

# **Naval Documents of The American Revolution**

**Volume 8**

**AMERICAN THEATRE: Mar. 1, 1777–Apr. 30, 1777**

**EUROPEAN THEATRE: Jan. 1, 1777–May 31, 1777**

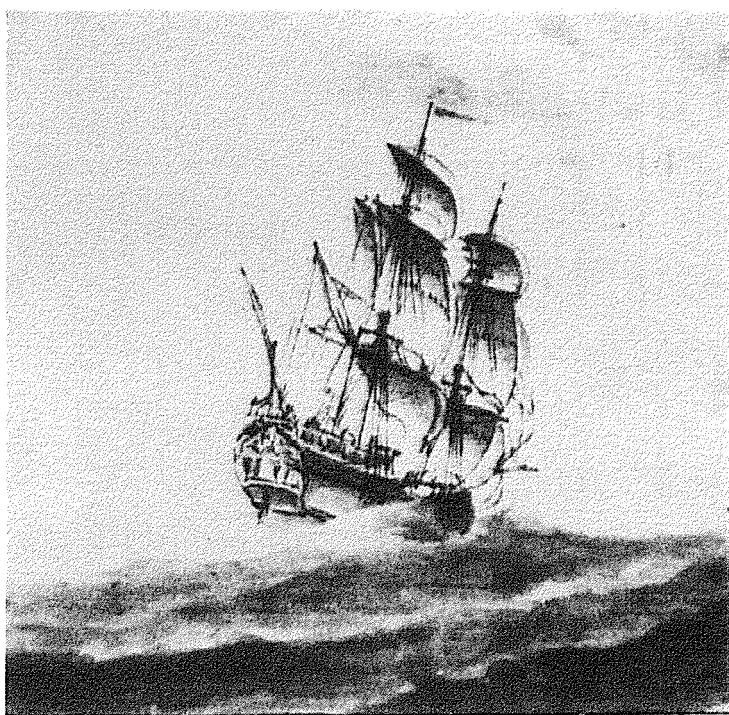
**AMERICAN THEATRE: May 1, 1777–May 31, 1777**

**Part 3 of 4**

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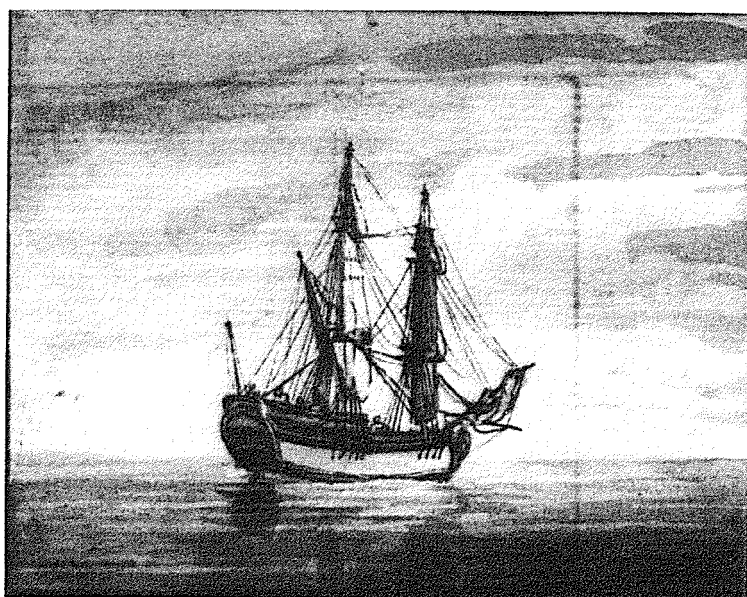
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# EUROPEAN THEATRE

*From January 1, 1777 to May 31, 1777*





## EUROPEAN THEATRE

From January 1, 1777, to May 31, 1777

### SUMMARY

Intensified American activity at sea around the British Isles, on the European coast and even off Africa pressured the Royal Navy to dispatch more ships on patrol duty and expand convoy coverage. The rich linen ships from Dublin for England were placed under convoy; a precaution which never became necessary during the Seven Years War.

Privateers cruising European waters were now joined by Continental Navy vessels and ships of the Massachusetts State Navy. Prizes sent into French ports continued to stir the diplomatic caldron. The capture which caused the most fury was *Prince of Orange*, an English mail packet from Harwich, taken by Captain Gustavus Conyngham in the Continental lugger *Surprize* and brought into Dunkerque.

Insurance rates for British merchant shipping rose sharply, and American successes prompted Benjamin Franklin to observe: "it is extremely mortifying to proud Britain that all her boasted Naval Power cannot prevent her being insulted on her own Coasts."

All, however, was not a chain of successes. The Royal Navy's expanded dragnet took a heavy toll of American ships. Forton Prison at Portsmouth and Mill Prison in Plymouth were readied to receive a large influx of rebel seamen prisoners. George III approved issuance of letters of marque, and to man the King's ships the press continued very hot in Britain.

The American Commissioners in Paris, Deane recently joined by Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee, sought increased material aid from France and Spain and urged both courts to enter into treaties of commerce and amity with the United States, and to join the war for the mutual benefit of all. The Commissioners also took an active role in naval matters, issuing sailing orders and dispatching agents to various ports to purchase or arrange for the construction of ships.

Great alarm and much attention was aroused by an incendiary, identified as "John the Painter," who had fired the rope house at Portsmouth Dockyard. He was apprehended and at the trial, which resulted in a guilty verdict and hanging, he implicated Silas Deane in the plot.

On 3 April, Lieutenant General John Burgoyne sailed on board H.M.S. *Apollo* for Quebec and his ultimate encounter with destiny at Saratoga.

1 Jan.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GOVERNOR GEORGE JAMES BRUERE, BERMUDA <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 2.

Sir

Whitehall 1st Janry 1777

From the Account you gave of publick Transactions in the Islands under your Governmt., in your Letters to me by Mr [Thomas] Lyttelton, and from the Apprehensions you expressed in those Letters, of the Consequences of such Transactions, I thought myself precluded from all Consideration of any Civil Arrangements, in respect to which it was apparent, from what you stated of the Temper & Disposition of the People, that any Orders or Instructions from the King would only be exposed to Insult & Indignity.

My Attention therefore was confined to the Consideration of such Measures as might be judged proper for the Security of so important a Possession; and as it appeared clearly to me that the only rational Mode of providing for that Object would be the having a Ship of War stationed there, I did in pursuance of the King's Commands, signify His Majesty's Pleasure to the Lords of the Admty on the 6th of Janry last, that they should send thither a Frigate or 20 Gun Ship, so soon as one could be got ready, and on the 27th of that Month I again urged to their Lordships the Necessity of carrying those Orders into Execution, acquainting them with the Intelligence I had recd from you, of the Defection of the Inhabitants, and that an armed American Vessel had appeared off the Islands.

From the Inquiries I have made, respecting the Steps which have been taken in consequence of those Orders, I have the Satisfaction to find that, notwithstanding all the Difficulties of procuring Ships for the Variety of Services that present themselves in the present Emergency, this Object has not been neglected; and that there is good ground to hope that the Steps which the Lords of the Admiralty have taken have prevented the Rebels, in any designs they might have had, to possess themselves of the Bermuda Islands.

... as the Station of one of His Majestys Ships at the Bermuda Islands will occasion an Intercourse with the Admiral Lord Howe at New York, you will have a safe Opportunity of conveying your Letters to me; which I desire may contain a full & particular Account of the actual State & Condition of Your Government . . .

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 37/36.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 1st January 1777

I have received and communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admiralty your Letter of the 30t last past transmitting the State of the Case of the 9 Prisoners as represented to you by Captain [Stair] Douglas whom he brought home in the *Squirrel* and informing their Lordships that the

Violence of the Weather and Confinement under the Situation and Case of the American Prisoners that were brought to Spithead in the different Ships before truly pitiable; and in return I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that a Copy of the State of the Case of the said 9 Prisoners is transmitted to the Earl of Suffolk<sup>2</sup> for the King's information, and the receiving His Majesty's Pleasure requesting them; and that his Lordship is made acquainted with what you represent relative to the pitiable situation of the other american Prisoners abovementioned I am &c

P: S:

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 381-82.

2. Lords Commissioners, Admiralty, to Lord Suffolk, January 1, 1777, PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 1-2.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL CLARK GAYTON<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 1st January 1777

Having since the Letter I had the honour to write you of the 5 Septemr last received your several Letters one of the 25 July Two of the 5th August, Two of the 3d of September, one of the 8th of October, and one of the 4th of November last giving an account of the proceedings of the Squadron under your Command and having read the same as they came to hand to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; I have it in command from them to acquaint you they are pleased to approve of your said proceedings particularly in the disposition made of the Ships and Vessels with a view to the suppressing of the insurrection intended to have been made on the Island by the Negroes.

As to what you have represented concerning the disposal of the Gun powder or ammunition which may be taken by the different Cruizers under your Command their Lordships not considering it as a matter cognizable by them, do not think fit to give any directions upon it.

Their Lordships approve of your Orders to compleat the Complement of the *Atalanta* to 125 Men the same having been intended by their Lordships They likewise approve of your having purchased a Sloop for watering the Ships and have ordered the Navy Board to allow the sum which has been paid for her.

Your representations with respect to the State of the Stores at Jamaica are signified to the Navy Board for their information, and their Lordships doubt not but every endeavour will be used not only as to the quantity but the quality of the Stores requisite to be supplied It will occur to yourself that the complying therewith will be attended with difficulties at this period so many and large demands requiring to be supplied at the same time: and on that account their Lordships trust you will order the utmost care to be taken in the expenditure of those which may be sent for the use of the Ships under your Command.

The several Matters of Intelligence represented in your Letter of the 8th of October were transmitted to Lord Weymouth one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for His Majesty's Information.

Their Lordships think it of consequence that I should acquaint you that notwithstanding the very great number of Ships appointed to sail to England under Convoy of the *Pallas* the said Ship arrived at Spithead without bringing home one of them; And that the *Squirrel* has since arrived without one of the Ships with which she was charged, Which having occasioned great disappointments to the Merchants concerned in the said Ships Their Lordships, to prevent as much as possible, the like happening in future command me to signify their direction to you to order the Captains of the Convoys which you may hereafter send home to be particularly careful for their safety, keeping them together by every means in their power and on no account to leave them on pretence of their not sailing so fast as to be able to keep in Company their Lordships expecting that the Convoys shall in the course of the passage accomodate their progress to the worst sailing Ships that May be under their Care.

Their Lordships have appointed the *Druid* Sloop and *Kent* armed Ship to sail with the Trade from Cork for the Leeward Islands and Jamaica; which they expect will be ready to proceed in a few days from this. The former is directed to stop at Antigua and the latter to continue her Voyage to Jamaica with the several Ships intended for that Island, where she is to be employed under your Command until the first convenient opportunity of your returning her to England with the homeward bound Trade And their Lordships have under consideration the appointing two other Convoys one to sail from Spithead as soon after the 20th Instant as the Weather will permit, the other from Cork as soon after the 20th of next Month, as may be convenient. I am &c

P: S:

Vice Admiral Gayton, at Jamaica

(By the Packet the same Day)

Duplicate sent by the Packet 5 Februry

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 384-87.

#### PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 1st January 1777

Since the Letter I had the honor to write you of the 3d of October last in answer to yours conveyed by His Majesty's Sloop the *Weazle* I have received a Duplicate of your Letter of 30t September (the original of which is not yet come to hand) inclosing four Papers, and giving an account of the proceedings of His Majesty's Ships under your Command up to that time all which were immediately communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for their information. I have also received and communicated to their Lordships your Letter of the 29th October with the State and Condition of the Ships under your Command which came in your said last mentioned Letter.

Their Lordships have appointed the *Druid* Sloop and *Kent* armed Ship to sail with the Trade from Cork for the Leeward Islands and Jamaica

which they expect will be ready to proceed in a few days from this The *Kent* is directed to continue her Voyage to Jamaica with the Ships intended for that Island but the *Druid* is to be employed under your Command until the first convenient opportunity of your returning her to England with the homeward bound Trade.

From the disappointments which there have been in respect to the arrival of the Ships in England under the Convoys appointed for them both at Jamaica and from the Leeward Islands which disappointments have occasioned great uneasiness to the Merchants concerned in the said Ships, Their Lordships to prevent as much as possible the like happening in future command me to signify their direction to you to order the Captains of the Convoys which you may hereafter send home to be particularly careful for their safety, keeping them together by every means in their power And on no Account to leave them on pretence of their not sailing so fast as to be able to keep in Company, their Lordships expecting that the Convoys shall in the course of the passage accomodate their progress to the worst sailing Ships that may be under their Care.

Their Lordships have under consideration the appointing two other Convoys One to sail from Spithead as soon after the 20th Instant as the Weather will permit, the other from Cork as soon after the 20th of next Month as may be convenient. I am &c

P: S:

P.S. What you mention in your Letters abovementioned respecting the *Pomona* gives their Lordships great pain for her safety as Admiral Gayton takes no notice of her in his Letter of the 4th November.

Vice Admiral Young, at Antigua

(By the Packet same Day)

Duplicate sent 5 Feby

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 387-89.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1777

London [January 1].

Dr. Franklin's Privateer, in her Passage to Nantz, made Prizes of two British Merchantmen. The Conduct of the Court of France, respecting the Restitution of these Vessels to the proper Owners, will be a better Comment on their political System, than all the flimsy Colourings of a deceived and deceiving Ministry<sup>1</sup>

A Vessel belonging to Bristol has been brought into Bilboa, by an American Privateer; and as the Yankees attempted to sell the Cargo in the Name of her own Captain, this naturally induced the Master and Mates of another Ship in the Port, belonging to the same Owners, to go on board, in order to see their Townsmen and Friends; but none of their Acquaintance appearing, the true State of the Case was soon discovered. Information was immediately given to the British Consul, who wrote to Lord Grantham at Madrid; and the Event of his Application to the Spanish Ministry, in

Behalf of the Owners, will be a sufficient Test of the Dispositions of that Nation.

The Success of the first Outset of Privateers from the Provincials, had raised such a Spirit among them, that Hands were soon found to man the Vessels; but now the King's Ships have taken a few of them, they begin to relax greatly of their piratical Scheme, and seem contented with what they have already got.

1. Continental Navy brig *Reprisal*, Captain Lambert Wickes, took the brigs *George* and *Vine*. See Volume 7.

*Mercure De France* – FEBRUARY 1777

From London, January 1 [1777]

Despite the fact that all orders for Impressment have been executed punctually, more than three thousand sailors are lacking for the most pressing needs of service at sea. In the port of Yarmouth more than forty merchant vessels are held up due to the impossibility of filling crew complements because of forced enlistments for war vessels the number of impressed sailors only amounts to 4750, good and bad.

SILAS DEANE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Paris 1st Jany 1777

May it please your Excellency

pursuant to the encouragement given me by your Excellency at the first, & subsequent interviews I had the honor of having with your Excellency I had engaged a Number of Brass Cannon thro. the agency of Mr Beaumarchais, & had the same transported to different ports in the Kingdom of France, & Vessels engaged for the transporting the same to the place of their destination, having thus farr succeeded I dispatch'd Letters to my Constituents informing them of my proceeding and that they might rely on the supplies I had thus engaged. These Stores I am now informed are detained by Order from Court on which I have to entreat your Excellency that in Case they will be permitted to be shipped at all, they may not be stopp'd any longer, as the Vessels expence is very great & the disappointment should they not arrive in Season absolutely irreparable. I have the misfortune of being confined to my Chamber by a slight Fever or I should in person have solicited your Favors in this Affair. This is a brief & just stating of the Facts as farr as I have been concerned. if these Articles may be permitted to be shipped, your Excellency may depend that your directions as to the port from whence, & the manner in Which they shall be sent shall be most exactly attended to.<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be with the most profound respect Your Excellency's [&c.]

Silas Deane

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 5-6, LC Photocopy.

2. Lord Stormont concluded that "Beaumarchais' Indiscretions" had caused the ships to be detained. Stormont to Weymouth, January 1, 1777, PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 18.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Secret

No 1

My Lord

Paris Jany 1st 1777

I inclose a duplicate, of my Letter by Lord Fitzwilliam, least by any Accident, He should have been detained upon the Road.

I have received, through a Secret Channel, the following Intelligence, which I can by no means warrant, but think it deserves some degree of Attention.

Doctor Franklin certainly was at Versailles soon after his Arrival here, (some accounts Say, that he stopped there in his Way to Paris, and staid several Hours) He did not see any of the Ministers, but had a Secret Interview with the youngest M Gerard, who I suppose was chose, on account of his speaking English: The Interview was in the Depot des Archives.

Franklin gave him a Memorial, the Substance of which, was as follows: To Demand a formal Guarantee, of the Independence of the Colonies, this Guarantee to be given by the whole House of Bourbon.

To offer on the part of the Colonies, any Treaty of Commerce, that should be thought most advantageous, to their several Dominions.

To propose, that the Colonies shall engage, never to enter into any Treaty, or agreement, with Great Britain, nor accept any proposals from Her, How advantageous so ever; Besides this, the Colonies in case of a War with England, offer to assist the House of Bourbon, with their whole force, in the prosecution of that War, and leave it to them, to determine, in what Manner this force is to be employed.

The Colonies demand, in return for this offer, the immediate Assistance of France, and Spain, in the present Emergency, they ask fifteen Ships of the Line, and twenty frigates, and promise as soon as their Independency is established, to pay fifty thousand Pounds Sterling, as an acknowledgement for this Assistance.

such, I am told, is the Substance of this Memorial. After perusing it, the french Ministers sent a verbal answer, through the same M Gerard, to this Effect. His Most Cn Majesty being determined, to give his principal Attention, to the Reestablishment of his Finances, and the improvement, of the internal Government of his Dominions, in all its several Branches, cannot think of entering into a War; He will however, be disposed to listen to the proposals of the Colonies, and Second their views, when they have given more Consistency and stability, to the Independence they have assumed, but in the present moment, unless l'Angleterre contre toute Attente lui declare la Guerre, he can only give Refuge, and Protection to such Individuals, as chuse to come into his Dominions, but is determined, to take no part whatever, in this Contest, but continue to observe the Strictest Neutrality.

This answer seems to me My Lord, the more probable, as it falls in with the present Intentions, and Designs of this Court, which as far as I can

judge, are not to take the Americans by the Hand, till they appear able to defend themselves better than they have hitherto done.

