any direction—Captain Jones being already possessed of the full confidence of the American Navy Board, and at Liberty to Act & Cruize as he may see fit.—Ambition will lead a man of Spirit to do honour to his Country; distinguished in this manner, and I really conceive it practicable for the Commissioners, upon proper application, to Succeed in what might enable him to render essential Services with Reputation in a line different from money objects.—it is rather intruding on your patience to enlarge so much on this subject. Nevertheless, from my knowledge of your accustomed attention of promoting what tends useful in public Services, I doubt not youl forgive my freedom—I have the honour to be &c.

Jn ² Ross

N:B. Whether or not a scheme take for Captain in the line mentioned.—It will be exceedingly Prudent to dispatch his business at Paris Soon, and Permit him to Proceed on a Cruize, that his time may not be lost during his Stay on this Side the Atlantic—& by directions from the Comm ³ when Ready for Sea, will join & proceed off the Coast, as part of the Convoy intended.—


1. Ross wrote the Commissioners on 24 Dec., advising that plans for a ship convoy to America be kept secret. In the same letter, he spoke of the arrival from Hamburg of his ship the Henrietta and his hope that the Brune, having arrived at Paimboeuf, would complete her lading by the following week. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 24: 343–44.
2. Indien, and another frigate building at Amsterdam.
28 DECEMBER 1777

JOSEPH GARDOQUI & SONS TO ARTHUR LEE

Arthur Lee Esq1

Honoured Sir

As we had the pleasing satisfaction to informe you on the 17th. Instant1 (datte of our last salutations to you) our haveing placed to your Creditt Reales 242092. & 24 mrs of Vl. & 24 mrs of Vn. we again beg leave to confirme the same with the Rest of it's Contents; & This very post haveing produced us your allways agreeable & Esteemed favour of the 14th. Current have the pleasure to advice you in Contestation thereof, our haveing at present a favourable prospect of begining soon to full fill your orders. Two days agoe haveing come in aprice Schooner %f the General1 Mercer's Privateer Cap Babson, & as he Intends to fitt her out for your quarters, have given proper disposi-
tions for the purpose, & Rest assured good Sir that we shall send in her a very good assortment of the Articles you are pleased to prescribe in your Kind favour before us—most part of them being allready prepared in Loadge—There is also in Port the Privateer Schooner Hawke Jeremiah Hibbert Master with an Intent of Returning home his Cruzing time being over, therefore doubt not, shall also have Roomé in her to send another assortment of your said Articles, & In short our present appearance for the purpose being now very fair, you may depend that not a moments time will be lost in executting your orders, giving you punctual advice thereof—

We had a direct information of G. Burgoyne’s defeatt, & hope that the Repports sprad about G. Howe will prove True in Expectations therefore of Receiving a Confir-
mation of it from your good self most Cordially Subscrive—[&c.]

J: G. & s


1. In MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers. The Garдоquis described their attempts to fulfill Lee's request to purchase blankets and send them to America.
2. Real de Vell6n: a coin worth half a silver real. Mrs: maravedis, a Spanish coin, 34 of which are worth one real vell6n.
3. Schooner Sally.

December 28 (Sunday)

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VÉRGENNES

à Versailles Le 28. Xbre. 1777.

J’ay eu l’honneur, Monsieur, de vous marquer par ma Lettre du 12. de ce mois, que je faisois prendre des éclaircissemens relativement à la note qui vous avoit été remise par M. L’ambassadeur d’angleterre concernant un Batiment anglais nommé L’ann Susanna amené à L’orient par un Corsaire americain,1 et qu’on luy avoit assuré être au Pelerin où on travailloit a le défigurer, luy ayant déjà donné le nom de La Mignone. Suivant ce qui m’est marqué, il y a en effet aud. lieu du Pelerin près Nantes un navire nommé La Mignone en armement pour le Cap françois; mais ce Ba-
timent appartient à un négociant de Nantes qui l’a acheté d’un autre négociant du meme lieu, à qui, Suivant l’acte de propriété enregistré en L’amirauté de cette ville, il avoit été vendu par un particulier de Vannes qui a pareillement justifié en être pro-
prietaire. Il n'a d'ailleurs été reconnu aucune circonstance qui puisse faire regarder ce Batiment comme étant celui qui a donné lieu à la réclamation de M. Le Vicomte de Stormont. J'ay l'honneur d'être [&c.]