Franklin, who came back from Versailles, much dissatisfied, has since that time, made several endeavours, to be admitted to see M de Vergennes, and I strongly suspect, did see him on Saturday last [December 28], I know at least, that He, and Dean, went to Versailles that day. M de Vergennes has affected to say, to several Persons, of late, that it would be impossible for him to refuse to see Mr Franklin, as it was a General Rule with Ministers, to see and hear everybody. Franklin who is much at home, is, I am told, frequently visited by different Persons of the Choiseul Party, but particularly by M de Shainville. The Duke of Choiseul, Franklin, and Deane, met on Monday Evening, at a Ladys House of my acquaintance, and I am much inclined to believe, that the Meeting was not Accidental. It is certain, that the Choiseul Party take Franklin by the Hand, openly espouse the cause of the Rebels, and Rail, in all companies, at the Weakness of the present french Ministers, who say they lose such an opportunity, of giving the Natural Rival, and enemy of France, a Mortal Blow. Your Lordship sees that by this Means, Franklin will become an Instrument of Faction, which I hope will rather obstruct, than facilitate his Negotiations. The language he Affects to hold, to his intimates, is, that He accepted this Commission very unwillingly, that he told the Congress, that all he could do, was to go to France, and die there in their Service, that the stuff was almost worn out, but that the last thread of it was at their Disposal. I purposely repeat all this, to shew your Lordship, the Canterng Tone he assumes.

I cannot yet pretend to form any decisive Judgement, as to his success: My poor opinion is, that the present French Ministers wish to wound, but are afraid to strike, and tho the offers he makes, may tempt them, they will think twice, before they expose themselves, and their Country, to the Hazard of an unnecessary War; however this may be, I am persuaded, that it is on our constant Vigilance, at Home, and uninterrupted Success in America, that the Continuance of the public Tranquillity, must ultimately depend.

I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 1-3.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 2)

Paris Jany 1. 1777

Two American Privateers, have put into Blaye near Bourdeaux, and desired to purchase Ammunition, which I am told has been refused them.

I have received a letter from Mr Delamain, one of the proprietors, of an English Vessel, called the *Vine*, which as I have already informed Your Lordship, was taken by an American Privateer.<sup>2</sup> He tells me, that He cannot learn where his ship is, but is informed, that the Americans have unloaded her, taken part of her Cargo on board their own Ship, and dis-



posed of the Remainder, along the Coast of France, without Attending to any form of Justice, or Legal Condemnation.

I am with the greatest Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 5-6.

2. Taken by Continental Navy brig *Reprisal*, not by a privateer.

2 Jan.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD MULGRAVE <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Your Lordship is hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the very first opportunity of Wind and Weather, and proceed off Cape Ortegal, and very diligently cruize from thence to Cape Finisterre for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, and to intercept, seize, or destroy any Cruizers or other Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of No America, which you may be able to come up with.

Your Lordship is to continue upon the above Station for the space of one month, after you arrive upon it, and then to return to Spithead, and remain there until further Order. Given &c the 2d January 1777.

Rt Honble Lord Mulgrave <sup>2</sup> – *Ardent* – Spithead.

By &c

P S.

Sandwich

J. Buller

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 142-43.

2. Constantine John Phipps, Lord Mulgrave.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL MARSHALL, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the very first Opportunity of Wind and Weather, and make the best of your Way off Cape Finisterre, and from thence to the Rock of Lisbon; between which Places you are to cruize very diligently for the Protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, and to use your best endeavours to take, or destroy, any Cruizers or other Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies in No America, which you may be able to come up with.

You are to continue, upon the above Station, for one Month after your arrival thereupon, and then go into Lisbon to recruit the Ship's Water, and to enquire for Orders; And not finding any there to the contrary, you are to return and cruize, for the Space of one Month longer, upon the said Station, and for the said purpose, and then return to Plymouth Sound, & wait there for further Orders, sending Us an Account of your arrival and proceedings. Given &c the 2d January 1777.

Capn Marshall – *Arethusa* – Spithead.

By &c

P S.

Sandwich.

J. Buller.

H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 143-44.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN ROBERT LINZEE, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we intend that the Ship you command shall convoy the Trade bound to Spain, Portugal and the Mediterranean; You are hereby required and directed so soon after the 6th instant; as the Wind shall have been fair for 24 Hours to bring Ships from the Downes, to make enquiry for and take under your Convoy all such of the said Trade as may be assembled and ready to sail, and putting to Sea with the very first opportunity of Wind and Weather, proceed with them towards the places of their respective destinations; And, having seen into Oporto, Lisbon, and Cadiz, such of the said Trade as may be bound to those Ports, & to Gibralter, such as may be bound up the Mediterranean, You are to complete the Provisions & Stores of the Ship you command at Gibralter with all possible dispatch, and then make the best of your way to Newfoundland, (taking care not to convey thither any Seamen or other Persons, but such as belong to the Ship you command,) and passing over the Grand Bank in the Latitude  $46^{\circ} : 30''$  use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of No America which may happen to be on that Bank, either for the purpose of fishing or trading, or annoying and disturbing the Fishery carrying on there by His Majesty's other Subjects; and then making the Land about Cape Race, run up to the Northward as high as St John's, calling at the several Ports on that Coast for the Protection of the Fisheries and Trade of His Majesty's said Subjects, and to give them any Assistance they may stand in need of; And having so done, You are to continue to Cruize between St John's and Cape Race, using your utmost diligence to protect and defend the fisheries carrying on by His Majesty's said Subjects within that Station; and to take or destroy any Ships or Vessels belonging to the aforesaid Rebellious Colonies, or any other Piratical Ships or Vessels, which may be found within the above Limits, or in the Neighbourhood thereof; And in the execution of that Service to observe the following Instructions. Vizt

1st

You are agreeable to an Act of Parliament of the 10th and 11th Years of King William the 3d Entitled an Act to encourage the Trade to Newfoundland of which you will receive herewith; to be aiding & assisting to the Admirals, Vice Admirals and Rear Admirals, of the respective Ports and Harbours of Newfoundland, from time to time, as need shall require in preserving the Peace and good Government among the Seamen and Fishermen, and in apprehending Offenders.

2d

You are not to lend any of your Ship's Company to any of the Fishing Ships, neither are you to suffer to be taken on board her any sort of Fish either by way of Merchandize, Freight or otherwise, excepting what shall be necessary for the use and spending of her Company.



*Not sold according to Act of Parliament.*

*A General View of the CITY of LISBON: the Capital of the Kingdom of Portugal. | Vue Generale de LISBONE VILLE Capitale du Royaume de Portugal.*

*Published 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1794, by LAURIE & WHISTLE, 61 Fleet Street, London.*

3d

And, Whereas the Lords Commissrs for Trade and Plantations have represented to Us, that it is very prejudicial to this Kingdom that the Fishing Ships do not bring home from Newfound Land the Complement of Men they carry out, many of them being enticed away to New England, and others left in the Country; And for that reason have desired that it might be signified to the Masters of all British Ships at Newfound Land, that they take care to bring home the number of Men they carry out, (except in case of death,) for that otherwise they will be prosecuted at their return; You are to let the Masters know the same accordingly; And to use your best endeavours to oblige them thereto, as far as in you lies.

4th

And, whereas no Foreign Ships or Vessels whatever, (except as is herein after excepted) have any right to fish at, or about Newfound-Land, and the Commanders of the Ships of War bound as Convoy thither have, at all times past, been directed not to allow of their fishing in those parts; it is therefore His Majesty's Pleasure, that you take especial care to prevent the Same, and that His Orders given herein be strictly complied with; And if you shall meet with any foreign Ships fishing at or about Newfound-Land, You are to oblige them to desist and depart from off the Coast; excepting Ships and Vessels belonging to the Subjects of His Most Christian Majesty, fishing agreeable to the 13th Article of the Treaty of Peace concluded with France at Utrecht in the Year 1713, and to the 4th 5th & 6th Articles of the Treaty of Peace concluded at Paris the 10th Day of February 1763. Copies of which you will receive herewith. Given &c the 2d January 1777.

Captn Linzee – *Surprize* – Portsmouth.

By &c.

P S.

Sandwich.

J. Buller.

H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 145-49.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 1777

London [January 2].

As an Instance how far the Americans are strenuous to become a naval Power, we have certain Accounts that seventeen Ships, from ten to twenty-six Guns, have been built at Rhode Island only in the Course of two Years.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N., TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD <sup>1</sup>

Gentl

*Isis* [Portsmouth harbor] 2d Jany 1777

I have received your letter dated 30th of Last Month objecting to the expence of Stores supplied to the *Mary* American Schooner by His Majesty's Ship *Pallas* late under my Command –

I beg leave to acquaint you that I was ordered by the Admiralty last year to seize all Vessels belonging to the Colonies that were in rebellion, to prevent their carrying Powder & Arms to America taking all such Vessels

with me to Jamaica Where I was to deliver them up to the Adml They were not at that time Looked upon in the Light of Prizes, The *Mary* was absolutely in Want of these Stores to enable her to proceed with me down the Coast & to Jamaica There were none to be purchased upon the Coast of Africa, indeed if their had I do not see that it was my business to put myself to any expence in executing my Orders which if they had not been for the good of the Kings Service I should not have received I am Sure it could be of no service to me as the Vessel would not have paid her Condemnation if she had arived safe at Port Royal but she was very capable of Carrying Arms and Powder to the Rebels.

Tho' this expence may not be according to rule, I flatter myself the board will see the Necessity of it. I did not chuse to expend the Stores in any other Way as I wish allway to stick as much to truth as possible On these Occasions I am [&c.]

W. Cornwallis

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, 6-7, NYHS.

3 Jan.

ARTHUR LEE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen –

Paris January 3d 1777

I had the honor of receiving your favors, announcing to me my appointment as one of the Commissioners from the Congress of the united States of America.

I cannot express how greatly I am oblig'd to that most respectable Body, for giving me an opportunity of showing how much I prefer the service of my Country & of her present cause to every other pursuit & situation in life.

I had the happiness of joining Dr Franklin and Mr Dean, the day after the arrival, of the former at this place. We have employ'd every moment in preparing the way for fulfilling the purposes of our mission. It is impossible to say yet, in what degree we shall be able to accomplish our instructions & our wishes.

The politicks of this Court are in a kind of trembling hesitation. It is in consequence of this, that the promises which were made to me by the french Agent in London, & which I stated to you by Mr Storey & others, have not been entirely fulfilled. The changing [of] the mode of conveying what they promised, was settled with Mr Dean, whom Monsr Hortalez or Beaumarchais found here upon his return from London, & with whom therefore all the arrangements were afterwards made.

I hope you will have receiv'd some of the Supplies, long before this reaches you. Infinitely short as they are of what was promis'd in quantity, quality & time, I trust they will be of very material service in the operations of the next campaign. It is that, to use the words of our arch-enemy, to which we must look forward; & no exertions in preparing for it, can be too

great, because the events of it must be very decisive. I have the honor of being &c.

Arthur Lee

1. Papers CC (Letters from Arthur Lee, 1776-1780), 83, vol. 1, 27-30, NA.

4 Jan.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 2 TO SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1777

[London] Saturday, Jan. 4.

Letters from Halifax gave an account of the *Milford* frigate having brought three prizes into that port in one week.

The *Friendship*, Broomstone, a victualler from Corke to New York, is taken by the rebels, and carried into Connecticut.

A new ship from Baltimore, loaded with 500 tons of corn, is taken by the *Olive Branch*, Miller, and two other victuallers, and carried into New York.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

Paris Jan. 4. 1777.

I arrived here about two weeks Since, where I found Mr Deane. Mr Lee has since join'd us from London. We have had an Audience of the Minister, Count de Vergennes, and were respectfully receiv'd. We left for his Consideration a Sketch of the propos'd Treaty. We are to wait upon him tomorrow with a strong Memorial requesting the Aids mentioned in our Instructions. By this Advice, we have had an Interview with the Spanish Ambassador, Count d'Aranda, who seems well dispos'd towards us, and will forward Copies of our Memorials to his Court, which will act, he says, in perfect Concert with this. Their Fleets are said to be in fine Order, mann'd and fit for Sea. The Cry of this Nation is for us; but the Court it is thought views an approaching War with Reluctance. The Press continues in England. As soon as we can receive a positive Answer from these Courts we shall dispatch an Express with it. I am, gentlemen, &c.

B Franklin

1. Papers CC (Letters from Benjamin Franklin, 1776-88), 82, vol. 1, 13, NA.

5 Jan. (Sunday)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Paris]

The Congress, the better to defend their Coasts, protect their Trade and drive off the Enemy, have instructed us to apply to France for 8 Ships of the Line, compleatly mann[e]d, the Expence of which they will undertake to pay. As other Princes of Europe are lending or hiring their Troops to Britain against America, it is apprehended that France may, if she thinks fit, afford our Independant States the same kind of Aid, without giving England just Cause of complaint. But if England should on that Account declare War we conceive that by the United Force of France, Spain and

America, she will lose all her Possessions in the West Indies, much the greatest Part of that Commerce which has rendered her so opulent, and be reduced to that State of Weakness and Humiliation, which she has by her Perfidy, her Insolence, and her Cruelty both in the East and West, so justly merited.

We are also instructed to solicit the Court of France for an immediate Supply of twenty or thirty Thousand Muskets and Bayonets, and a large Quantity of Ammunition and brass Field Pieces, to be sent under Convoy. The United States engage for the Payment of the Arms, Artillery and Ammunition and to defray the Expence of the Convoy. This Application is now become the more necessary, as the private purchase made by Mr Deane of those Articles, is rendered ineffectual by an order forbidding their Exportation.

We also beg it may be particularly considered, that while the English are Masters of the American Seas, and can, without Fear of Interruption transport with such Ease their Army from one Part of our extensive Coasts to another and we can only meet them by Land Marches, we may possibly unless some powerfull aid is given us or some strong Diversion made in our Favour, be so harrassed, and put to such immense Expence, as that finally our People will find themselves reduced to the Necessity of ending the War by an Accommodation. —

The Courts of France and Spain may rely with the fullest Confidence, that whatever Stipulations are made by us in case of granting such Aid, will be ratified and punctually fulfilled by the Congress, who are determined to found their future Character, with regard to Justice and Fidelity, on a full and perfect Performance of all their present Engagements

North America now offers to France and Spain her Amity and Commerce. She is also ready to guarantee in the firmest manner to those Nations all their present Possessions in the West Indies, as well as those they shall acquire from the Enemy in a War that may be consequential of such Assistance as she requests. The Interests of the three Nations are the same. The Opportunity of cementing them, and of securing all the Advantages of that Commerce, which in Time will be immense, now presents itself. If neglected, it may never again return. And we cannot help suggesting that a considerable Delay may be attended with fatal Consequences.

[N. B.] Signd by the Commissioners & presente[d] to Count Vergennes, thro Mr Gerard, Jan'y 5th 1777. A. Lee

1. Lee Family Papers, 1742–1795, UVL.

6 Jan.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LIEUTENANT RICHARD PHILIP SHEWEN, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we intend that you shall be employed to procure Men at Haverfordwest and in the Neighbourhood thereof for his Majesty's Fleet,

and you will receive herewith a Press Warrant accompanied with printed Instructions for your guidance; You are hereby required and directed to repair forthwith to that Place and, in the execution of the said Service to observe the following Instructions, Vizt

## 1st

You are (agreeable to the 14th Article of the abovementioned printed Instructions) to open a Rendezvous, to cause Invitation Bills to be printed and stuck up; to enter Voluntier Seamen and Landmen of the Ages and Abilities therein mentioned; and to impress such Persons described in the Press Warrant as will not enter Voluntarily; applying to the Chief Magistrate for his assistance; behaving (and ordering those employed under you to behave) with proper respect to him and to all other Civil Magistrates; and doing every thing in your power, consisting with the well executing the Service hereby entrusted to your Management to cultivate a good understanding with them, and to give no just cause of complaint; And you are to receive all such Seamen fit for His Majesty's Service, as shall be brought or sent to you by the Civil Officers or the Officers of the Vice Admirals of the Maritime Counties; giving to the Persons who bring them the Certificates required by the 13th Article of the said Instructions.

## 2d

You are to procure two Petty Officers to assist you in carrying on the Service; and, if they are not borne for Wages on board any of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels, You are to pay them the Wages, directed by the 14th Article of the abovementioned Instructions.

## 3d

The better to enable you to carry on the Service, you are to form a Gang out of such Voluntiers as may offer, or, til Voluntiers offer, to hire a sufficient Number of Land-men for that purpose; paying the hired Men one Shilling and six Pence a day each for Wages, during such time only as it may be necessary to employ them, but you are to take care that such Gang doth not consist of more Men than may be sufficient for the Service on which you employ them; And that the Number of Men doth not, on any Account, exceed twelve (exclusive of Petty Officers) unless you receive particular Orders from Us to the contrary.

## 4th

You are to make such Allowances for subsistence to each of the Petty Officers employed under you, And also to the several Persons composing your Gang, and to the new raised Men, as are specified in the 14th Article abovementioned; And to pay them such travelling Charges and Conduct Money, also specified in that Article, as they may be respectively entitled to.

## 5th

You will herewith receive one of His Majesty's Proclamations dated the 25th of October last, promising the Bounties therein mention'd to Voluntier Seamen who should enter into His Majesty's Service on or before the 31st of last Month; And also another dated the 8th Novr last promising the Records therein mentioned to Persons who should discover Seamen



who might secrete themselves, so that such Seamen might be taken into His Majesty's Service, on, or before the said 31st December together with Twelve of His Majesty's Orders in Council of the 20th of last Month, continuing the said Bounties and Rewards to the 28th of next Month, which you are to make as public as possible, And to receive such Volunteers fit for the Service as shall offer; And you are to give the Certificates, directed by the last of those Proclamations, to such Persons as shall discover Seamen who, in consequence of such discovery may be accordingly taken by you, or those employed under you into His Majesty's Service.

## 6th

You are from time to time to send the Men whom you shall procure, on board the *Wolf* Sloop, or any other Ship; Vessel or Tender of His Majesty's that may be in Milford Haven, that they may be carried to Portsmouth or Plymouth, agreeable to the Orders her Commander may be under; But, if there shall be none of His Majesty's Ships, Vessels or Tenders in Milford Haven, you are to get the Prest Men secured as directed by the 5th part of the 14th Article abovementioned, until you shall have an opportunity of sending them on board as above directed; taking particular care to send with them a List of their Names &c. as directed by the said Article.

## 7th

You are to draw upon the Navy Board from time to time for such Money as you may have occasion for to carry on the Service, always taking regular Vouchers for whatever Sums you may pay; keeping exact Accounts of all your disbursements; sending them to the Navy Board Mont[h]ly; and delivering or causing to be delivered to that Board (when the Service shall be over) a general Account thereof, in the manner directed by the said 14th Article.