[Translation]

Versailles, 28 December 1777

I had the honor, Sir, of reporting to you in my letter of the 12th of this month that I had obtained clarifications relating to the note the English ambassador had given to you regarding an English ship called the Ann Susanna brought to Lorient by an American privateer.1 The source maintained the ship was in Le Pellerin where it was being worked on to alter its appearance, having already renamed it La Mignone. According to what has been reported to me, there is, in fact, in the aforesaid place of Le Pellerin near Nantes, a ship named La Mignone being fitted out for Cap François. This ship, however, belongs to a merchant of Nantes who bought it from another merchant of the same place, to whom, according to the deed of ownership recorded at the Admiralty of this city, the ship had been sold by a private citizen of Vannes who likewise had furnished proof of ownership. In addition, there has been no known evidence that might lead one to believe this ship to be the one that gave rise to Viscount Stormont's complaint. I have the honor of being [&c.]


1. See Lord Stormont to Comte de Vergennes, [2 Dec.], above.

CAPTAIN THOMAS BELL TO SILAS DEANE

Dear Sir

Nantes y" 28 Dec" 1777

I recd. your Esteemed favour of the 2d Instant1 and Wold have Rought to you before this But Expecting to Sail Day After Day I put it of as Long as posibel on the 22d. Cap1 Young and My Self Went on board2 But the Wind to the Westward prevented us from Sailing and as the Wind Still Remans to the Westward and bad Weather Cap1 Young thought it Best to Return, to Nantes in Case of Aney Orders from you Might Arive you Say in your Letter the Commissioners Expect that I will Embark With Cap1 Young and in Case of Accident the Dispatches is Solely to my Care as to the dispatches I hant as yet Seen Aney of them as to What Cap1 Young Entends Dowing on that head I no Not but dare Say Cap1 Young has your Orders for that and Will Act Accordingly you Say the Letters to Mr. Morris is to my particular Care Which I have not yet Seen but make no dout Cap1 Young has Receivd them With the despatches if Cap1 Young thinks proper to Give me the despatches you may be Ashhurd my best Endeors Shall not be wanting to prevent them from falling into the Enemy hands and Shall deliver them Saif on my Arrivel the Inclosed is the Account of All the Disbursments of the Ship Tartar that I have, I have Left A Copey of the Saim With Mr. Tho. Morris as to the Account he wont Settel it With me but Says he Will Settel With you as he has Advanced Mr. Pellve in Lyons the Sum of £1200.0.0.0 Livers and in Paris £72.0.0—Which in All Makes £1272.0.0—. . .—Liv-
ers More then we New of Sir I am Glad to hear of things tacking A turn With you In favour of America but am Suprised to hear dayley of British Ship of War being of hear and no Stop put to it I think it Wold be Dangeris for Cap' Young to Sail While thay are of hear Cap' Smith Sailed from hear on the 20 Instant and report Was Giving by A Vesell that Arived on the 22d that on the 21 A Ship Was takeing of belliffe and I make no dout but it is Cap' Smith if that is the Case

Sir I most Sincerely Wish you health and hapiness With much Esteem [&c.]

Tho+ Bell


1. Silas Deane to Thomas Bell, 2 Dec. 1777, in Deane Papers 2: 263. See also The American Commissioners in France to Captain John Young, 2 Dec., above.
2. Continental Navy sloop Independence.
3. Samuel Smith, in Hancock and Adams.

December 29

JOHN FLETCHER TO LORD WEYMOUTH

To the Right Hon[ble] Lord Visco[e] Weymouth.