## 8th

You are not to fail to send to our Secretary, every Week so as to arrive at this Office on a Monday an Account under your own hand (as directed by the said 14th Article) of the number of Men procured.

## 9th

And for your trouble and pains in the execution of the above Service you will have an Allowance of 5 Shillings a Day (being the Pay of a Lieutenant of a 1st Rate) to be paid you by Bill; besides two Shillings and Nine Pence a day for Subsistence, and nine Pence p Mile travelling Charges for your Journey to and from Haverfordwest, as specified in the 14th Article of the said printed Instructions; which Subsistence Money and Travelling Charges, you are to charge in your Account of Disbursements. Given &c the 6th January 1777.

Lieut Richd Philip Shewen  
at Pater Church near Pembroke.  
By &c PS.

Sandwich.  
J. Buller.  
H. Palliser.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1777

London [January 6].

Two Men of War are ordered from Portsmouth with the greatest Expedition to cruise off the Coast of Ireland, it being asserted as a Fact, that two American Privateers have for several Days, previous to the Accounts being sent to England to Government, been hovering off the Coast, as it is thought to intercept the Transports lading there with Provisions, &c. for General Howe.

SILAS DEANE TO BEAUMARCHAIS<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

Paris, Jan'y 6th 1777 –

I received yours of last Evening and should have waited on you this Morning but for a Violent cold attended with a slight Fever which confines Me to my Chamber. I had before the receipt of Yours the disagreeable Intelligence of the Return of the *Amphitrite* into L'Orient and of the orders from Court forbidding her or any other of the Vessels to proceed to America. Your Chagrin and vexation on this Event, cannot exceed mine. We must not however despair in a Cause the magnitude, as well as critical Situation of which calls for Our utmost Efforts, and will justify Us in running almost any risque to get out the Supplies now ready, & without which America must suffer extremely, if not be forced to submit. In answer to yours of this morning, I have to inform you the joint Commission (17th Decr) from Congress to my Colleagues & Me does not supercede or interfere in the least with my former Commission & Instructions to purchase & send out Stores and Merchandize to America; and my Colleagues will not intermeddle in the Engagements taken by Me previous to their Arrival. The whole therefore of this Affair remains in the state it was at first, and it lyes solely on Us to take the best Measures in Our power to get the Shipp's to Sea with the Stores, as soon as possible. The Cargo of the *Amphitrite* alone would be a Capital Supply in the present destitute situation of Our Army in America. I still hope, that as soon as the Noise occasioned principally by some of the Officers returned in the *Amphitrite* shall have subsided, this Ship may again be got to Sea. . . .

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

7 Jan.

SILAS DEANE TO CONRAD ALEXANDRE GÉRARD<sup>1</sup>

Sir

Paris Jany 7th 1777

On my returning to Paris & informing my Agent that the Counter orders were taken off, & that the Cannon might be embarked I was informed that Monsr Sartine would not permit them to be shipp'd but in American Vessels, You will remember I told You that I had procured French Vessels, who would clear out as if bound for St Domingo to which I understood there

would be no Objection – as every delay is in a greater or less degree fatal to the American Cause. I must intreat that the Orders may be explicit on this subject – American Vessels cannot be procured if they could, the risque would be too great whilst There is none in French Vessels on this Coast, & but little in America.

I have not received the letters You did me the honor of writing to me some Days since but Your Answer to this will be delivered safe by the bearer, & I wish a Copy of the Order or permission, respecting the Embarkation may be inclosed which will prevent a possibility of Doubt. The season Advances & I am extremely impatient to despatch these Stores on which so much Depends. I have the honor to be with the most profound respect, Sir [&c.]  
S Deane

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 42, LC Photocopy.

8 Jan.

LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

St James's, Jany 8th 1777.

Having submitted to The King Your Lordships Letter of the 1st, and Mr Stephens's of the 7th Inst, respecting the Nine American Prisoners brought into the Harbour of Portsmouth, by Capt [Stair] Douglas of the *Squirrel*, I am to signify to Your Lordships His Majesty's Commands, that these People be detained in safe Custody, as was directed in my Letter of the 2d Decr, with regard to the Men brought home in the *Pallas*; excepting only, in this Instance, Peter Burk, the Negro, whom it is His Majesty's Pleasure, that Your Lordships direct to be set at Liberty. I am &c:

Suffolk.

1. PRO, Foreign Office, 95/355, 309–10.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CHARLES NEWMAN <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we have signed a Commission appointing you Master and Commander of the *Swallow* Pacquet Boat; You are hereby required and directed not to hoist any other Colours worn in His Majesty's Fleet, besides a Red Ensign, Jack and Pendant on board the said Pacquet Boat, at any time, or, on any Account. Given &c. the 8th January 1777.

Sandwich. J. Buller. H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 171.

THOMAS ERSKINE TO LORD SUFFOLK <sup>1</sup>

No 8 –

My Lord

Gothenburg 8th January 1777.

I beg leave to refer to what I had the honour of writing your Lordship the 28th Ulto – The Memorial I gave in to our Governor concerning the American at Marstrand, Occasion'd his Writing to the Commandant there, In Answer he sent in the Vessells Hamburg Pass, of which I Inclose

a Copy, the Owner therein Named is a Brittainer. – the Commandant & Burgomr of Marstrand granted the American evry Indulgence – On receiving Letters from Stockholm & this place concerning him, they immediatly acquainted him & Advised him to make haste to get away; they allow'd him to take on board a good part of his Cargo without entering it at the Customhouse & I am pretty certain that a few days before he saild, he got some Powder from the Garrison – he again Quarreled with his Hamburg Master & discharged him – in his place he Inserted in the Pass the Name of John Kiver as Master; he cleared out for Lisbon – the Cargo not being regularly entered at the Customhouse, I have not got to know it exactly, but consists nearly of 500 Centner Powder, some Casks of Sulphur, a few firelocks, a parcell of flints, some Whalebone & five Boxes of Teas – she was cleared out the 3d in geting underway the Pilot run her on a Rock, but she got off, & Sail'd the 4th – I am very sorry that all my endeavours could not detain this Enemy to my Country – I hope he never will reach the Seat of Rebellion – I shall have the honour to transmit soon an Abstract of our Exports for the past year –

I am with all possible Respect My Lord [&c.]

Tho<sup>s</sup> Erskine.

1. PRO, State Papers, 95/127.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Secret No 5

Paris Jany 8th 1776 [1777]

... I told him,<sup>2</sup> which is true, that I have intelligence from America, which says, that Franklin is come with his Pocket full of Letters of Marque, and that his Intention is to engage french Ships, fitt those Ships with Men of this Country, and by putting an American or two on board, and giving Lettres de Marque try to make these Vessels pass for American Privateers. I spoke of this as a wild, and Extravagant Idea, the Execution of which, would never be suffered here, M de Vergennes answered with great seeming openness, that what Franklin had, or had not brought, He could not pretend to say. Je n'ai pas fouille dans ses Portefeuilles, But this I can Say, that if he has such Letters, he never will make use of them here, upon a thing of this Nature, I have no occasion to wait to take the King my Masters Pleasure, I can answer you at once, and in the most positive Manner, from what I know of his Majestys fixt Resolution, which is not to suffer, any Armament, or Enrollement whatever, to be made in his Dominions, in favour of the Americans.

According to the last Accounts, I have seen from Toulon, there are there, Eighteen Ships of the Line, which have got in their lower Masts, and lower standing Rigging. Three seventy four Gun ships, are careened, and the others are to be so, two at a time. According to these accounts, There is no Stoppage of sailors, nor any extraordinary hands employed at Toulon. Most of the above mentioned Ships, are represented to be my

Lord, as being in a very bad Condition, and such as we should think, almost unfit for service.

I am told that M d'Estaing, is going to Brest, not to take the Command of the fleet, but to quicken the Preparations. The general opinion of the Navy is, that M du Chaffaults fleet will not put to sea this Winter, if it sails at all.

I acquainted M de Vergennes yesterday, with what I mentioned to your Lordship last week, viz that the proprietor of the ship the *Vine*, does not know what is become of her, but say[s] that part of the Cargoe has been sold along the french Coast. M de Vergennes answered, if there has been such a sale, it must have been Clandestinely, and en fraude, and certainly was not authorized, by any judicial proceeding. according to the best Information I have been able to get, the Cargoes of the two Vessels Franklin took, have been sold in the like Clandestine manner, but I do not find, that the ships have been brought into any Port of France.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 22-27.

2. Vergennes.

9 Jan.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, JAN. 9" <sup>1</sup>

We have just received advice from Beerhaven that two boats, from two American privateers, had come on shore there, armed, but that they had not offered any violence to the inhabitants, but paid for every thing they bought, which was live-stock, such as sheep, hogs, fowls, &c.

1. *Liverpool Public Advertiser*, January 24, 1777.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 9th January 1777

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having transmitted to the Earl of Suffolk the Case of Nine American Prisoners brought to Portsmouth by Captain [Stair] Douglas of His Majesty's Ship *Squirrel* (which case came inclosed in your Letter of the 30th past) and desired to receive His Majesty's Pleasure respecting the said Prisoners, and his Lordship, having, in return signified the Kings Pleasure, that the said Prisoners be detained in safe Custody, as was directed with regard to the Men brought home in the *Pallas*, excepting only in this instance Peter Burk, the Negro, who, it is His Majesty's Pleasure, shall be set at liberty; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to cause Peter Burk, the Negro to be set at liberty and the other Eight Prisoners beforementioned to be removed into the *Barfleur*, and there kept in safe custody until further Orders accordingly, as was directed by my Letter of the 3d of December last with respect to the Prisoners brought to Portsmouth in the *Pallas*. I am &c

P:S:

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 422-23.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1777

London [January 9].

The French Ambassador has been given to understand that any French Ships coming out of the American Ports, that are taken by his Majesty's Cruizers, will be deemed lawful Prizes, and condemned as such: The Dutch have had the same Caution.

The last two capital Captures made by the Provincial Privateers are valued at 160,000 l, one laden with Cloathing for 20,000 Men, the other with 80,000 l. for the Payment of the Troops in Canada.

MINUTE PRESENTED TO LOUIS XVI IN ANSWER TO THE AMERICAN  
COMMISSIONERS' MEMORIAL OF JANUARY 5<sup>1</sup>

No 2 handed to the King in the presence of Count de Maurepas on the 9th January 1777. His Majesty approved it with his own hand.

Account has been given to the King of the contents of the memorial from the deputies of the American Congress. His Majesty would wish that circumstances might permit him to give up some of his vessels; he

would willingly make the sacrifice gratuitously, but these circumstances require rather that he should apply himself to increasing his naval forces, – and with this he is now occupied. It must be considered, likewise, that the sending of eight vessels to the shores of America would not change the face of affairs there. As powerfully armed as the English are in Europe they would very quickly send a greatly superior squadron which would reduce the other to inaction. France, in agreeing to this requisition, would thus compromise herself openly, without any advantage resulting to the cause she wished to assist. We must not receive ourselves. Ostensible assistance is a legitimate motive of war for the nation against which it is directed.

The same reasons which Militate against the lending of vessels, oppose equally the granting of convoys. These should be the consequence and not the preliminary of war. It would be contrary to the dignity and justice of a great power to lead thither by indirect means. It is by sentiment and the necessity of her own great interests that she can and ought to be led there. What seems yet far off may draw near but one may not anticipate the course of events, one must await them and be prepared to profit by them. That will be the time to come to an understanding, and to lay the solid foundation of a union the desire for which already exists, and which will be the more easily rendered indissoluble as there exists no aim on the part of France and Spain which could clash with the interests of the united provinces and excite their jealousy or cause their uneasiness.

France and Spain, in according to the Americans all the facilities in their ports which they grant to friendly nations, sufficiently exhibit their manner of thinking as regards the united provinces. What more could be required of them? A war lightly embarked upon would not form a point of real union, it would rather be to ignore the object which each must have

in view and which may result from the natural course of events.

France does not hamper the Americans in obtaining such resources as they can procure by commerce, but she recommends them to conform on their part to all the rules prescribed by the precise and rigorous meaning of the treaties which the King does not wish to be the first to infringe. It is not possible to enter into the details of the several provisions which may be needed, but His Majesty wishing to signify to the united provinces his favourable disposition and his good wishes assigns for them secret assistance calculated to extend their credit and to facilitate their purchases.

approved

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Espagne, vol. 583, 42, LC Photocopy. Another version is in AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 24, LC Photocopy.

10 Jan.

“COPY OF A LETTER FROM CAPT. FITZHERBERT, COMMR OF HIS MAJESTY’S  
SHIP *Raisable* DATED IN PLYMOUTH SOUND THE 10TH JANY 1777,  
TO MR STEPHENS”<sup>1</sup>

On the 24th last Month between Twenty and Thirty Leagues West of Cape Finisterre, I fell in with and took an American Brigantine, Privatier, cal’d the *Dalton*, Eliazer Johnson Commander, Mounting Twenty Carrage and Twenty Swivel Guns, and one hundred and Twenty Men, Equiped for a Cruize of Six Months, she belonged to Newbury in the Massachusetts Bay, left that place on the 16th of Novr last, and had not taken a Prize, I cannot find by her Logg Book, Papers, Prisoners or other information that she sail’d in Company, or that she had seen any American Vessels since out. The Prize parted Company on the night of the 4th instant about 30 Leagues to the Westward of Scilly but as I have a careful Officer in her I make no doubt but she will soon arrive here,

P.S. since I wrote the above the Prize is arrived here. —

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 31–32.

#### MEMOIR OF THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE<sup>1</sup>

Memoire

[Paris, January 10, 1777]<sup>2</sup>

The situation of the United-states, require an immediate supply of Stores of various sorts, of which a proportion of Military for the opening and supporting the coming Campaign

Vessels or Ships belonging to the United States cannot be procured, and if they could, the Danger and Risque would be very great.

Difficulties have arose at the different Ports, where Military Stores have been collected and Objections made to their being shipp’d for the United-states in French ships though Charter’d on Account of the States, in the name of private Persons, by which great Delay has been already occasioned, and the Damages in consequence will be irreparable, unless speedily relieved. — Prudence dictates that ships charged with Stores for the United states should appear as if bound for other Parts at Peace with

Great Britain, but at the same time Captns of such ships are unwilling (after giving security in France, that they will Land such stores in some French Port) to go for North America without assurances of indemnity.

To Remedy these Difficulties it is with submission requested, that War-like stores already purchased or that may hereafter be purchased for the United States, may be shipp'd in French Ships for the said United States, directly, & if Political purposes render it necessary that surety should be given for Landing them in some Port belonging to France, that the Captains giving such surety may by some means be satisfied of an Indemnity, should they land them in the Ports of the united States. –

To enforce this Request, it need only be Observed that without this, or some Measure effecting the same Design, the United States will be disappointed of the Stores they expected; The actually sending them to the West India Islands will be no relief, as the risque from thence to the Continent is as great, or greater than from Europe direct.

NB. The Stores in the *Amphitrite*, those ready to be Shipp'd from the other Ports, are now detain'd by the above Obstacle.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 81, LC Photocopy.

2. The memoir was not dated, but logically would seem to have been prepared shortly after Silas Deane's complaint to Gérard, dated January 7.

11 Jan.

*The General Advertiser. Liverpool, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1777*

London, January 11.

A few evenings ago the son of a tradesman in Fetter-lane, with another young fellow, an intimate companion, returned to their friends after having been absent from the 14th of last month, during which time, though repeatedly advertised, no tidings of them could be heard. The account they gave of themselves was as follows: That they went on the day they were missed to Brentford, and returning in a boat to Black-Friars Bridge were there pressed, together with the watermen who rowed them, and carried from thence to Woolwich; that at Woolwich they were put on board a vessel (amongst a number of other pressed men) which conveyed them all to Spithead, were they were delivered over to the *Foudroyant* man of war. The two watermen immediately entered themselves as able seamen; and the young fellows, giving up all hopes of escaping, did the same a few days after as land-men. After they had entered they obtained permission to come on shore, with some of the ship's crew, to buy a chest; and returned on board. Seeming now to be quite reconciled to their fate, they enjoyed more liberty, and one day coming on shore with only a couple of sailors, they found means to drop them, and through bye-roads, and almost penniless (having laid out what little they had for the chest) they happily made their escape to London.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantz January 11th 1777

Immediately After the Rect of your favor of 26th Decr I Set out for



L'Orient & have Executed the Business you Desird there in the best manner The time & Surcumstances Would Admitt I have no Great Appinion of the 60 Gunn Ship As Shee is an Ould Ship & A very Slow Sailer Another Very Great Objection is her Draft Water being to much for our American ports very few of our ports Would have Water Enough for her to Enter in at As Shee will Draw 21 or 22 feet Water I think the Friggates Are better vessails & much Better for our purpose as Thier Draft Water Will be only 16 or 17 feet & Am perswaided they will Sail much faster Espetially the *St john* Shee is Entirely new built from the Keel & has All her Spare Riging Sails Anchors Cable & All other Materials Quite New Shee has the Carrecktor of A prime Sailer they have prommised to Furnish A Compleat Inventory of All her Riging Sails Stores And materals Which I Expect to Recv. tomorrow or Next Day & if Not Stopt by your order I shall Immediately Set of[f] for Parris on the Rect of The Inventory I have had A full view of the Ship & her Materals & Like her Well Her Materals are All new & of the first Qualety there is Another 36 Gun Frigate & a Ship that mounts 50 Guns on two Decks boath of these vessails have the Carrecktors of prime Sailors but I am Affeard they Are too Antient and Tender for our purpose therefore they Would Want over Halling & a Good out fitt before they Could Go to See the *St john* is All new & May be fitt for Sea in a month or 6 Weeks She is mounted With 26 twelve pounders on one Deck and 10 Six pounders on the Quarter Deck & fore Castle her Dementions is 114 feet Keel 36 feet Beam 13 feet Hoald & 6 feet Between decks – I think they Can Well Afford to Sell this Ship for 12000 £ Sterling haveing formd my jugment on the best Information I Could Get of the prices of Ships & Materals at L'Orient I Dare Say provided it Suites you to purchase the Cargo you May Get her At that price the Cargo Consists Cheifly of Led Copper Cordage Canvis & Large Anchors Which is Much Wanted in America I was on bord of the Ship that Put into L'Orient from Haver de grass & found her So Much Lumbered & Short of provishon that I think they Did well to put in & Get a Supply.<sup>2</sup> on finding them So Crowded I Advised General De coudred [du Coudray] to Leave Some of his most Useless officers behind Which he Did to Get Passages Elsewhere he has Dischargd 12 or 13 & Sent the Rest forward in the Ship he Got Her Water'd & Supplied With provishon As Soon As possible & Sent her of[f] for fear of haveing her Stopt he is to Come to Nantz & may Possibly be At Parris before he Leaves France This Business I Performd at the Request of the General and thought it [illegible] To Make my Report to you Accordingly I am with Much Respect Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 13, APS.