May it please your Lordship—

I humbly beg Leave to represent to you on the Behalf of my Friend Mr John Goss of Teingmouth in the County of Devon Owner of the good Ship or Vessel called the Brittania, John Wood late Commander, that the said Ship was laden at Newfoundland with Cod-Fish and Oil for a Market in Spain or Portugal; that in the prosecution of the Voyage the said Ship was taken by an American privateer,¹ the Captain of which took out the Brittania's Crew and substituted some of his own people appointing one John Allen Commander, who carried the said Ship into St Sebastian's in the Kingdom of Spain under American Colours and reported the same as come from Newberry in North America, and the Cargo as American Property, but fortunately there happened to be in the same place a Capt: John Hooper Master of another Ship just arrived from Newfoundland, who sail'd with the Brittania under the same Convoy and had been in Company with her some few Days before, this Capt: Hooper knew the Brittania to be the property of Mr: John Goss, and being acquainted with the Circumstances under which she was brought into that port went to the Commandant and acquainted him that the said Ship was falsely reported, where upon the Commandant committed the American Captain and Crew to prison on the Declaration and Affidavit of Capt: Hooper and detained the Brittania and Cargo till further Enquiry should be made into the Matter—I humbly therefore entreat your Lordship to cause this Case to be stated to his Majesty's Minister at the Court of Madrid, and to enforce the Restitution of the said Ship and Cargo to my Friend Mr: John Goss or to whomsoever he shall appoint to take Charge of the same—I have the Honour to be

[London]

Jn Fletcher

Broad Street

1. Taken by Massachusetts privateer Hawke, Jeremiah Hibbert.
Messieurs

Nous nous empressons de vous informer que les deux frégates du congrès Le Raleigh & L’Alfred, ainsi que le Shloup le Mars¹ sont appareillés cet après midi, Sur les Trois heures avec un Bon vent de nord est qui promet de favoriser Beaucoup leurs projets.

Nous ne devons pas vous Laisser ignorer qu’elles Sont accompagniér de La frégate Du Roi La Silphyle dont Le Capitaine a promis A Messieurs Thompson et Hînman de Les Préceder et de Leurs annoncer par Les Signaux convenus tout ce qu’il découvrirait en avant, personne ne désire plus de Succès que nous à Ces Deux frégates; nous N’Avons Rien neglige pour Leur être utiles pendant leur Sejour ici. nous aurons L’honneur de vous Rémètre par le premier Courier Le Compte de leurs dépenses.

Mâ Moyland² est arrivé ici en Bonne Santé, il nous tardait d’Avoir la Satisfaction de le Connaître & de le voir, nous nous flattons que nous acquerrons Son amitié comme Son estime. Les Vaux Le Beaumont & L’Anonime Sont en Rade avec L’intention d’Appareiller demain. Nous Sommes [&c.]

Gourlade
de Monplaisir

[Translation]

Gentlemen:

L’Orient, 29 December 1777

We hasten to inform you that the two Congress frigates, the Raleigh and the Alfred, as well as the sloop the Mars¹ set sail this afternoon around three o’clock with a favorable wind from the northeast which gives promise of being of great assistance in their plans.

We should not leave you ignorant of the fact that they are accompanied by the king’s frigate La Silphyle, whose captain promised Messrs. Thompson and Hinman that he would precede them and announce to them by signals agreed upon everything that he should discover ahead. No one desires success for the two frigates more earnestly than we do. We have neglected nothing for their convenience during their sojourn here. We shall have the honor to remit to you by the first courier their expense account. Mr. Moylan² arrived here in good health. We were anxious to have the satisfaction of knowing and seeing him. We flatter ourselves in believing we shall acquire both his friendship and esteem. The vessels Le Beaumont and L’ Anonime are at anchor in the roads with the intention of setting sail tomorrow. We are [&c.]

Gourlade
de Monplaisir

¹ James Moylan’s letter to the commissioners of the same date gives the sloop Mars’s master’s name as Captain Holmes. Ibid.
² For the purpose of Moylan’s visit to L’Orient, see John Ross to Silas Deane, 16 Dec., note 2, above.
I received Mr. Franklin's Inclosing Mr. Boudien; also a Letter from Mr. Lee Informing of a Spy's being in Lorient; the time of sailing and the way I intend to go is a matter that remains Intirely with myself therefore you must not expect to hear of our sails until some time after our departure; a Frigate and a 74 has been seen off Bell Isle; I have a proper Look out for them by a small vesel employd for the Purpos; when I think a fit opportunity they shant stop us (except they anchor in the Harbours mouth which I hope will be the Case) to see how Tamely the French would bear with it—Since your application to m d Sartine the Commisary here has given us Leave to Command our own ships—all kindness and Condisendcion to the Highest degree. But personal Civilities will not attone with me for an Insult offerd to the States in my person as their officer—But as "Dr. Franklin says in his Letter" all begins to go well and I belive for the future we shall have Civelier Usage—I am [&c.]