2. *L'Amphitrite*, one of the ships fitted out by Beaumarchais.

12 Jan. (Sunday)

LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

January 12

This Morning arrived here from St. Maloes, Capt. Hill, of the *Generous Friends*, which was laden with Provisions for New York, and was taken by an American Privateer call'd the *America*, Capt. [Thomas] Nicholson; and Captain M'Donald, of the *Leghorn Galley*, from Jamaica for Liverpool, taken by the *Wasp*, John Baldwin; and the Surgeon of the *William*, Capt. Bond, from Jamaica for Liverpool, taken by the *Chance* Sloop, John Armitage, who were all carried into Philadelphia. They came home in a Vessel loaded with Tobacco to Nantz: When they left that Place, there was a Frigate of 16 Guns, two Privateers, and eight Merchantmen, loading with Military Stores for America.

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, January 15, 1777.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MADEIRA, JAN. 12" <sup>1</sup>

The ship *Nancy and Betsey*, Captain Norman M'Cloud, from Quebec, is arrived at this port with a cargo of wheat; she mounts six carriage guns, six pounders and eighteen men, and informs us, that between the 31st of December, and 1st of January, in this road, in the night, he was attacked by an American schooner privateer, of eight carriage guns, some swivels, and full of men. Captain M'Cloud had the presence of mind to deceive the privateer's people, while firing at and calling to him to surrender, till he got one gun ready, charged to the muzzle with one round, and the rest grape shot, which he fired at the privateer, and supposes must have made some havock amongst them, as they immediately turned tale [*sic*] and left her. The privateer is supposed to be lurking about the Island, as about the 6th instant she spoke with a Portuguese brig, bound into this place. Capt. M'Cloud had only one man wounded.

1. *London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, February 19 to February 21, 1777.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *Glasgow*, CAPTAIN THOMAS PASLEY <sup>1</sup>

January 1777.

Palma <sup>2</sup> N. 61° 26 Et Distant 257 Leagues.

Satuary 11.

At 10 AM hoisted the Cutter out, and exchanged two Men, with the *Hanover Planter* the Master having complained of these being exceeding Mutinous.

Moderate amd fair.

At 4 pm made the Signal to close the Convoy, and made the *Hornet's* signal to lead, and carry a light, and the *Beaver* to bring up the Rear. Shortned Sail, and drop'd aStern, to see how the Rear of the Convoy behaved.

Sunday 12.

At 7 AM out Reefs and made sail ahead, with intention of making the Circuit of the whole Convoy, but on seeing the *Hornet* disabled having her Main Yard upon Deck, hawled

to speak her. found two Ships had run foul of her in the Night, and done her considerable damage, took the Lead again, the Convoy being in great confusion. 84 Sail in Sight.<sup>3</sup>

1. PRO, Admiralty 51/399.

2. La Palma, Canary Islands.

3. The fleet, bound for the West Indies, had sailed from Cowes, December 6, 1776. *Glasgow's* log reads: "at 2 Made Sail with the *Hornet*, *Beaver*, and *Fly* Sloops of War, and Ninety sail of Mercht Ships, under my Convoy," PRO, Admiralty 51/399.

13 Jan.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 1777

London [January 13].

A Gentleman arrived in Town from Dunkirk informs us, that about ten Days since 500 Barrels of Gunpowder were shipped off from that Port for America.

M. GOURLADE, LORIENT MERCHANT, TO CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

L'Orient the 13 January 1777

The excuse for the present letter is to send you the inventory of the frigate, the *Comte de Maurepas*, which you will find herewith enclosed. I have decided to sell her if I can get 400,000 livres for her. My conditions will be to turn the vessel over to you ready to receive her cargo or rather to take in ballast and provisions. If you fit her out, I can furnish you a couple of officers who are good sailors and brave men. If your principals, after purchasing her, are willing to entrust her fitting out to me, I shall do everything that one should expect of an honest man, but above all no trickery like that of Havre.<sup>2</sup> If we have got to work like that I should prefer not to move in the matter.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with all sincerity [&c.]

Gourlade

The *Amphitrite* is still at Port Louis; Mr. Roche sends his compliments.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 47, 71, APS. A copy is in Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 623, but without the reference to Mr. Roche.

2. Outfitting of *l'Amphitrite* by Beaumarchais.

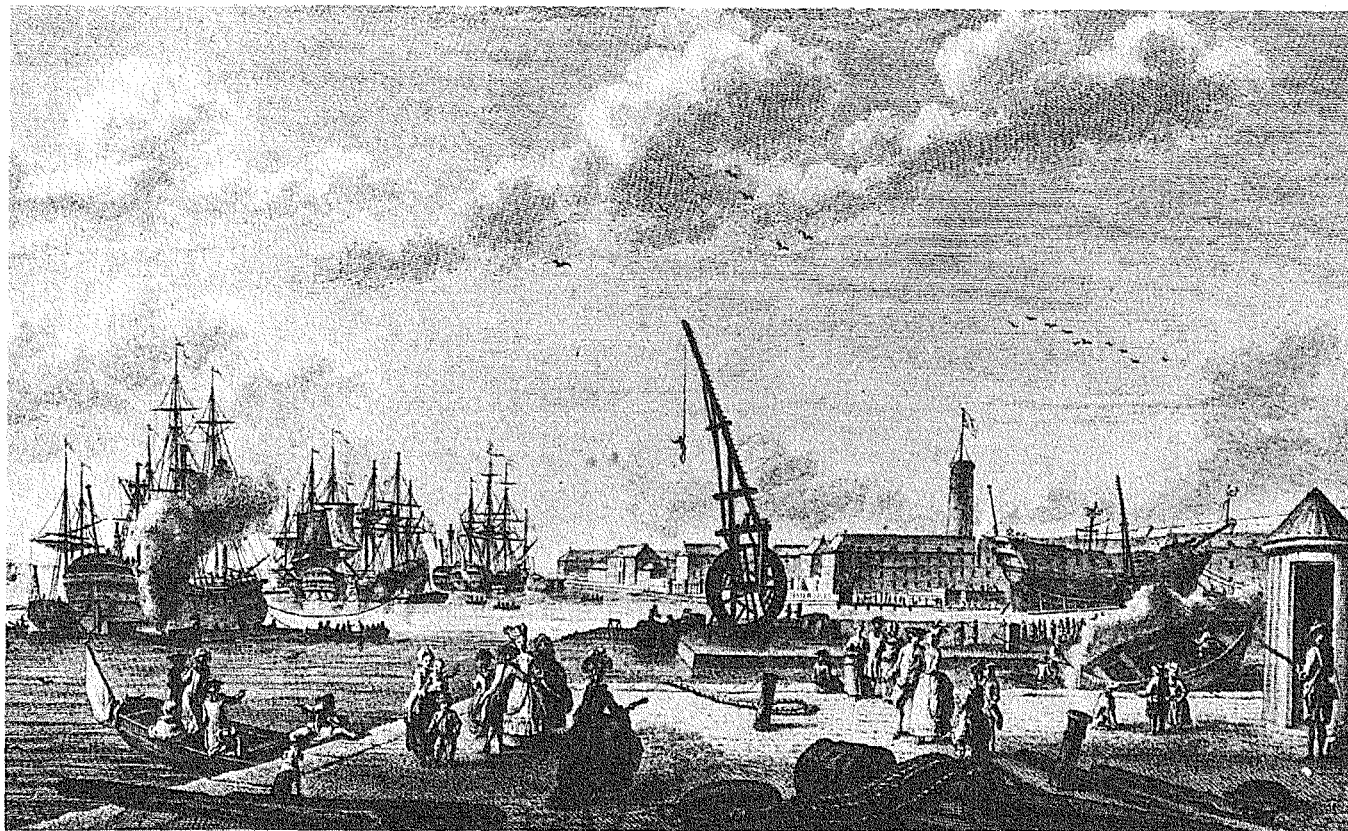
14 Jan.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE<sup>1</sup>

My Lord

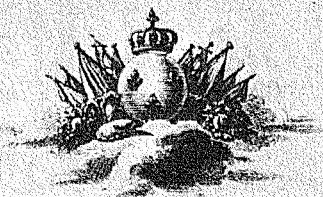
[Admiralty Office] 14th Jany 1777.

On the 17th of last Month, I had the honor to receive by His Maj'ts Ship *Active* your Lordships Letter of the 1t Novr with a List of the Transports ordered to return to England under Convoy of that Ship & the *Fowey*, two days after I received the Original & Duplicate of your Lordships Letter of the 23d Octr the former by the Post from Ireland the latter by the *Fowey*; And on the same day came to hand from the *Fowey* your Lordships



*Verne del.*

LE PORT DE  
Vu du Quai de la



L' ORIENT  
Machine à mater.

*W. G. Smith del.*

Letter of the 5th Novr all which Letters & the several Papers which came inclosed therein were immediately after received communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty for their Information.

On the 30th of last Month their Lordships had the satisfaction to receive by Captn [Christopher] Mason whose Sloop had put into Dartmouth your Lordships dispatches of the 23d Novr giving an Account of the Progress & Success of His Majts Forces against his Rebellious Subjects in the Provinces of New York & the Jerseys, and they are pleas'd to command me, after expressing their congratulations on the aforementioned Success & their approbation of your Lordships Zeal & attention in the conduct of that part of the Service falling under your particular direction, to acquaint your Lordship they have the highest pleasure in finding the Officers & Seamen belonging to the Ships under your command were animated & acquitted themselves with a Spirit that has induced your Lordship to speak of them in Terms so highly commendable, and it is equally agreeable to their Lordships to be inform'd that a like Spirit was shewn by the Seamen belonging to the Transports.

Captn Mason at the same time deliver'd to me two other Letters from your Lordship dated 25th & 27th Novr the former containing Copies of your Instructions to Sir Peter Parker for his conduct in the command of the Expedition against Rhode Island, and the latter enclosing the disposition of the Squadron in No America, the State & Condition of the said Squadron, and also a State of the Supernumeraries on board the several Ships, all which were immediately communicated to their Lordships for their information.

I send your Lordship inclosed a List of the Ships which sailed on the 5th of last Month from Spithead, under Convoy of the *Thames* for New York, since which it has appeared by a Letter received from Captn [Thomas] Fitzherbert of the *Raisonable* that he met the said Ship on the 21st 89. Leagues West from Cape Finisterre with all her Convoy except the *Elephant* Storeship & one other Ship whose Name Captn [Tyringham] Howe on account of the bad Weather from the time of seperation could not inform him of.

The Navy Board are collecting in addition to the Stores your Lordship will receive by the aforementioned Storeship a further Supply of all sorts for the use of the Squadron under your command, which will sail under the first Convoy that offers after the same are ready; There are also providing & will be sent in the Transports intended to carry a Reinforcement of Troops Twenty flat Boats, and there will be put on board the said Transports four Hundred Chaldron of Coals to be distributed on their arrival amongst the Pursers of such of His Majesty's Ships as your Lordship may see fit.

Captain [Charles] Douglas of His Majts Ship the *Isis* (on whom His Majesty has been pleas'd to confer the Dignity of a Baronet) arrived on the 9th of last Month at Spithead, as did the *Blonde* at Plymouth on the 14th There have likewise arrived from Quebec the *Bute* & *Lord Howe* arm'd Vessels, and inclosed your Lordship will receive a Copy of the Letter

Sir Charles wrote on his arrival, acquainting my Lords with the reasons for the said Ships return to England, & giving an Account of his further proceedings as Senior Captain in the River St Lawrence which Letter their Lordships think is necessary for your Information. I likewise send your Lordship herewith Copies of Instructions which Sir Charles Douglas on his leaving Quebec gave to Captn [Richard] Pearson of the *Garland* for his conduct in relation to the Services to be carried on there, til' he could receive directions or Instructions from your Lordship, and with these Papers you will receive Copies of five others all relating to the Service on the Station aforementioned, & explaining those to be carried on upon the Lakes so soon as the Season shall permit thereof.

In one of the aforementioned five Papers your Lordship will observe that the Captains of the *Triton*, *Garland* and *Viper* are to lend great part of their Complement of Men to be employ'd on the Lakes, and on this Account their Lordships propose to send a Ship early in the Spring with Supernumeraries sufficient to supply the places of the Men so lent that the Ships may be enabled to proceed on any Services your Lordship shall think fit, and they are pleas'd to direct me to recommend it to you to consider if under the circumstance of Lending so many of their Men it may not be adviseable to send a proper Number of Commiss'd & Petty Officers with them, and in case you shall think fit to direct the same to be done, their Lordships are of opinion it will be further necessary that you direct their different Captains to bear other Commissd and Petty Officers in the room of those disposed of as aforementioned acquainting me for their Information with the Orders you give that such directions may then be sent to the Navy Board with respect to the paying the Parties for the time they act in such manner as their Lordships shall see fit. I am &c.

P.S.

Vice Adml Lord Visct Howe, New York.

By the Packet.

Duplicate sent by the *Albion* the 4 March

Schedule of the Papers referr'd to in the Letter aforementioned Vizt –

- No 1. List of the Ships which sailed under Convoy of the *Thames*  
 2. Copy of Captn Douglas's Letter dated 9th Decr 1776.  
 3. Copy of an Order to Captn Pearson of the *Garland*, dated 2d Novr 1776.  
 4. Copy of an Order to Captn Pearson dated 3d Novr 1776  
 5. Copy of an Order to Do dated 10th Novr 1776.  
 6. Copy of General [Guy] Carleton's Letter to Captn Douglas dated 30th Octr 1776.  
 7. The *Triton's* wintering Order dated the 2d Novr 1776.  
 8. The *Viper's* wintering Order dated 3d Novr 1776.  
 9. List of the Commissd & Petty Officers serving on Lake Champlain. –  
 10. List of Transports remaining in the River St Lawrence. –

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LONDON TO MR [ARTHUR] LEE DATED 14 JANY." <sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the hot press continues, they cant get half men enough for the fleet, & 50 sail of W. India-men, which were to sail 20th are not likely to get away before the middle or latter end of next month, for want of men. Of 30 Sail that left Jamaica with the last Convoy, only one has been yet heard of. The Convoy arrived three weeks since, alone. This has raisd the Insurance from thence to 25 Guineas pr Ct with Convoy, tho' in the last war it never exceeded 7 pr Ct

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 42, LC Photocopy.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantz january 14th, 1777 -

I have bin Waiting Ever Since I wrote you last for the Inventory of *St John* & have not Rec'd. It yet therefore Conclude Mr Goulade has Sent it forward for Parris Captn. [Samuel] Nicholson Arrivd here Yesterday & produc'd your Instrucktions to him concerning the vissiting & Inspecting the Ships at L'Orient But I think I have Done Everything that Captn. Nicholson Could Do Was he to Go there therefore have Concl'ded That it is Best for Captn. Nicholson to Return Immediately to Parris & there to Assist you in pointing out the Defishencyes of Stores and Materals agreeable to Inventory I think you had best get Captn. Nicholson to Make What Addition he may think Neadfull or Nessesary to the Inventory And Agree With those Gentlemen to furnis All Stores And materials & fitt the Ship out fitt for Sea as it Will Be in thier Power to Do it much Cheaper & Quicker then We Could possibly Do it our Selves my Reason for Mentioning this Matter is that It May be Conducted With More secrecy Than it Could be Done provided Captn. Nicholson or my Self was to Attend the fiting This Ship as they have Spies In Every port Who would Giv Immediate Information to the Court of Brittain Whome We may Reasonably Suppose Would give orders for Blocking her up & thereby Render her Useless I Beg Leav to Recommend Captn. Nicholson To your Notice as a Gentlemen of Good fammily Who has Bin Regularly Bred to the Sea & think him Well Quallified to Command A Ship of Warr he Was very Activ in the Begining of our Unhappy Disputes in his Cuntrys Cause & Continnued So Untill the Nesesity of his business oblig'd him to Go to London Where he has bin Ever Since Idle for Want of Employment this Inconvenency I hope you'l Soon Remedy by Employing him in the Service of the United States of America & there by put it in his Power to Make Good His Lost Time As Captn. Nicholson Will be there to Assist you I hope it Will not be Nessesary for me to Come to Parris I Am Now All Ready fited for Sea & only Wait To be informd by you Whether our prizes Will Be Recd. & protected in french ports or not as I May Take my Measures Accordingly youl pleas Inform of this As Soon As possible As I only Wait your orders & Answer to this & then proceed on A Cruize Immediately I Should be much Obligd for All

other Nessesary Informations in your Power I remain With much Respect  
Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

P.S. If you think it Nessesary I Should Come to Parris I Will Set o[f] Im-  
mediately on Recving your Orders.

L.W.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 19, APS.

THOMAS MORRIS TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Nantes January 14th 1777

I embrace this opportunity of Captain Nicholson's return to Paris to acquaint you with my arrival here yesterday about four o'Clock in the afternoon – Mr Penet having some bussiness at Orleans – detained us at that place a few hours wh together with the badness of the roads rendered it impossible for us to make greater dispatch than we did – I have now the pleasure to acquaint you that best part of the Tobacco is disposed of at a price that will neat about 13 Sous P lb. two of the Ships are now ready to take onboard their return Cargoes which are now in store waiting – I expect one of them the *Success* Captain [James] Anderson will be dispatched in 10 days from this date – for your government in preparing any Papers you may have to send to America – Captain Wickes has been at Port L'Orient and will write you fully with respect to the Ships you desired him to examine there – and an Inventory of the 36 Gun Frigate will be sent to Paris, and as Captain Nicholson will be on the Spot, he can form a judgement of the situation that Ships in – and what may be still necessary provided you determine to purchase her <sup>2</sup> – I should be glad to know your sentiments with respect to any prizes that may be sent into any of the French Ports by American Privateers – and wether you are of oppinion they will meet the protection of the Court of France – I shall keep you regularly advised of every occurence here – and in the mean time remain with much respect  
Gentlemen [&c.]

Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. The proposal alluded to reads:

Proposals for the sale of a frigate

This frigate will be delivered and Ready to sail by the end of next October in whatever French Port may be indicated, with guarantee, and under a neutral flag.

This frigate will carry 36 Guns, with spare sails; she is 126 feet long [and] about 40 wide; she has been thoroughly Careened and Caulked, [and] is Built according to French Dimensions, which were given by a man named Roland Shipbuilder at Brest. As the Owner of the frigate has Timber belonging to him which is already cut and squared, he offers to Build 12 frigates and 12 ships of the line on the Plans and Dimensions which shall be prescribed to him.

The ships of the line with 64 Guns will cost 120 Thousand French Ecus each.

The frigates with 36 Guns [will cost] 50 Thousand Ecus. The frigate Ready to Sail in the Month of October [will cost] 55 Thousand Ecus.

Franklin Papers, vol. 56, 67, APS.



15 Jan.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, DATED JAN. 15." <sup>1</sup>

Arrived the *Betsey*, Loftus, in seven weeks from St. Augustine, laden with skins and indigo, for London . . . About 60 leagues off Bermudas, Capt. Loftus fell in with a Provincial schooner, laden with rice and indigo, called the *Port au Prince*, which he took without opposition, and put on board her his Mate and ten men, with orders to proceed to the first port in England, since which she is said to have arrived at Plymouth.

1. *London Chronicle*, January 16 to January 18, 1777.

16 Jan.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS, SURGEON OF THE RHODE ISLAND  
PRIVATEER SLOOP *Charming Sally* <sup>1</sup>

[December 15, 1776 to January 16, 1777]

15th About 5 A.M. Discover'd a Sail, came up with her, & She Immediately Hall'd her Wind, & we Dogg'd her till Day light, She Proved a [Pr]ivateer Schooner from Pisca[ta]way Joshua Moore Mastr about 3 P.M. Spy'd a Sail & [gave] Chase, & came up with her at 7 Ditto, & Sent Our Boat on Board of her, & Our Consort had [take]n Possession of her, & refused [to] let us have any right or Share in her, They Informed us her Name was the *Resolution* & Francis Barnard Late Comdr, She Was a Snow Laden with Fish from Newfoundland - <sup>2</sup>

24th or thereabouts we Engaged a Ship of 14 or 16 Guns & full of Soldiers, therefore We Concluded She was No Prise for us, & Accordingly we left her, who gave Chase a Short time then Gave Over

1st of Jany 1777 at Day light Spy'd a Sail, & gave Chase we Soon Discover'd a fleet to the Eastd But As we were in a Poor Condition as to Sails, we thot most Proper to give Chase to the Single Ship & Came up with her About 2 P.M. & Engaged her for the Space of 2½ Glasses; But a Gale of Wind, with Rain & Night coming On, She put About & Stood toward the fleet. But we knowing our Infirmary thot not Proper to Pursue her: But we afterwards found She was the Principle Convoy left Belonging to said fleet.

9th Took the Brigg *Hannah* from St Johns N:f:ld Laden with Fish, Bound to Lisbon Hy Bailey Master. Meisha Dunham was Prise Mastr Beach Judson mate & 9 Hands Including one of the Brigs People, & sent for America - <sup>3</sup>

16th Fell in with His Britanic Majesties Ship the *Nonsuch* of 64 Guns, Walter Griffis Esqr Mr we Spy'd her at 3 A.M. & kept in Sight Untill Day light, when we Discover'd her Strength & made Sail from her; but the wind dying Away & a Heavy Sea Running She Came up with us about 9 A.M. & we not being Able to use Our Ores were under Necessity of Striking to her, & Sent on board of the Ship & Continued there all Except the Capt Doctr & Black Will. Capt Griffis Sent his first Mate on Board of the Sloop to

take Charge of her, with 30 of His hands. She was Intended as a Tender to Decoy the Americans But Sailing but Poorly & Very Leaky She was order'd to Plymouth, Where they Arived the 23d Instant <sup>4</sup>

1. MeHS.

2. "The *Resolution*, Burnett, from Newfoundland to the West Indies, was taken by an American Privateer in Lat. 34.2. N. Long. 42. W. who, after taking out the Captain, five Men, and a Boy, ordered her to be carried into Piscataqua; but in three Days after she sunk. The People were saved by taking to the Long Boat, and were taken up after seven Days by a Vessel bound from America to Martinico," *Public Advertiser*, London, May 22, 1777.

3. *Hannah*, 90 tons burden, was brought into Boston and libeled against April 17, *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, April 17, 1777.

4. Vice Admiral Amherst to Philip Stephens, January 24:

Last night arrived here a Rebel Privateer Sloop of ten carriage Guns (called the *Charming Sally*, Francis Brown Commander) taken by the *Nonsuch* the 16th in Latitude 44°.59 about 45 Leagues N.N.W. from Cape Finisterre

The Officer who has brought in the Privateer informs me, that she had been out about five Weeks and had taken a Schooner called the *Betsey*, William Clark Master, bound from Gaspee to Jamaica with Fish and a Brigantine called the *Hannah*, Henry Bailey Master, bound from Newfoundland to Lisbon with Fish; and that it appears by her Log Book, she had spoken with another Rebel Privateer of fourteen Guns (called the *Boston*) a few days before she was taken. —

PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 41-42.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, JANUARY 14 TO THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 1777

[London] Thursday, Jan. 16.

The *Port au Prince*, an American schooner, a prize, laden with rice, taken by the *Duke of Cumberland* packet-boat, was carried into Plymouth the 12th instant.

*Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 1777

London, January 15, 16.

An officer of the King's, who had been a prisoner, was lately brought through the post of Ticonderoga, and reports that the rebels were at work upon their fleet for next season, and says that they had laid the keels of 26 boats, large and small. The General [Carleton] has, on our part, laid the keels of six, one of which is to be a 20 gun ship. Little is to be apprehended from these preparations of the rebels, who are in want of artillery, and all manner of articles for equipping a fleet, and have applied to Philadelphia for shipwrights, without success, that city having no assistance to spare, from the consideration of its own defence.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H. M. S. *Raisable*, off Plymouth]

[1777. January] 16. A number of seamen's wives came on board to-day, and upon being told that they had American prisoners on board, "Have you?" said one to the other; "What sort of people are they?" "Are they white?" "Can they talk?" Upon being pointed to where some of them

stood, "Why!" exclaimed they, "they look like our people, and they talk English."

1. Charles Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution, containing a full and particular account of the sufferings and privations of all the American Prisoners captured on the high seas, and carried into Plymouth, England, during the Revolution of 1776 . . .* (Boston, 1847), 19-20. Hereafter cited as Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*. Herbert was a seaman on board the Massachusetts privateer brig *Dalton*, taken December 24, 1776, by H.M.S. *Raisonable*.

17 Jan.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LONDONDERRY, JAN. 17." <sup>1</sup>

The *Molly*, Lusk, belonging to Glasgow, was taken by the *Alfred* Provincial frigate of 32 guns, near the Banks of Newfoundland, the 5th of December; the seamen entrusted to conduct her to America brought her safe into this harbour yesterday. <sup>2</sup>

1. *London Chronicle*, January 28 to January 30, 1777.

2. *Molly* was one of three colliers captured by Captain John Paul Jones in the Continental Navy ship *Alfred* off Cape Breton.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 5.

St James's 17th January 1777

However unlikely it may be that the french Court should connive at the project which Your Excy has been informed was framed in America of giving Letters of Marque to french Vessels, in order to make captures of our trading Vessels, it could not be improper to mention such a report to Monsr de Vergennes, as it may tend to put that Minister on his guard with respect to the many various schemes which eagerness of gain may induce individuals to frame. I am aware, My Lord, that in such times a diligent Minister must avail himself of favorable opportunities and act without orders, but the Discretion that has so constantly directed Your Excellency's Conduct is a very sufficient security to Yourself, and to His Majesty's service.

His Majesty approves of the assurances You so often repeat of His pacifick Intentions, and authorises Your Excellency to assert, as often as you shall see occasion, that the security of His Empire is the only object He has in view. The Extent of the Armaments here is directed by those of france and Spain, and have no other cause or object. Your Excellency will express to Monsr Creutz by His Majesty's Command the Satisfaction He receives at the friendly part His Swedish Majesty has taken in discountenancing the application of the American Agents, which The King considers as a proof that honorable and friendly attention that has on all occasions distinguished the Conduct of the King of Sweden.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 47-48.

LORD SANDWICH TO CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Admiralty Jan 17. 1777

I concluded there was some mistake about your asking for all your men, as I well recollected what had passed when I had the pleasure of seeing you; I am

also perswaded that you will remember that I declared against disabling the *Blonde* as she is wanted for immediate service, which cannot be dispensed with I therefore must hope you will not pursue your object of having 50 of her men, which would totally disable her, as she has allready left 62 in Canada: besides in our business in this office we must adhere to rules, and if one Captain is allowed 50 men on his changing his ship,<sup>2</sup> another has a right to the same indulgence; all your young gentlemen, and 8 or 10 seamen who go under the description of your followers will be suffered of course to go with you; but so great a draught as you propose cannot be agreed to without real prejudice to the service, I therefore flatter myself you will see that it is impossible for me to comply with the whole of your demand without establishing a very dangerous precedent. I am with great regard [&c.]

Sandwich

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

2. Pownoll had been transferred to H.M.S. *Apollo* after returning from Canadian waters to England in H.M.S. *Blonde*.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST <sup>1</sup>

By &c

In pursuance of the King's pleasure signified to Us by the Earl of Suffolk, One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; in his Letter of the 15th instant, You are hereby required and directed to cause the Rebel Prisoners belonging to the American Armed Vessel the *Dalton*, lately taken and brought into Plymouth by the *Raisonable*, to be kept in safe Custody on board such of the Ships under your command, as you shall judge most proper for that purpose, until you receive further Orders. Given &c the 17th January 1777.

To John Amherst Esqr  
Vice Admiral of the Red  
and Commander in Chief  
of His Majtys Ships & Vessels  
at Plymouth.

Sandwich.  
C. Spencer.  
H. Palliser.

By &c PS

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 181.

*Public Advertiser*, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1777

London [January 17].

A French Ship landed at Gibraltar the 19th of Dec. Part of the Crew of the *Juno*, Capt. Orr, taken on the Banks of Newfoundland by the *General Lee* Privateer.

Advice is received from New Providence, that a Hurricane had happened at the Bahama Islands, which had driven on Shore an American Privateer of 40 Guns, foreign built, and a great Number of Bermudian Vessels.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 16 TO SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1777

[London] Friday, January 17.

The *Pat[t]y and Peggy*, Capt. —, is seized at Lisbon by one of our men of war. She was chiefly laden with salt and cleared out; but being suspected to have made a false entrance was searched by the Captain of the man of war, when a box of letters was found directed for America, and some gunpowder, on which he thought fit to make a prize of her.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, JAN. 17”<sup>1</sup>

Arrived at Spithead his Majesty's ship *Mercury*, Capt. James Montague, express from Sir Peter Parker and General Clinton at Rhode Island, with an account of the Provincials having evacuated that island, and of their blocking up Admiral Hopkins's squadron, with about 40 sail of privateers and prizes which they had taken in Providence Harbour.

1. *London Chronicle*, January 23 to January 25, 1777.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET  
CORRESPONDENCE<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Paris. Jany 17. 1777.

We joined each other at this place on the 22d of December and on the 28th had an Audience of his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, one of his most Christian Majesty's principal Secretaries of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs. We laid before him our Commission with the Articles of the proposed Treaty of Commerce. He assured us of the protection of his Court, and that due Consideration should be given to what we offered. Soon after we presented a Memoire on the present situation of our States, drawn up at the Ministers request, together with the Articles of general Confederation and the Demand for Ships of War, agreeable to our Instructions. Copies of all these Papers were given by us to the Count D'Aranda his Catholic Majestys Ambassador here, to be communicated to his Court.

We are promised an Answer from this Court, as soon as they can know the Determination of Spain, with which they mean to act in perfect Unanimity.

In the mean time we are endeavouring to expedite several Vessels laden with artillery, Arms, Ammunition & Cloathing, which we hope will reach you in time for the Campaign, tho' unfortunately one Vessell which Mr Dean had sent so laden has put back after having been three Weeks at Sea. She is however now sail'd again.

The Ports of France, Spain, and Florence (that is Leghorn in the Mediterranean) are open to the American Cruisers, upon the usual Terms of Neutrality.

We find it essential to the establishment and maintenance of your com-

mercial Credit in Europe, that your Concerns of that kind should be in the Hands of the most respectable men in the different Countries. From the Observations we have made Mr Myrtle [John Philip Merkle] is not of that Description, and we are sorry to say that the irregularities of Mr Thomas Morris render it absolutely necessary that some other person should be immediately appointed in his place. We also think it adviseable that you should be so far on your guard with respect to Mons. Pennet as not to deviate from the original Contract made with him; as we can not learn that he is known to be a Person of Substance. At the same time it is justice to say that he appears to be active, industrious, and attentive to your Interests. He is indeed connected with a very good House in Nantes, M. Gruel, but we know not the Terms of that Connection, or how far Mr Gruel is answerable. It seems to us that those houses which are connected in great Britain are to be avoided.

It would be useful if we had some blank commissions for Privateers: and we therefore wish that some may be sent us by the first opportunity. As vessels are almost daily arriving from America at the ports here, we conceive advices of the Proceedings in the Campaign might be frequently contrived to us, so as to enable us to contradict the exaggerated representations made by the English of their Successes; which standing uncontroverted have a considerable influence upon our Credit, and upon our Cause.

The hearts of the French are universally for us, and the Cry is strong for immediate War with Britain. Indeed everything tends that way, but the Court has its reasons for postponing it a little longer. In the mean time preparations for it are making. They have already a Fleet of 26 Sail of the Line, mann'd and fit for Sea; Spain has 17 Sail in the same State; and more are fitting with such Diligence, that they reckon to have 30 sail in each Kingdom by the month of April. This must have an immediate good Effect in our favour, as it keeps the English Fleet at Bay, coops up their Seamen, of whom they will scarce find enough to man their next set of Transports, will probably keep Lord Howe's Fleet more together for fear of a Visit, and leave us more Sea Room to prey upon their Commerce, and a freer Coast to bring in our Prizes: – and also the supplies we shall be able to send you in consequence of our agreement with the Farmers general, which is, that the Congress shall provide, purchasing bona fide at the lowest price possible, 20 thousand Hhds of tobacco in Virginia and Maryland at the Publick Warehouses in those States, for the Ships which they the Farmers General shall send, and that those tobaccoes shall be brought to France at their risque & in their Ships. They understand the Price is not likely to exceed 3 or 4 french sous in America; but we do not warrant that it shall cost no more, tho' we hope it will not. Upon these Conditions we are to have half the supposed price avanc'd immediately and the Opportunity of Shipping Warlike stores on board their Ships at your risque & paying reasonable Freights, the rest is to be paid as soon as advice is received that the Tobacco is Shipt.

The Desire of getting Money immediately to command the preparative for the ensuing Campaign, and of interesting so powerful a body as the Farmers-General, who in fact make the most Efficient part of Government here, and the absolute part in all Commercial & money'd Concerns, induced us to concede these terms which may possibly in the Estimate of the price of the Tobacco be low; but which upon the whole we judg'd necessary, and we hope will be advantageous.

So strong is the inclination of the wealthy here to assist us, that since this Agreement we are offered a Loan of two Millions of Livres, without Interest, and to be Repaid when the United States are settled in Peace and Prosperity; No Conditions or Securities are required, not even an Engagement from us. We have accepted this generous and noble Benefaction, 500,000 Livres or one Quarter is to be paid into the Hands of our Banker this Day, and 500,000 more every three Months.

As the Ships we were ordered to hire or buy from this Court cannot be obtain'd, it being judg'd absolutely necessary to keep their whole Naval force ready at home in case of a Rupture, we think of purchasing some elsewhere, or of building, in order as far as possible to answer the views of Congress. Of this we shall write more fully in our next.

In the mean time we cannot but hint, that this seems to be a fair Opportunity of supporting the Credit of the Paper Money you borrow; as you may Promise payment in Specie of the Interests, and may draw upon us for the same with all Confidence.

We cannot for several weighty Reasons be more explicit at present; but shall hereafter. Present our dutiful respects to the Congress, and assure them of our most faithful Services. We are, gentlemen [&c.]

B Franklin Silas Deane Arthur Lee

P.S. Jan. 22. Our Agreement with the Farmers general is not yet signed, and perhaps some small Changes may be made in it; but as those will probably not be very material, we wish measures may be taken immediately for the purchase of the Tobacco. We shall send by the next Opportunity a Copy of the Contract.

We have receiv'd the Five hundred thousand Livres mentioned above, it is now at our Disposal in the Hands of our Banker; who has orders to advance us the second Payment if we desire it, and he is ready to do it. We are on the Strength of this, in Treaty for some strong Ships.

10,000 French Troops are on their March to Brest. But America should exert herself as if she had no Aid to Expect but from God and her own Valour. Another Campaign will ruin her Enemies.

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 5-12, NA.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE<sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes Jan. 17. 1777

The two last days have been employed in going to Painbeuf (about 30 miles hence) examining the *Mercury*, and returning to Nantes. - I have

the pleasure to inform you that what I have hither to seen is very satisfactory, the *Mercury* appears to be a very good Ship, 7 Years old, burden 330 Tons (Mr Peltrier [Peltier] thinks 350) 78 feet Keel, 26 feet Beam, 10 feet in the lower hold under the Beams, & 5 feet 4 Inches between decks, she was new sheathed about 6 months ago, & upon that sheathing has another sheathing of Deal to prevent the Worms from penetrating. – her Rigg is in general very good, part of it new, she has 4 Cables each 120 Fathom, 1 of them has never yet been wet, another almost new, & the other two about half worn; she has 4 Anchors from 12 to 1500 wt besides a good Hauser and Kedge, two suit of Sails, some of which entirely new; in short I see no cause of Complaint, either of the Ship or the manner in which she is provided. She has accomodations for 4 and can have for 6 passengers in the great Cabin, and places may be made for 10 or 12 more between decks, but in the latter Case she must have so much less Cargo as these places can be well filled. The number of Passengers should be known as early as possible, that a sufficiency of provision may be provided. Mr Peltrier promises me that he will have rather more than less than 4 months but if I stay here, I shall see this myself. She has at present on board a quantity of Bricks well stowed for Ballast, & 1000 barrells of powder, she is now taking in Cases of Arms and Bales of Blankets &c. All her Cargo is ready, and I have examined the Fusils which turn out very much to my satisfaction, but I have taken 3 from different Cases and ordered them to be pack'd & sent to Paris for your own Inspection. the Bales I have yet opened are only Caps, which appear very well pack'd as to their preservation, but very ill as to their Bulk, having two coverings, and a large quantity of straw between, which appears to me useless. – The Blankets particularly are pack'd too loosely – according to the english method they would have been squeezed into half the Compass, and the covering of straw would have been saved. – I shall examine the Bales of Cloth &c tomorrow – Mr Peltrier says that she shall be ready to sail in 8 Days & if nothing unforeseen happens I think this very practicable. I should here observe that Mr Peltrier is the Shipper of the Goods only so knows nothing of the quantity & Quality of the Contents (except of the Arms). They are sent from orleans on Acot of Mr Morrice Mercht at Paris, so that Mr Monthieu must see that the Invoices & necessary papers are sent here in time, if there is no delay in these particulars the ship may be dispatch'd as above. – Her Guns are only 3 pounders, – she has 14 of them, but I think it would have been better if they were larger. –

It is reported here that there will be a stoppage at l'orient, I hope it is without Foundation or that the *Amphitrite* will get away before it comes. she was not sail'd the 15th, but I understand it is only the Wind that detains her, & I hope soon to hear of her Departure.