Thos. Thompson

L. PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers. Addressed at foot of last page: "To the Hon' the Commissioners/Benjn. Franklin, Silas Dean, & Arch' Lee Esq." Docketed: "Cap' Thompson L'Orient." The date supplied is that of Alfred's and Raleigh's sailing.

1. Baudouin, an agent Sartine used occasionally as an intermediary with the Americans. Papers of Benjamin Franklin 25: 348.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU DE KERGARIOU TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

j'ay eu L'honneur de vous rendre compte de la baie de quiberon de ma Sortie pour rejoindre Les fregattes angloises et de toutes Les particularités de ma navigation avec elles, jusqu'au moment ou Les vents forcés et contraires Les ont obligis de Relacher et mouiller sous belle-isle.

Dans La nuitte du 25 au 26 Les vents venus de la partie du nord elles ont appareillées et des que Le jour me La permis j'ay mis aussi sous voile et Les ai Suivi en dehors de belle isle. Les vents favorables, ces batiments se Sont bientot eloignis de la vue de nos côtes et Les ayant moi meme perdu de vue, je Suis Revenus Sur mes pas et ay passé Le jours dehors, pendant ces 24 heures Les vents n'ayant Eprouver aucun changement on peut etre assuri que ces fregattes ont Continuées Leur Route.

En me Raprochant de belle-isle, j'ay Eu connaissance d'un batiment grecien En Lougre que je prenois pour un des notres. Sa maneuvre Lorsque j'ay voulu me ralier a lui ma prouv qu'il etoit corsaire etranger. La nuitte se faisot et je n'ay pu continuer a le chasser, j'ay meme Lieu de penser qu'il marchoit aussi bien que ma fregatte. Dans La nuitte je Suis venu mouiller aux cardinaux et au jours reverant vien En dehors de belle-isle j'ay fait Route pour La riviere de nantes ouj'ay Entri Le Soir. je me flattois y trouver vos ordres concernans Les matelots francais que j'ay Retiri du Corsaire insurgent L'indépendance; Mr. de Rozily qui a ma priere, tenoit de depuis mon depart La Station de St nazaire m'a dit n'avoir rien reçu de vous, Monseigneur, n'y a son adresse n'y a la mienne concernant notre mission.

je Reçois des ordres du M' Le Comte d'orvilliers pour que j'aye a me joindre a La Corvette La curieuse sous belle-isle, m'y Etablir En croisiere pour En Eloingner plusieurs corsaires anglais dont on y a eu connoissance. Le tems me permettant de sortir aujourdhuy je profiteray de la marée pour mettre sous voile
par Le Raport de l'officier commandant à belle-isle, qu'on m'enore il me paroit
qui Sert prêêêe genereusement aux besoins des corsaires et que c'est leur donner bien
des facilités pour tenir Leur croisiere Sur nos côtes, Si on Leur y Refusoit ces secours et
mêne La Relache En mauvais temps, ce Seul ordre Les contraindroient de Sen Ecarter,
je vais tacher de Les joindre et Leur notifieray de S'eloigner conformement a vos ordres.

Les frégattes angloises venues prendres Les deux batiments du commerce S'appel-
rent L'une La Minerve commandée par C Stot et l'autre La 'thetis cap' gell, ces deux fré-
gattes portent 26 canons de 12 En batterie et 6 canons de guillaud. La frégatte La danaé
pouvoir porter une pareille artillerie Si nous avions des canons des mêmes proportions
que Les angloi, plus courts que Les canons de 8 que j'ay abord, Leur batterie par ce
moien Est plus aisée a Servir, ces fregattes n'étant cependant plus Larges que Les notres.

La frégatte La minerve avoit une marche Superieure et le Capitaine L'attribue a
son doublage de Cuivre, La 'thetis qui netest pas ainsi doublée marchait mal et javois
autant davantage a Servir, ces fregattes n'étant cependant plus Larges que Les notres.

je vais Encore prier M de Rozily de tenir En Station dans La Riviere et je lui
Remet Les 7 francais qui se sont Reclamés du Corsaire insurgent, ne Sachant ou ma
croisier me conduira et la destination que vous En ordonerer, ainsi M de Rozily
sera a même de faire Executer vos ordres a leur Egard. . . . je Suis [&c.]
abord de la danaé ce 29 Xbre 1777

Kergariou
a St nazaire par guerande.