It may not be amiss to desire Mr Monthieu to procure some good Charts if they are to be had at Paris least they should be wanted. I have not yet examined the Captains, but I shall enquire about it to morrow, when I



intend to have the pleasure of writing to you again. I have the honor to be  
Gentlemen [&c.]

J Williams Junr

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 41, APS.

18 Jan.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>  
[Extract]

[Admiralty Office] 18 Jany 1777

... in answer to their Lordships enquiry respecting a Lieut & three Men late belonging to the *Sturdy Beggar* American Privateer, who were brought to Plymouth in the *Ranger* Sloop, four Men said to have belonged to a Rebel Privateer were brought to Plymouth in the said Sloop, one of whom was an Irishman, & the other three Americans, & upon the *Nonsuch* being ordered to Sea you caused them to be put onboard her as part of her Complement; And in return I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their directions to you to take care upon the *Nonsuch's* return the said Men are properly secured 'til you receive their Lordships further directions Concerning them. I am &ca PS

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 466, 467.

*Public Advertiser*, SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1777

London [January 18].

A Letter from Portsmouth, dated Jan. 16, says, "Yesterday was discovered, by the removal of some Hemp, in the great Hemp Warehouse at our Dock-yard, a Piece of Wood hollowed out, and filled with combustible Matter (which was covered with Tin full of Holes to admit Air) and a Tube and Match at each End. This Instrument had been conveyed under some refuse Hemp, in order to set fire thereto. There is Reason to suppose the Match had been lighted, but providentially went out before the Machine took fire. This fully convinces us that the late dreadful Fires were perpetrated by some diabolical Incendiaries. 'Tis hoped such Measures will be taken as may prevent these Calamities in future, and such Inquiries be made as may lead to Conviction and Punishment of the Offenders."

Dr. Franklin quitted England three Years ago. He was then seventy-two Years of Age. He is now, at the Age of seventy-five negotiating an Affair, on which the Fate of an Empire may depend, with the most politic Court in Europe. This is neither a Sign of Enthusiasm, nor of Dotage.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>  
Gentlemen

Nantz January 18th 1777 -

Inclos'd you have a letter & Inventory of the Frigate the *Count of Maurepat* <sup>2</sup> it is the same Vessell that I saw at L'Oriont & Called the *St John*, I think her Inventory is very short & will want a Large addition if fitted for a Ship of Warr, the Defishencys I Hope will be pointed out by Capt [Samuel] Nicholson when translated into English I hope Capt

Nicholson will be Able to make the Necessary Addition but least he should not be Able to recollect all the Necessary articles, I shall readily & willingly Give all the Assistance in my Power. I think the price very high, but submit that to your Superior Judgment I shall be very glad to hear from you as soon as possible Mr Goullade is Desireous of having the Fitting of this Ship & I have promised to Recomind him to your Honours for this Service, as I am persuaded he will do it on as Good if not better terms than any Other person, at that port & with more Secrecy. he also mention'd two Officers, whom he can Reccomend as proper persons for Officers for said Ship. as to the Officers I Shall Referr him to you for answer as well as for fitting the Ship out from Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

The *St john* is 114 feet Keel 36 feet Beam 13 feet Hold 6 Do Between Decks She has only Made one voige & is Now All New Built her Rigging Spars Sails Anchors Cables and All other Stores and Materals are All New & of the first Quality her guns Appear very Good but ought To be prov'd previous to thier being put on bord This precaution Will be Hily Nessesary as the Guns has bin Laying by Some time If the Inventory is Not At Parris I Will Desire Mr Goullade to Send it Immediately or Will Send it myself If it Comes to my hands

L. Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 26, APS.
2. See Goullade to Wickes, January 13, 1777.

19 Jan. (Sunday)

"COPY OF A LETTER FROM CAPTAIN [MITCHELL] GRAHAM, COMMR OF HIS MAJTS SHIP *Thetis* TO MR STEPHENS DATED PLYMOUTH, 19TH JANY 1777." <sup>1</sup>

Please to acquaint my Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty that I arrived here this Day in His Majestys Ship under my Command with the Brigantine *Triton* James Tiletson Master of 120 Tons which I fell in with on the 7th instant in Lattitude 43. 52 North Cape Ortagal bearing South East 1/2 East 11. or 12 Leagues, under American Colours from Boston in 26 Days bound to Bilboa in Spain with Fish Cod-Oyl Spermacity Candles & Bees' Wax as per Invoice, Also Furrs & sundry Articles not inserted in the said Invoice.

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 37.

#### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H. M. S. *Reasonable*, off Plymouth]

[1777. January] 18. To-day is the Queen's birth-day, and every ship in the harbor that is in commission, fired twenty-one guns, as a royal salute.

19. Sunday. To-day we were removed from the *Reasonable* to the *Bellisle*, a ship of sixty-four guns, after having been on board the *Reasonable* twenty-seven days. Here we lodged in the cable-tier, on boards laid over the cable, which is better than we had on board the *Reasonable*.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 20.

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir

Havre Jan'y 19th 1777

Things are in much the Same state as when I arriv'd here, No order to permit the exportation of the Tents, fusils, Cannon, &c.c. I know not on what terms the Ships are freighted but neither have enough at present to fill them, & not more than wou'd fill one, the *Seine*, as they call her. I wrote you what time it would take to make a different arrangement. All allow the *Romaine* safe for the voyage, but She sails & steers badly & there is nothing now in her but the Cannon, some bombs, bullets, & the carriages &c.c. of the Cannon. The other is a fine sailer, & even Monsr [Andrew] Limozin allows her fit for the voyage. I am askd many questions by this Latter, & by Monsr Feray. I appear to them to be dissatisfied with the Ships & to look out for others, so that if Your orders & the Courts arrive the *Seine* may sail directly for America, as intended by the *Romaine*, without much suspicion. But what to do with the poor artillery men I know not, who have waited here 3 or 4 months & have constantly worked & assisted in the various changes of loading & unloading, which the Inconsistency of these people directed. It is really a great hardship on these as I took the liberty of mentioning before. They appear discreet Ingenious hardy fellows. Desire Mr Montieux or B. M. [Beaumarchais] to write to the same purpose as Yourself, if you persist in not sending them. I wait with impatience to hear from you. I find the *Amphitrite* is again put back. The great error seems to be in the number of passengers & in Du Coudrays desire to See Dr Franklin. Each here throws the blame on the other, and they do not fail to calumniate each other like Devils – I find our good Doctor Dubourghs offers to the Fermier Generauxs are not accepted, but that your bargain is made. There are two or three letters arrivd here to this purpose, which were shown to me in great confidence, and I dare undertake to say there are as many gone to every part of France & that in Consequence there are fifty schemes on foot to cheat the Fermiers Generaux's in the Ships which are to go out for it. If you ever expect secrecy from a French man, woman, or child, you merit being abusd; the secrets of the women are sometimes indeed worth having, but as from them you run the risque of Infection, So from the Close whisper of the men you are suffocated with Garlic. There are two ships for sale here which could be soon fitted out. I will get an Inventory of them. Let me have your final orders for I am staying here with no pleasure to myself, since I really can be of little service. I shall get the Invoice of every thing in these Ships, shall examine the fusils &c. I can assure you that all my inquiries have turnd out in favor of the Sufficiency of the *Romaine* except as to her sailing, which The persons concernd do not pretend to vouch for. The Other can carry all the Cloathing all the Fusils, the mortars, Shells, Tents, &c mounts ten & can mount 16 guns and will be ready to sail the moment the Embargo is taken off; but then 19 peices of Cannon are left behind &c. for the Stowage being made of both the Ships, it will be a work of time with Frenchmen to unload both in order that the *Seine*

carry the Whole – Such is the Situation Determine. A vessel arriv'd spoke a privateer of ours, off Cape Finisterre with three prizes. I beg my Compliments to Dr Franklin & Mr Lee, & am with truth [&c.]

W. Carmichael

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

20 Jan.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LONDONDERRY, JAN. 20.”<sup>1</sup>

On Wednesday last a vessel came into Lough Foyle, which we hear is the *Molly*, of Newcastle, laden with coals, for New York, but was taken by an American privateer of 32 guns, who put some hands on board her in order to carry her to Virginia; but the crew of the *Molly* rose on their new masters, and have brought the vessel safe in as above.

1. *London Chronicle*, February 4 to February 6, 1777.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 1777

London [January 20].

Dr. Franklin is at Paris, and certainly came from the Congress for the Purposes easier guessed at than explained.

It is said that Lord Weymouth, by a proper and spirited Memorial, demanded the Restitution of the Ship *Vine* of Hull, which was laden at Charant (a French Port near Rochefort) with Brandy, Lintseed, &c. for Hull, and was taken by the American Privateer which brought Dr. Franklin. And it is said, that the French Court, so far from complying with this Request, have permitted the Ship and Cargo to be publicly sold at Nantz. Is not this acknowledging the American Privateer's Commission? And is not *that* an Acknowledgment of the Independency of America?

*Continental Journal*, THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1777

London, January 20.

The Provincial privateers have taken to the amount of

West India ships –	£ 1,069,000
Newfoundland –	58,500
African –	187,000
Canada and Nova Scotia –	16,500
Transports, victuallers, and storeships –	167,000
Irish –	3,500
Mediterranean –	14,000
Sundry traders –	60,000
	<hr/>
	£ 1,575,500

Mr. Dean, Agent for the Congress at Paris, has received blank commissions from them for fitting out privateers: He has asked and obtained leave from the Court of France to fit out ships in their ports, and has sent over

here to collect American officers for that service; so that we may expect great havock among our merchant ships in the channel, as no cruizers are out to intercept or annoy them, or any convoys for our trade to Spain or Portugal, which must evidently suffer.

21 Jan.

*London Chronicle*, JANUARY 18 TO TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1777

[London] Tuesday, Jan. 21.

A letter from Alexander M'Daniel, late master of the ship *Leghorn Galley*, bound from Jamaica to Liverpool, but taken by an American privateer, and carried into Philadelphia, from whence he was arrived at Nantz in the *Mary and Elizabeth*, Peter Young master, in 38 days, to his owner Mr. Thomas Earle, of Liverpool, dated Nantz, Dec. 19, 1776, says,

"Here is the *Enterprize* [*Reprisal*] Capt. Weeks [Lambert Wickes] at this place, belonging to the Congress, mounting 16 six-pounders, 24 swivels, and one hundred and thirty men. She took a brig belonging to Corke from Bourdeaux,——— God, master, and a brig from Rochelle, bound to Hull,——— Fetchet [Pratchell] master, about 15 leagues from this place, and has sold both vessels and cargoes to the French. Here is also a privateer, belonging to Charlestown, South Carolina, commanded by Capt. Cockran, mounting 12 four-pounders and 80 men,<sup>1</sup> besides four other vessels belonging to the Congress, all taking in naval and military stores, and are arming them all."

1. South Carolina Navy brig *Notre Dame*, Captain Robert Cochran.

22 Jan.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[*Isis*, Portsmouth harbor] 22. Jan'y 77

In a Letter from Sierre Leona Dated 30th January 1776 I beg you to acquaint their Lordships that I had Taken the *St Johns* Sloop into the Service to enable me to execute that part of my orders relative to seizing American Vessels belonging to particular provinces & prevent their carrying Arms & Amunition to the rebels, I had recieved information of some that were hiding up the rivers, one of which, a Schooner the *St John*, seized, and I carried her to Jamaica. The Difficulty of corresponding and the length of time it takes to recieve an Answer from England upon the Coast made it impossible for me to recieve Authourity from the Admiralty, as I do not doubt their Lordships would have thought it upon my representation a Necessary Measure.

The Present rebellion and the information their Lordships had recieved of the rebels being supplied with Powder and Arms from Africa makes it a very particular case and there hath I believe always been a Vessel Stationed in time of War upon the Weather part of the Coast of Africa How far this Vessell hath succeeded doth not lay with me, she seized one Vessel which could not have done without her; and I did not think I could very well

Answer leaving the Coast with American Vessels upon it after receiving their Lordships Orders to seize them.

I understand the Officer I put in to Command the *St John* is Arrived in England, I have taken the Liberty of sending to you for their Lordships inspection the scheme of the Complement of Men she was to bare, also the report of the Survey and the Value of the Officers who were upon the Survey set upon her in case any Accident should happen the Vessel belongs to the proprietors of Bents Island and the persons who are there on the part of the proprietors did not chuse to make any agreement for the Hire or to Value her.

I conclude all Vessels in Government Service are paid according to their Tonnage. What I did was entirely for the Good of the Service and I hope will meet with their Lordships Approbation. I could receive no Share in any thing she might take nor was I any way Interested taking her into the Service I am [&c.]

W. Cornwallis

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, 11-13, NYHS.

# LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 14

Most Secret

My Lord

Paris Jany 22d 1777

I never gave much Credit to the Report of the *Amphitrite* being ordered to remain at L'Orient. It is now believed, that she is actually Sailed for St Domingo.

I am secretly informed, that five Ships are preparing to sail from Havre, L'Orient, St Malo, Nantes, or la Rochelle. These Ships, which are laden with Ammunition, Cloth, and various other Effects, for the use of the Rebels, are to carry french Colours, and to clear out for St Domingo. Beaumarchais is the Principal Director of the whole, he has paid ready Money for great part of the abovementioned Cargoes, and if my Information is right, has received large Remittances from England for that Purpose, but from what Quarter, I do not know: there will be several Passengers to North America, on board these Ships. . . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 107-12.

23 Jan.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas you have represented to Us by your Letter of the 24th of last month, that you had received a Letter from Sir Peter Parker informing you that the Companies of His Majesty's Ships under his command, employed on an expedition against Charles Town South Carolina, had been afflicted with the Scurvy and other disorders, and as there was not any Hospital or

place on shore to receive them, he had given orders to the Agent for Victual-ling the said Squadron, to purchase twenty Casks of Limes at one Guinea p Cask, which had been distributed amongst the Crews of those Ships and proved very salutary; for the amount of which Limes the said Agent Victual-ler had drawn a Bill upon You.

And, Whereas you have further represented to Us that you had received a Letter from the Navy Board informing you that Captn Reid of His Majesty's ship *Sphynx* had represented to them that the Company of the said Ship had been in a very sickly state with Scurvies and bilious disorders, and that no fresh provisions having been to be procured, he had, at the recommendation of the Surgeon, purchased 80 Gallons of Orange Juice at 5s P Gallon, And that the said Board had referred to you a Bill drawn by the said Captain Reid for the amount of the said Orange Juice.

We do hereby require and direct you, as the purchases of the above-mentioned Articles appear by your said Letter to have been made with the utmost propriety, to allow thereof and to accept and pay the said Bills accordingly. Given &c the 23d January 1777.

Commissrs for Sick & Hurt.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

H. Penton.

H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 191-93.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1777

London [January 23].

A *true Briton* observes, that the *Fire* at New York, the *Fire* at Portsmouth, the *Fire* at Bristol, and the burning the Hemp Warehouses on Monday Night at Southwark, have had a very *odd* Effect on many People in this Country, who before were disposed to favour the Americans; – in short all these *Fires* have served to *cool* those mistaken Zealots, who had espoused the unnatural Cause of *ungrateful* Children, against a too *indulgent* Parent.

The last Account from Bristol, which arrived on Monday Evening, brought Advice that the Fire was happily extinguished, with the Loss only of a few Houses, and some Warehouses. The Value of the Damage is not yet mentioned. There is but one Opinion in that City concerning the Cause of this extraordinary Event. They look upon it to be a Brush from the Tail of some Comet that was observed not long ago by many People of Portsmouth.

The Tin Case, containing Combustibles, which was found on board a Ship at Bristol, is said to be similar to that which was concealed in the Long Room at Portsmouth.

*Navy-Office,*

Jan. 21, 1777

Whereas there is strong Reason to suspect that the Rope-house in the Dock Yard, at Portsmouth, was on the 7th of December last most wickedly and

maliciously set on Fire; and whereas several attempts (some of which have taken Effect) have been made to set Fire to the City of Bristol; and as there is Reason to suppose that the Incendiary or Incendiaries may have been the same in both Cases, the following Description of a Person who was seen in the Rope-house, in Portsmouth Yard, on the Day the said Fire happened, and whose Conduct was suspicious, is now published, in hopes that on his Apprehension some Light may be thrown on these two dreadful Transactions.

He was called John, and is a Painter; said he worked as such last Summer with one Golding, at Titchfield, in Hampshire. He is about 25 Years of Age, about five Feet seven Inches high, rather thin in Person, and thin visaged.

Whoever will apprehend the said John, the Painter, and bring him before any Magistrate, or give such Notice as may be the Means of his being apprehended, so that he be produced to his Majesty's Commissioners of Portsmouth Dock Yard, or to the Commissioners of his Majesty's Navy in London, shall receive Fifty Pounds Reward, to be paid by the Commissioners of the Navy: Or if the said Person, knowing himself to be innocent, will voluntarily appear before Commissioner Gambier, at Portsmouth, or the Commissioners of his Majesty's Navy in London, he shall himself be entitled to the same Reward.

#### LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

No 3.

My Lord

Madrid 23d Janry 1777.

I have received the Honour of your Lordship's, No 28, with its several Inclosures.

I saw M. Grimaldi yesterday, and spoke to him very strongly with respect to the Prize, which the *Washington* Privateer<sup>2</sup> had taken, and sent into Bilbao to dispose of the Cargo. I represented this Transaction to him, as an Act of the most open Piracy, and as an Attempt to impose upon this Government by the Prize Master's Endeavour to pass for the Captain of the Vessell which he brought in, & added, that I was instructed to demand a Delivery of the said Ship and Cargo to the true Proprietor. I enclose to your Lordship a Copy of the Memorial which I have sent to him to state and explain this Business.