[Translation]

My Lord

I had the honor of reporting to you, from Quiberon Bay, about my departure
to join up with the English frigates and about all the details regarding my sailing with
them, until the time when contrary and high winds forced me to put into port and
to lie at anchor in the lee of Belle Ile.

During the night of the 25th to the 26th, the wind blowing from the north quar-
ter, the English frigates weighed anchor, and as soon as daybreak allowed me to do it,
I set sail and followed them away from Belle Ile. Sailing under favorable winds, these
ships were soon out of sight of our coast; having myself lost sight of them, I retraced
my course and spent the day outside; during these 24 hours, the winds having under-
gone no change in direction, it is certain these frigates had continued on their course.

While again approaching Belle Ile, I observed a ship, rigged like a lugger, which
I took to be one of ours. Its able maneuvering when I tried to catch up with it proved
to me that it was a foreign privateer. Since it was getting dark, I could not continue
after the ship, and I even had reason to believe that the ship was sailing as well as my
frigate. During the night I came to anchor at the Cardinaux; at daybreak, seeing
nothing outside Belle Ile, I set a course for the Nantes River where I arrived in the
evening. I was pleased to find there your orders concerning the French sailors I had
taken off the enemy privateer Independence. M. de Rozily, who, at my request, was
since my departure manning the St. Nazaire station, told me he had received nothing from you, my Lord, either addressed to him or to me regarding our mission.

I received orders from Comte d'Orvilliers to join up with the corvette La Curieuse to the leeward of Belle Ile, and to establish myself cruising about in order to rid it of several English privateers that we knew were there. Since the weather makes it possible for me to leave today, I shall take advantage of the tide to set sail.

It appeared from the report of Belle Ile’s commanding officer, which was brought to me, he had generously responded to the needs of the privateers and had made available to them many accommodations to keep them on our coasts. If help were to be refused them, or even refusing to allow them to enter a harbor during bad weather, this order alone would force them to move away. I shall try to catch up with them to tell them to move away in accordance with your orders. The two English frigates came to take the two merchant ships, one was called the Minerva, commanded by Captain Stot, and the other the Thetis, commanded by Captain Gell. The two frigates carry 26 12-pounders and 6 guns on the quarter-deck. The frigate Danae could carry a similar amount of armament, if we were to have guns of the same size as the English, shorter than the 8-pounders I have on board. Their guns are much easier to handle in action. These frigates are no longer than ours. The frigate Minerva was faster, which the captain attributed to his copper sheathing. The Thetis, which was not so sheathed, sailed badly and I had as much an advantage over the frigate as the other had over me. The English officers among whom I came, as I reported to you, as I was trying in a straightforward manner to find ways to follow them without pretence, as my instructions stipulated, told me with great affectation that they had 15 ships of the line or frigates cruising from Cape Finistere to the Scilly Islands and stationed within the gulf. In addition, they appeared to me to expect the total loss of America, according to the news they had received about it.

I shall ask M. Rozily to remain on station in the river and I have turned over to him the seven Frenchmen who were reclaimed from the insurgent privateer, not knowing where my cruising will take me, nor the destination you will order for it, thus M. de Rozily will be in a position to have your orders carried out concerning them. . . . I am [&c.]

On board the Danaé, 29 December 1777

Kergariou

at St. Nazaire-par-Guérande.


1. See Lieutenant de Vaisseau de Kergariou to Gabriel de Sartine, 18 Dec., above.
2. H.M.S. Minerva, Capt. John Stott, and H.M.S. Thetis, Capt. John Gell, had orders to convoy back to England the Jamaicamen Clarendon and Hanover Planter, American prizes that had been restored to their owners by the French king. See Lords of the Admiralty to Captain John Stott, R.N., 24 Nov., above.

December 30

COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN TO PHILIP STEPHENS

(A Copy)

Office for Sick & Hurt Seamen 30th Dec 1777.