In the Conversation, which we had on this Subject, he asserted in the strongest Terms his not being at all acquainted with it, and declared, that ever since the first Discourse between us on the Subject of the American Ships coming into Bilbao, very positive Orders had been sent from Government here to prevent any Assistance being given to such Ships except of absolute Necessity, to hinder their Stay in that River, not to admit the Sale of any Prize which they might bring in, nor take any Step whatever tending to admit in any Shape the Existence of a Power in America, separate from that of Great Britain. I could not but observe to him, that if such Orders had been issued, they were ill obeyed, for that, if I was rightly informed,



the Cargo of this last Vessell had been sold, tho' the Value of it was deposited 'till further Orders. – 'Though on this Occasion I did not obtain from him a Promise of Restitution, as he asserted his own Ignorance of the Facts, yet I think on the Foundation of the Arguments which the Memorial states, and which he, I may say, allowed, it cannot well be refused. I have furnished him with all the Information which I have received on this Subject, as well the authentick Evidence which Captain Pennell gives of the Proceeding against him, as such Facts relative to the Prize Master bringing the Ship into Bilbao, as have come to my knowledge, and I am to add, that he promised me an immediate Inquiry and Answer in Consequence of it.

I am informed, that the Master of a Merchant Ship, who left Toulon on the 18th of last Month brought Intelligence to Alicant, that they were heaving down for Service eighteen Ships of the Line and six Frigates, but that he saw no Preparations for their being victualled and manned.

At Cadiz a new Ship called *Angel de La Guardia*, is arrived from Carthagena in the Mediterranean with ten thousand Tents, which, it is said there, are to be sent to Seville. Ammunition Bread is likewise ordered in great Quantities, and to be got ready with the greatest Dispatch.

I have the Honour to be with the greatest Truth & Regard My Lord [&c.]  
Grantham.

1. PRO, State Papers, 94/203.

2. Massachusetts privateer brig, Captain Elias Smith, Mass. Arch., vol. 7, 288.

24 Jan.

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir

Havre 24th January 1777

Yours to the 22d I just this moment receivd. I hope what I have since wrote has sufficiently explained what you wishd to know. However I will repeat to you that in the 1st place without an order from Court the Vessel cannot sail. In the Second place the 19 peices of Cannon, carriages for the Cannon & matches & bomes & bullets are chiefly in the *Romaine* & are stowd in such a manner in the hold, that it would be a work of Time to take these out, & then unload the *Andromide*,<sup>2</sup> which has all the Cloathing, fusils two mortars some bomes, flints powder, bullets tents & in Short all that I could have taken out of the other ship conveniently stowd away in her. I should have sent this Ship instantly away with Du Coudray if the imbargo had been taken off – She could sail tomorrow & should if that was the case. I only suspect injunctions will be laid to go to St Domingo But I will promise mountains to the Captn & he may call on me for performance hereafter, for when we are so distressed we must not stick at Trifles. My first letter was under cover to Monsr Le Grand. For Gods sake Paint the dispatch of the Ships here, at Dunkirk and Marseilles, as the proof necessary to Show us that France wishes to see us Independent. The English Consul at Tangier is arrived here from Gibraltar. He says a ship from S. Carolina with a Mr Dupont, whom he saw, Supercargo is carried into that place That by letters

found on Board to a Gentleman in France. He was pressd to hurry ships from Bourdeaux & Nantz away with Cloathing & likewise informd that He might expect many American Ships in those ports, that In consequence of this a light vessel was sent to Falmouth with the Intelligence. These Seas swarm with English Cruisers. I wrote you that one or two vessels had been searched just arrivd here. Yesterday a Captn Came in from Spain who informs, that He was searched by a fifty Gun ship & the *Arethusa* a frigate & chacd by several others. He likewise Informs that two American vessels were arrived at Barcelona. The Weather has been Hazy, which may facilitate their Escape. I think we have been told that France would not allow English men of War to block up their ports. I have seen letters from Various parts of England which mention that Dr Franklin is come over to make peace thro the Mediation of France, that is a new turn.

Inclosed you have inventories of Vessels. I would have sent you an acct of the trade of this place, but I shall reserve it till you have more leisure. I am happy Dr Franklin does not think my journey to Berlin useless. I shall lay before You the acct of Expences when I return to Paris but I want nothing but mere expences – Too happy if I can devote any part of other ways an useless life to the Public service. However if we are to be Shuffled with I absolutely will return to America; either to tell lyes & keep up their Spirits or tell the truth & let them guard against the worst. If I do not receive the orders to suffer the Ship to sail by Sunday, I will quit this, for my longer stay will only make a noise without Serving any one good purpose I had like to have forgot that the Man who sold the wine offers to repay the Money, if it is not found to be good. He is imployd by every one here. I beg you to take Care of your self, to be able to assist you, is one motive why I wish to quit this. My Compliments to your Collegues & tell Mr Lee if He wishes his brother to have bark he must go to Versailles to have the Embargo taken off. Upbraid Mr B. M. [Beaumarchais] for this

I am with truth your [&c.]

W<sup>m</sup> Carmichael

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. Renamed *la Seine*.

#### CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen – St Auzear [St. Nazaire] January 24th 1777 –

My last of the 29th December, informed you of former proceedings & this will serve to inform you of my proceedings to this day, In my last I mentioned being Employed in getting provisions on board ready to proceed on a Cruize, just as I had got ready for Sea, was Blocked up by the Ice and while detained by that, recd. a Letter from the Honorable Commissioners at Parris, desireing me to go to L'Orient, and there View and inspect a 60 Gun Ship and two Frigates that was laying there, which was offered them on very easy Terms, if they suited their purposes, I set out imeadiately to perform this bussiness, but on examining the 60 Gun Ship found her rather old and tender a Very slow Sailor & of so great draft of Water, that few of the

American ports would have water enough for her to enter in At, One of the frigates I found new and well put together, tho Something rougher than those built at Philada The other Frigate & 50 Gun Ship, both old and wanting great repair, the New Frigate Called the *Count of Maurepas* is a Very fine Ship, will be mounted with 26 twelve pounders on her Gun Deck & 10 Six pounders on her Quarter Deck and Fore Castle, her Masts, Yards, Rigging Sails and Stores, are all new & of the first quality her Guns have been used, but appear very good, the price is £ 17,000 Sterg After perform – ing this bussiness I made my report accordingly to your Honourable Commissioners at Parris, who have since wrote me, that they had not yet made the purchase, but expected to do it Soon.

The river is now Clear of Ice, and I have got down to St Auzeur, where I am waiting a Wind to go to Sea – Doctor Franklin informs me that us, and our prizes will be kindly received, protected and Supplied in all French and Spanish ports. This is good news, which I have waited with impatience to hear, and am very glad to have it in my power to give so good an Author for it. I Cannot hear of any more Troops raising for the American Service as yet, It had been reported that the russians has offered 40 thousand Men for that Service, but this is not thought true, as France is determined to Stop them if Possible, they have a large Fleet now in England in Commis-sion, which I believe they will find very difficult to Man, there never was so hot a press in England before, and fewer Men got The French say they are in the Situation they was last Warr having a number of Ships and no Men, to Man them. I shall take particular Care to keep you informed of my future proceedings by every opportunity that May offer, from Gentlemen [ &c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes.

P.S. the *Count of Maurepas* is 114 feet Keel, 36 feet Beam 13 feet Hold & 6 feet between Decks –

1. Papers CC (Letters Addressed to Congress), 78 XXIII, 335–58, NA.

25 Jan.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23 TO SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1777

[London] Saturday, Jan. 25.

On Wednesday Capt. George Montagu, son of Vice Admiral Montagu of the *Fowey*, was at Court, and had the honour to be introduced to his Majesty, who received him most graciously. As this gentleman took the first American privateer,<sup>1</sup> was at the attack at New York, and has been engaged in many active scenes for six years past, the King spent much time in asking him many interesting questions.

Capt. Wyley, of the *Alfred* who is arrived at Dartmouth from Jamaica, sailed from thence the 7th of November, and on the 8th of Dec. in Lat. 34, 13, north, long. 63, 40, west, was attacked by two American privateers, which she beat off, and saw no more during the rest of the voyage.

The *Leghorn Galley*, M'Daniel, is taken and burnt at Philadelphia, and with her the cargo is consumed.<sup>2</sup>

The *Woodcock*, Richardson, from Quebec to London, is taken and carried into Providence.

1. Washington's armed brig *Washington*, Captain Sion Martindale. See Volume 2.

2. Taken by the Continental Navy schooner *Wasp*. See Volume 6.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Jan 25 1777

I am just informed that the *amphitrite* is at last gone, she sail'd yesterday morning at 7 o'clock

Nothing is more difficult than to procure Charts of our Coast. I am however well supplied except from N York to Georgia, but here I want particular ones; the Captain will I hope arrive at Boston, if not he must do as well as he can with the general Charts (Mercators &c) . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 46, APS.

26 Jan. (Sunday)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON <sup>1</sup>

Sir –

Paris, Jan'y 26th, 1777

You are directed to proceed to Boulogne, and there purchase, on as good Terms as possible, a Cutter suitable for the purpose of being sent to America; on the purchase being made dispatch the Vessel to Havre du Grace to the Care of Monsr Limozin,<sup>2</sup> and agree in the Bargain to have her delivered, at sd Port, at the risque, & expence of the Original Owner, at which stipulate to make the payment; should You miss of one at Boulogne, proceed to Calais, & pursue the same Directions, if you fail there pass to Dover, or Deal, & employ a person there to make the purchase as for Mr Limozin of Nantes [*sic* Havre], at whose house the payment shall be made – Your skill in Maritime Affairs will enable You, to judge of the Vessel, proper for Our purpose, in which We wish You to embark yourself for Havre, & on Your Arrival, put the Vessel, into the care of Mr Limozin to be fitted with every thing necessary for her to proceed the designed Voyage, at the Same Time directing Mr Limozin to call her, & speak of her as his Own, – after which You will instantly set off, for this Place, to inform Us of Your proceedings, meantime you are on purchasing, to write, first post, not to Us, but to Mr Le Grand Banqr Rue Mons Mart Vis-a-Vis St Joseph a Paris, only saying in a few Words that you have made a purchase, & shall draw on him soon for the Money favor of Mr Limozin, or Words to that Purpose. This Letter will be shewn Us, & We shall regulate, Our proceedings Accordingly. Should you be obliged on purchasing, to pay at Dover or, Deal, Monsr Le Grands Letter, will give a Sufficient Credit for the purpose and at Calais, or Boulogne, you will address yourself, on the Score of advice, and Assistance in Money Matters, to the persons to whom you will have Letters directed,

but on No other Account, & avoid hinting your proceedings or views to any one, but should Capt [Joseph] Hynson arrive from London & join you let him go in the Vessel you purchase to Havre & there wait Our further Orders – should he arrive and no Vessel be purchased, in Such Case, procure him a passage to Havre, & Direct him to apply to Mr Limozin for Our Directions – In the whole, We have to wish You to Make the Utmost Dispatch, & to conduct with the utmost secrecy & the Oeconomy consistent with hastening as fast as possible the Object in View.

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, 329, LC.

2. Andrew Limozin, Le Havre merchant, acting as agent for the American commissioners.

27 Jan.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, JANUARY 25 TO TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1777

[London] Monday, January 27.

The *Thomas*, Bell, lately mentioned to be taken, is carried into Providence. The Captain was wounded in the engagement, and is since dead.

28 Jan.

CAPTAIN JAMES WORTH, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS<sup>1</sup>

Sir

Liverpool January 28th 1777

Please to acquaint their Lordships that this Morning hearing there was a Ship coming into this Port, belonging to the Rebellious Colony's, I immediately sent off Lieutenant Clark to take Possesstion of her, and found she was Called the *Aurora* John Hutchason Master, belonging to Cumberland on york River Virginia Bound to Nantz in France Laden'd with 412 Hogs-heads of Tobacco and Two Thousand Staves.

In there Passage find disputes had arrose Among the Crew, which were Partly English and Americans and was the Cause of the Boatswain an English Man Assisted with three others getting Possesstion of the Ship on the 20th Instant, between the Latitudes of 47°: and 48° and Longitude of 20°: & 21°, Wish I could have Transmitted her Papers to their Lordships, but am Prevented doing so by the Collector getting Hold of them before me. I understand after she had deliver'd her Cargo, she was to have been fitted for War, and to Act as a Privateer.

All the Americans I found on board without Acception I have Put on board the *Union* Tender, that Arrived yesterday where I intend they shall remain till I receive their Lordships Directions, Inclosed is their Names and Quality, and I am Sir [&c.]

Ja<sup>s</sup> Worth

[Enclosure]

A List, of Eight American's taken out of the *Aurora*, and Put on Board the *Union* Tender, Lieut Collingwood,

John Hutchason,	master
James Richardson,	Calls himself an owner
John Hall,	son to an Owner, in Virginia
Jeff Jenkinson	} Seamen.
Joseph Walker	
Hughes Jonston	
Gilbert Welch	
Jesse Topping	

[Endorsed] R 31 do Feby 1st Send Copy to Mr Seddon with directns to proceed agt her as Droit of Admty

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2672. *Aurora* was formerly the captured British transport *Oxford*. See Volumes 5 and 6.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admiralty Office 28th Jan'y 1777

Having received a Letter from Vice Admiral Gayton Commander in Chief of His Majestys Ships and Vessels at Jamaica, dated the 16th Novr last, acquainting us with Intelligence he had received of a considerable Force having been assembled by the Rebels upon the River Ohio, with an Intent to attack West Florida by the Way of the Mississippi and of his Proceedings in other Matters with the Squadron under his Command; We send your Lordship inclosed a Copy of his said Letter for His Majesty's Information. and are My Lord &ca

Sandwich J. Buller Lisburne

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 130.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN  
WILLIAM CLEMENT FINCH, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Having ordered the Commissrs for Victualling His Majesty's Navy to cause all the provisions on board the Ship you command to be taken out of her except what may be necessary for 160 Men for three months at whole allowance, beer excepted, of which she is to have as much as she can conveniently stow, and a proper proportion of Spirits in lieu of the remainder; You are hereby required and directed to put the surplus provisions into such Craft as the said Commissioners shall send down to receive the same accordingly, and to make in other respects as much room on board the said Ship as possible for receiving aboard Camp Equipage intended to be sent out in her for the use of His Majesty's Army under the command of General Sir William Howe; letting Us know what number of Tons of the said Camp Equipage you judge she will be then capable of receiving. Given &c the 28th January 1777.

Honoble Capt'n Finch — *Camel* — in Longreach.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich  
Palmerston  
H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 219-20.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST, PLYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

[Admiralty Office] 28 Jan'y 1777

... With respect to John Evans who has received 165 Lashes in part of the punishment inflicted on him by Sentence of a Court Martial, and who in the Opinion of the Surgeon will not be in a condition to undergo the remainder of his Punishment for a considerable time, I am to acquaint you that, upon your intercession therein, their Lordships are pleased to remit the remainder of the Punishment. . . .

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 509-10.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT<sup>1</sup>[H. M. S. *Belle Isle*, off Plymouth]

[1777. January] 27. The daily allowance on board His Majesty's ships, is: Sunday, pork and peas; Monday, birgu,<sup>2</sup> butter and cheese; Tuesday, beef and pudding; Wednesday, birgu and peas, butter and cheese; Thursday, pork and peas; Friday, birgu and peas, butter and cheese; Saturday, beef and pudding; a pint of wine, or half a pint of rum, when at sea; and when in port, beer in abundance, and fresh meat twice in a week.

28. To-day I received a pair of stockings, a present from one of the seamen.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 20-21.

2. Burgoo, a thick oatmeal gruel.

29 Jan.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1777

London [January 29].

They write from Jamaica, that a Number of Pirates, who do not act immediately under the Authority of the Congress, have made their Appearance in those Seas: They are chiefly commanded by French and Dutch Rovers, and do incredible Damage.

The same Letters add, that the *Keith*, an armed Ship, fitted out by the Merchants at Port Royal, had just brought in one of those Vessels; the Commander of which was a Frenchman, born in Martinico, upon whom a Court Martial was ordered to sit; and if he was found guilty, he would be hanged.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, JANUARY 28 TO THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1777

[London] Wednesday, January 29.

A letter from Lisbon, dated Jan. 9, says, "The *Zephyr* sloop of war has brought in here two prizes; one of them the *Argo*, Captain Ward; and the other the schooner *Betsey*, Lebras, with 1100 quintals of Bachalaw, bound from New England to Bilboa, on account of the Congress."

The Lords of the Admiralty have promoted Captain George Montagu, of his Majesty's ship *Fowey*, to the command of the *Romney*, a sixty-gun ship, on board of which his father the Admiral is to hoist his flag as Commander in Chief and Governor at Newfoundland.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Particular

No 17

My Lord

Paris Jany 29th 1777

In Consequence of Applications made to me, by the Proprietors of the two Vessels taken by the American Privateer, the *Reprisal* I spoke Yesterday to M de Vergennes, and not caring to give in a formal Memorial, I gave him extracts of the Letters I had received.

The Owners of the ship called the *Vine State*, that their Cargoe has in part been sold clandestinely, and part put on board the *Reprisal*, and that their Vessel is they hear in the River Vannes. Their Demand is, that this Court should give orders to stop the *Reprisal*, till the Value of their ship and Cargoe, should be repaid them. M de Vergennes said, that this was not a reasonable Claim. I observed to him that without entering into the general Question, and confining myself for the Moment, to the Conduct of the Captain of the *Reprisal*, it was clear that his proceeding was absolutely Piratical, and that it was therefore as much to the Interest of France, as it could be ours, to treat him, as a Pirate. Without any direct answer to this, M de Vergennes took the Note to Shew it to M de Sartines. Upon my Return from Versailles I found a Letter from Nantes which informs me that the *Reprisal* is actually sailed.

The owners of the ship the *George State*, that their ship has as they hear, been sold to a Monsieur Le Port. M de Vergennes took particular Notice of this, and said of his own accord, that that was directly contrary to the Intentions of this Court, and that he knew, M de Sartines had sent the most positive orders, that no American Captor, Should be permitted to sell his Prize, or any part of the Cargoe.

I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 122-23.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Most Secret

No 19

My Lord

Paris Jany 29th 1777

Having received further Confirmations, of the Intelligence I sent Your Lordship with regard to the five Ships, I mentioned in my Letter No 14 I thought the thing of too much importance, to be passed over in Silence, tho' at the same time I was aware of the Impropriety, of making a formal Complaint, I endeavoured to take a middle way, and spoke to M de Vergen-



nes Yesterday, to the following Effect. I began with saying, that as his Excellency, and M de Maurepas had repeatedly given me, the strongest Assurances, of the friendly sentiments, and pacific Intentions of this Court, I was persuaded that I should second their views, by acquainting them with whatever came to my Knowledge, that carried a contrary appearance, et sembloit tendre a un But contraire.