Sir

We desire you will please to acquaint the R° H° the Lords Comm° of the Admiralty, that the Keeper & Agent of the Prison at Forton, has informed us by his
Letter of the 28th Instant "that M* Huish an Attourney of that Town had called upon him & told him, that he had seen M* Missing, a Barrister at Law of Titchfield who had informed him that he had received Orders in the way of his profession, & if any Person died in the confining Hold, the Keeper & Agent would be Indicted for Murder; and that he had sent to the Coroner not to suffer any Person to be buried out of the Prison without taking an Inquest" And we beg leave upon this occasion to observe.

That what is called the confining Hold, is a Room divided off from an Apartment, the whole of which wou'd be otherwise filled up, as a common Ward, and the Prisoners lie upon Guard Beds, instead of Hammocks, and Provisions are made for this Room being properly Ventilated, and not becoming unwholesome, and no Prisoner has hitherto died in the confining Hold nor is there any probability of its happening in future, except in the case of sudden Death, as this part of the Prison, as well as every other is visited every Day by the Surgeon in order that such Prisoners, as are found, upon his Examination, Objects of it, may be received into the Sick Apartment; And he has particular Orders, that when any Men are sent from the confining Hold to the Sick Apartment, to report to Us the Nature of their Disorders, that proper directions may be given if necessary, for removing any other Prisoners that be remaining in that place; and for purifying it.

That with respect to the Coroners Inquest being had upon such Prisoners as may hereafter die in the Prisons, tho' this was never practiced with regard to Prisoners of War under our Care, We are humbly of opinion, that as such a precaution may be the means of preventing unnecessary trouble & expence by Prosecutions which may be commenced ignorantly or from Malevolent Motives; and especially as, if We are not mistaken, it is a part of the Coroners Duty, & it is incumbent on the Keeper of every Goal, to give Notice to him of any Deaths happening in It, it may be very proper that the respective, and Agents may have Instructions to give such Notice in case of any Deaths.¹ We are [&c.]

J Bell
Walter Farquharson
Vincent Corbett

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 281–84. Docketed: "In the Lords of the Admiralty's/Jan'ry 3rd 1778." The copy was actually an enclosure to the Lords of the Admiralty's letter to the Earl of Suffolk of 2 Jan. 1778.

¹. The Lords Commissioners ordered the Commissioners for Sick and Hurt Seamen to notify the Keeper and Agent of Forton Prison that he was to notify the local coroner in case of a prisoner's death, as was the practice in other jails. Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to the Earl of Suffolk, 2 Jan. 1778, ibid., fol. 281.

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON),
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1777

The Minehead, Blackstone, from N. foundland to Bilboa, is taken by the General Mercer Privateer, Capt. Babson, and carried into St. Andero.

The Savannah, Johnston, from Georgia for Nantz, with Rice and Indigio, is taken and sent into Plymouth by the P. of Wales M. W. Capt. Barrington.
30 DECEMBER 1777

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

Bushey Park, 30th December 1777.

My dear Lord—I have received your letter and will consider the contents of it fully before Thursday. The question seems to be whether our information is clear and positive enough to justify or require an explanation with the Court of France. Our intelligencer has, in the course of this last year and a half, sent us many pieces of information which have proved true and some which have not turned out according to his report. He probably always spoke to the best of his knowledge, but in one or two instances he has been mistaken because he was misinformed. Many very important advices from him have since been confirmed to us in a very satisfactory manner from other quarters; however, I own I cannot help thinking him mistaken in some degree as to some of the particulars in the paper of secret intelligence which I sent to you.

When the French go the length of sending convoys to protect American ships, they must be ready for war and indifferent how soon it begins; as I rather think they would choose to defer it a few months longer, this report may have arisen from a promise of the French Court which they do not mean to keep, as they have more than once in the course of the last year deceived the Americans by false hopes.¹

I shall stay here tomorrow; and if your Lordship and Sir Hugh Palliser have any commands with me you will find me at this place, but as I have appointed Mr Jenkinson upon business I will not trouble your Lordship unless you have any commands for me. I am, my dear Lord [&c.],

North


1. For the French court's promise to provide a convoy for the American supply ships, see the American Commissioners in France to the Continental Foreign Affairs Committee, 18 Dec., above.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE


Your Favour of the 27th Inst¹ was handed to me last Evening by my good Friend M' Carmichael. I am extreemly sorry to inform you that all the proposed measures will be useless, as the Ships in Question² sailed at least 8 days ago under Convoy of a french & an english Frigate. I went however to M' Montaudouin & from him immediately to the Lieut. General of the Admiralty; the Certainty of their Departure and the Impossibility of doing any Service in the affair were confirmed to me by the Latter. I therefore had only to express my thanks for their good Disposition & to lament that the Application was too late.—

I attempted yesterday to clear out the Lion but found that in the permission which I thought included all the Vessells this Ship was left out & she being under an arrest by name it could not be done. I must therefore hope that when the final orders come, this particular permission will come also. I must in the mean time inform you that finding it impossible to keep our men any Longer as they were, especialy as we have made an addition of about 20 to the number I have permitted them all to
go on board the Ship, & order'd her immediately down to S' Nazare where she will wait the last Word.—

A Man arriving from Bell Isle yesterday with News that our Enemies were cruising near the Coast in great numbers and that Cap' Smith who went out about a Week ago was taken it is thought not adviseable for Cap' Young to sail. Inclosed is a Copy of the Declaration 1 which is made & which I have had registered in the Admiralty, a Copy of which I have the authority of the Chief Judge to assure you, is this Day transmitted by him to the ministry: An authenticated Extract I could not obtain as in such Cases is forbid.—I have the honor to be [&c.]

Jon* Williams J

PS my last desired a Credit with M' Grand for 200.000 Livres more which I hope you have been pleased to grant.—

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers, Addressed: "The Honorable/The Commissioners of/The United States." Docked: "Dec' 30th 1777/J Williams Letter"; "Lion, Young, Credit desird for 200,000"; "N° 109."

1. Silas Deane to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 27 Dec. See note 2 to The American Commissioners in France to Comte de Vergennes, 26 Dec., above.

2. Clarendon and Hanover Planter.

3. Samuel Smith, Hancock and Adams.

4. "Acc' of the Voyage of the Chasse Marree," a statement in French by Capt. Dionie of the coasting vessel St. Jean Baptiste that on 26 Dec. there were at Belle Ile two vessels of 36 guns, two of 26, and an armed sloop, all English, and that pilots reported cruising near the island three warships as well as a boat armed with 12 guns, and a 24-gun schooner, both English. ViU, Lee Family Papers, 30 Dec. 1777.

December 31

THE DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1777

London.

Capt. Sutton, of the Proserpine, hath taken and brought into Portsmouth a French Schooner, called the Jeune Nannett, having a Cargo the Produce of America, viz. Tobacco and Staves.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU LE BRETON DE RANSANNE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

J'ai reçu Le vingt-huit Les ordres que vous m'avez Envoyé en Port-Louis pour me rendre ici. j'En Suis parti Le vingt-neuf & j'ai mouillé En rade De Brest Le Trente. Les Deux batiments insurgents 1 qui etoient dans La rivière de L'Orient Sont Sortis avec moi & m'ont demandé La permission de me Suivre jusqu'à La pointe du Bec du raz. Je Le Leur ai accordé, à Deux heures après minuit, ne me faisant plus qu'à Trois Lieues de ce passage, j'ai été obligé de mettre En Travers En attendant Le jour pour donner dedans. Pour Lors Les Deux Bostoniens m'ont abandonné & pris Le Large.... J'ai L'honneur D'Être [&c.]

le breton de Ransanne

À Bord De La Sylphide En rade de Brest Le 31 Decembre 1777.
31 DECEMBER 1777

[Translation]

My Lord

I received on the twenty-eighth the orders you sent to Port-Louis for me to come here. I left the twenty-ninth and anchored in the harbor at Brest the thirtieth. The two insurgent ships¹ that were in the river at L'Orient left with me and asked if they could follow me up to the Point du Raz, and I agreed to this. Two hours after midnight, after having made no more than three leagues of this passage, I was forced to bring the ship to, waiting for daylight to go in. At this point, the two Bostonians left me and took to the open sea... I have the honor of being [&c.]

le breton de Ransanne

On board La Sylphide in the harbor of Brest, 31 Decembre 1777.

¹ Continental Navy ship Alfred, Elisha Hinman, and Continental Navy frigate Raleigh, Thomas Thompson.