After this short preface, which I made as polite as I could, I added, que partant de ce principe, I would communicate to his Excellency, some information, that had come to me from various Quarters, since we met last. I then My Lord mentioned the five Ships, enumerated the five different Ports, from whence they are to sail, told him, that they were french Vessels, were to carry french Colours, and were laden with large quantities of Ammunition, Cloth, and other effects; All designed ultimately for the Rebels, nay more, actually belonging to them, at least in part, and already paid for by their Emissaries here, and the secret agents they employ. I said all this My Lord, as clearly, and strongly as I could, but with great Civility in the Manner, and without making the least Comment, as I waited to see what answer He would give me. He seemed rather embarrassed, assured me, that the whole was absolutely new to him; that indeed it did not, as I knew, relate to his Department, but to that of M de Sartine, to whom he would Speak upon the Subject. He then My Lord renewed the strongest assurances of the pacific Intentions, of the King his Master, and spoke like a Man who is much in Earnest, and who stands upon Truth.

After I had made a proper return to this He put a Question to me, which I easily saw was a premeditated one, He said that I should oblige him greatly, by giving him an Eclaircissement with regard to the Lettres de Marque, I had mentioned in a former Conversation; that he understood they were to be given to Merchant Ships, to authorize them to defend themselves, and make lawful Prizes of their Enemies, all which was most just, and reasonable, but what He wished to know was, whether the ships that had those Lettres de Marque would thereby be authorized to stop, and search Neutral Vessels; he owned, that as ships can hoist any Colours they please it was reasonable to examine them so far as to know whether they did, or did not, belong to the Nation, whose Colours they carried, but that the proper way of doing that was to examine Les Lettres de Mer that as to an actual Search there were infinite objections to it, it was a great interruption to Commerce, and brought on many disagreeable Discussions. I told Him, that it was not in my Power, to give him an Answer, without further information, and put him in mind, that I had spoke of those Lettres de Marque only as a thing in Contemplation. After he had admitted this, I brought him back to the original Subject, which I did not think we had sufficiently entered into, and begged him to consider, what Suspicions, and Jealousies, the Departure of these five ships, if it should take place must occasion in England. This whole Transaction cannot be a secret there in the first place Sir, I shall of Course mention it as is my Duty (He said I clearly ought to

do so) but independent of the Information I give my Court, It is a secret, that is already in many Hands, and must soon cross the Seas. It is well known at Paris, that Beaumarchais directs the whole of this Enterprize, that he Beaumarchais has frequent interviews with Franklin and Deane. M de Vergennes interrupted me here with an Exclamation (c'est le grand feseur que ce Beaumarchais) he said this, with a smile of Contempt, and spoke with derision, of the admirable Secrecy, with which He, and his Associates, conduct their Business. I answered with a Smile that we who wished to be informed, were obliged to them for the facilities they gave us, and then added in a graver Tone that I had good Reason to believe, that the Rebels had a great Share, if not the whole of those Cargoes, and had actually paid for them, that it was therefore evident, they were ultimately designed for North America, whatever Port these Ships might give out they sailed for, that suffering the Rebels to be supplied, with Ammunition, was contrary to the friendship, this Court professed for us, and in direct Contradiction to the friendly Declaration His Excellency had given me in writing, many Months ago. that the Suffering Ammunition to be conveyed to them in french Bottoms, was still more unfriendly, than the winking at their getting it here en fraude and carrying it in their own Ships, that whether these warlike Stores went directly to North America or touched first at st Domingo was in fact a Matter of Indifference, that every body knew that this was not the way in which this Court apprevisonner ses Isles. He interrupted me here to Say that they sometimes did send Ammunition on board Merchant Men, without controverting this I only answered that at least they did not send Ammunition that the Rebels had paid for, which was the case here, I added that if these Vessels were met by an English Man of War, and between twenty, and thirty thousand Uniforms were found on board it would be impossible to suppose, that they were designed, for the Garrison of St Domingo. What said he hastily do they send uniforms ready made up. I answered that I was not Sure that that was the Case but had been told so. I added, that I knew where the Rebel Emissaries, and their great Agent Beaumarchais, had bought large Quantities of Cloth On vend son Drap a qui on soent said he with a smile – I replied that there was a great difference between letting the Rebels have Cloth, which I knew Clothiers would sell to those who paid for it, and sending it in french Vessels but that what I laid the greatest stress upon was the large Quantities of Ammunition with which they were to be supplied and the manner in which it was to be conveyed. I told him that I had already acquainted him with the Motives from which I spoke that I always endeavoured to speak before the Event, as my object was to prevent not to complain. I then My Lord added by way of Illustration tho' Your Lordship will easily believe that was not my real Reason, that I had done so with regard to the french Officers said to be designed for North America, and had spoke as he well knew before any of them had sailed – What is become of them said He with a forced smile, – that your Excellency must know better than I can – I protest to You My

Lord, I do not, believe me you know more of these Matters than I do, I see you do – I answered that as I run about a good deal, I do now and then, pick up some Intelligence, but I cannot imagine my information can be better than Yours, however as You desire it I will without hesitation tell you what I know I then My Lord told him with truth, – that we believe at Paris that the ship which had those officers on board, and which was drove back by stress of Weather, had again put to sea, After I had said this, I was silent not chusing to be particular in my information – He paused for a Moment and then said with a serious and even Melancholy Tone, You cannot conceive what Engines are at Work what Wheels within wheels. be assured nous avons aussi Notre opposition

I answered that to speak to Him, not as a foreign Minister but as a friend. It was my clear opinion that the best manner to deal with all oppositions was not only to take care of Essentials mais de ne jamais donner prise sur Foi dans les petites choses. And then My Lord being desirous to resume once more a Subject to which I probably shall not return. I said that I did not consider those officers as a formidable Recruit, but that was not the point; the Intention and appearance the Thing carried was greatly to be Attended to, that to be sure France might send to st Domingo what officers she pleased, but if those Officers whose Noms et surnoms were already known to many here, and who certainly could not escape the Vigilance of such an able and active Governor as M D Ennery should steal from st Domingo to North America, their appearance there must force such a conclusion as before the event I would never draw

To give Your Lordship very shortly the substance of M de Vergennes Answer (as I have already troubled You so long) it consisted in thanks for my Intentions, and for the Manner in which I had spoke to him, in a renewal of the most friendly professions and in a promise to acquaint the King and M de Maurepas with all that had passed

Notwithstanding the Encouragement His Majestys gracious approbation of my Conduct has given me, I should not have ventured to touch upon a subject of this Delicacy without Orders, if I had not been induced to it by reflecting that the Thing did not brook delay as my last Intelligence says the ships are preparing to Sail I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 126–31.

30 Jan.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 30 Jan'y 1777

Mr Cumberland Secretary to the Lords Commrs for Trade & Plantation, having transmitted to my Lords Commrs of the Admty an Extract of a Letter which he received dated at St Croix the 18th Novr last giving an

Account of the Arrival of several American Vessels at that Port and St Thomas's from America, & that about a dozen had come to the Danish Islands in the course of five Weeks; I am commanded by their Lordships to send you enclosed a Copy of the said Extract for your information, and am  
&ca P S

Vice Adml Young at }  
Antigua – } By the Packet 5 Feby  
Duplicate 8 Feby by the *Sylph*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 516.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1777

London [January 30].

The Proclamation just published by the French King, says a Correspondent, prohibiting the Sale of any English Vessels or their Cargoes brought into any of the Ports of France by the Americans, under the Denomination of Prizes, is a clear, undeniable Evidence of the Sincerity of the Court of Versailles, in their constant Declarations that they are resolved to continue at Peace with Great Britain. All Reports to the contrary, we may be assured, are manufactured here, by interested Stockjobbers, or by disappointed Statesmen and their Journeymen.

31 Jan.

MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERWRITERS OF AN INSURANCE POLICY ON THE  
BRITISH SHIP *Vine* <sup>1</sup>

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Weymouth one of  
his Majesty's Principal Secretary's of State.

The Memorial of the Underwriters of a Policy of Insurance  
on the Ship *Vine* Captain [James] Pratchell. —

Sheweth

Unto your Lordship that the Ship *Vine* loaded with French produce was taken by an American Privateer (the same that carried the Rebel Dr Franklin to France) coming from Rochelle for Hull the Day after she set Sail and carried into Nantz where she now lays uncondemned though detained. —

That the Master of the Privateer has Piratically sold or embezled the Cargo of the said Ship upon a Representation of which to the French Court orders (as your Memorialists are informed) have been given to the Agent of the said Ship to Seize the Effects of the Rebels belonging [to] the said Privateer to satisfy the Value of the Cargo by which means the Underwriters of the Cargo will be saved harmless And therefore Your Lordships Memorialists beg leave to supplicate Your Lordship that immediate application may be made to the Ambassador at the French Court for the delivering up the said Ship for the benefit of the Owners or that the Value of the said Ship (which is underwrote at Hull for Seven hundred Pounds) of the Effects of

the Proprietors of the Privateer may be seized for the benefit of the Underwriters or that such other means may be used to indemnify Your Memorialists as Your Lordship shall think proper And your Lordships Memorialists shall ever hold themselves under the highest obligations to Your Lordship.

Hull 31st January 1777.

Richard Bell

Sam<sup>l</sup> Wright

Joseph Hickson

John Jarratt

Simon Horner

Henry Horner

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 144.

*Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1777

[Liverpool]

Tuesday last [January 28] was brought into this port, the ship *Oxford*, from York River, in Virginia, loaded 412 hogsheads of tobacco and staves, which was intended for Nantz, in France; on the passage, four of the ships company took the vessel from the rest, being eight, besides the supercargo, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Richards, a passenger. It appears that these four resolute brave men (two of whom are Liverpool, and the other two Lancaster lads, had, in conjunction with others of their countrymen who were put on board other vessels) combined together in Virginia, to attempt, on their passage, to take the respective vessels they belonged to; this was effectually accomplished in the *Oxford*, on Sunday the 11th instant, and with safety brought into this harbour, in the presence of thousands of rejoicing spectators. These brave sailors say that a brig loaded with tobacco, from the same place, with some men, part of their association, may be daily expected to arrive here. — The *Oxford* originally belonged to Glasgow, and was in the transport service when took by the Americans.<sup>1</sup> — As this vessel was not taken by the officers and seamen of his Majesty's ships of war, she becomes, by virtue of an act of the last session, and also the cargo, forfeited to his Majesty, who will, no doubt, reward the brave captors with the whole, or the greatest part of this valuable prize; which it is hoped will encourage all seamen, that may be engaged in the Rebel Service, to imitate these brave fellows.

1. Renamed *Aurora*. See Volumes 5 and 6.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO COMTE DE MAUREPAS <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

London 31st January 1777.

It is but too true, Monsieur le Comte, that our preparations must constitute a serious charge on the King's finances. We have not, however, any other means, either to repulse the first attacks with which we are threatened, or to avert war, if there still remains any hope of doing so. I confess that my hopes grow weaker in proportion as I follow the progress of this country. Through the different prettexts which the British Ministry makes use of to disguise its hostile intentions, it is impossible not to distinguish a determination tending to war. In any other circumstances, the half of what

they have already done would leave us no doubt as to what we should have reason to expect from them. The present circumstances joined to the pacific assurances of the English Ministers are, it is true, well fitted to deceive, and the period which elapses between the measures taken from time to time supports all the artifices which they make use of to calm our suspicions. But we cannot conceal from ourselves that the facts remain, that they accumulate, and that in separating the good alloy from the bad, I mean, what is applicable to the American war from that which can only be intended for a foreign war, in this latter respect the maritime forces of England will shortly be on a formidable footing. If they are not sufficient to suddenly make war with advantage in all parts of the world, they are at least more considerable than those which Great Britain has ever been able to gather together at any period before commencing hostilities.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 521, 157-59, LC Photocopy.

*Public Advertiser*, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1777

London [January 31].

The New York Packets now employed mount 16 Guns, and carry 50 Men, the same as the War Establishment.

A Letter from Limerick by Wednesday's Mail, brings Advice, that a large American Privateer put into the River Shannon, and sent a Boat on shore to procure some fresh Provisions and fresh Water, which they were readily supplied with, but sent the Commanding Officer Word, that his Stay there would be disagreeable to the Inhabitants, and perhaps more so to himself and People, as some Men of War from England are hourly expected there; upon which the Captain of the Privateer weighed Anchor, and sailed away. He wanted to barter Goods he had on board; such as Sugars, Rum, &c. for some Provisions. He said he had been out four Months, and had sent three Prizes to New England, two of them from Jamaica. He had 22 Guns and 130 Men; said his Ship was fitted out by the Congress, but the Name of it they could not learn.

R. IRVINE TO LORD SUFFOLK <sup>1</sup>

No 2

Rotterdam Janry 31st 1777

My Lord

My last respects were of 21st Inst – since which a list of the Dutch Ships intended this Season for the Whale Fishery, has been published, by which it appears they are to send 72 to Greenland, & 45 to Straits Davis; being 5 fewer to the former, & one more to the Latter place, than last year. I am informed that Two Frigates of War are to escort those which fish in Straits Davis, to protect them, as is said, from the Visits & insults of the Danes, who last year, seized & carried to Copenhagen Two Dutch Ships, & one belonging to Nantucket, under pretence of their having traded with the Natives, contrary to an exclusive priviledge from His Danish Majesty for that Trade to a Company of Merchants, extending in West Greenland, from Latitude 60, to 73

North. I have not yet been able to learn whether the Two Frigates destined for the Escorte, are to be of those belonging to the States, or only Private Ships Armed by the Merchants & Provided with Letters of Marque; if the former, it is most probable that the Object of their Mission is the Protection of the Dutch Ships in their fishery, but if the Latter, it is not quite impossible but they may serve for purposes less Justifiable; for it is certain that a quantity of Powder & Ammunition was last year Sent from Amsterdam to Straits Davis, & there put onboard of American Vessells sent to recieve them.

I know not whether the Nature of the Voyage admitts of Ships destined to Fish being Armed; but if that be practicable, it might be easy to grant Letters of Marque to some of our Ships bound to Straits Davis, to Seize such American Vessells as they should find Concerned in that illicit Trade. – Some of the Ships for Straits Davis Sail from hence so early as the Last Week in February, but Certainly in the Course of March. I have the Honour to Remain with most perfect Respect My Lord [&c.]

R Irvine

1. PRO, State Papers, 84/555.

1 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL HOOD, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

So Soon as the Number of Men on board the Ship you command shall be completed to 650 for which we have given directions to Vice Admiral Sir James Douglas, You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather, and proceed & cruize between the Start Point and the Isle of Wight to procure Men for His Majesty's Fleet, agreeable to the Press Warrant and Instructions which you have received, particularly from Homeward bound Merchant Ships; Victualling all such new raised men as your Ship's Company, during their continuance on board her; And when you have procured as many as she can conveniently contain, or have lent so many of her men as she can spare, to Merchant Ships, to navigate them, in lieu of those you may take from them, You are to repair to Spithead and dispose of the said new raised as the abovementioned Vice Admiral or the Commanding Officer of His Majesty's Ships there for the time being shall direct; delivering with them Lists of their names with notations thereon of the respective times of their coming into the Service; that they may be entered for Wages accordingly on the Books of the Ships wherein they may be appointed to serve, and sending to our Secretary an account of the Numbers procured.

During your continuance on the above Service, you are on occasions of bad Weather to anchor at St Helens, and to enquire for orders, and not finding any to the contrary, to return as soon as the weather will admit and cruize as above directed. Given &c the 1st February 1777.

Captn Hood – *Courageux* – Spithead

By &c

PS.

J. Buller.  
Palmerston.  
Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 232–33.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN BROOKS R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

So soon as the number of Men on board the ship you command shall be completed to 500 for which we have given directions to Vice Admiral Amherst; you are hereby required and directed to put to sea with the first opportunity of wind & weather, and proceed and cruize between the Latitudes of 46° and 47°, 30 Leagues to the Westward of the Penmarks point, for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, and diligently to look out for, and upon falling in with, to endeavour to take or destroy, any Privateers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue on the above Station for one month after your arrival thereupon, and then make the best of your way back to Plymouth, and remain there until you receive further order; sending Us an account of your Arrival & proceedings. Given &c the 1st February 1777.

Captn Brooks, *Belle Isle*, Plymo

By &c.

PS.

J. Buller  
Palmerston  
Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 233-34.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN FRANCIS REYNOLDS, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

So soon as the number of Men on board the Ship you command shall be completed to 500 for which we have given directions to Vice Admiral Sir James Douglas, and you shall have received on board the sum of £10,000 for carrying on the payments & Recalls of His Majesty's Ships at Plymouth, which we have directed the Navy Board to cause to be delivered into your charge, You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather, and make the best of your way to Plymouth, where you are to deliver the said money according to its consignment, and then proceed and cruize without a moments loss of time off the Capes Ortegal and Finisterre (ranging about within 30 Leagues from either of them) for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, and diligently to look out for, and upon falling in with, to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue upon the above Station for one month after the making either of the above Capes, or the Land near the same, and then return without loss of time to Spithead for further Order sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c the 1st Febr'y 1777.

Captn Reynolds - *Augusta* - Spithead.

By &c

PS.

J. Buller.  
Palmerston.  
Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 234-36.



LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO DAVID MAITLAND <sup>1</sup>

By &amp;c.

Whereas we have signed a Commission appointing you Master and Commander of the *Earl of Besborough* Packet Boat; You are hereby required and directed, not to hoist any other Colours, worn in His Majesty's Fleet, besides a Red Ensign, Jack and Pendant on board the said Packet Boat, at any time, or on any Account. Given &c the 1st Febr'y 1777.

J. Buller. Palmerston. Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 236.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, JANUARY 30 TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1777

[London] Saturday, Feb. 1.

The *Aurora*, John Hutchinson master, late the *Oxford*, of Glasgow, taken by the rebels, with a party of the 71st regiment on board, and carried into Virginia, is brought into Liverpool, laden with 412 hogsheads of tobacco on account of the Congress, and bound to Nantz or Bourdeaux. She was navigated by 15 men, and had a Mr. Hall on board in the capacity of a supercargo; eight of the crew were Englishmen, and had all been prisoners in America. About the longitude of 16 W. and lat. 47, Wm. Turner, boatswain of a ship, and who had previously sounded the inclinations of the English sailors, and found them willing to assist in seizing the vessel and carrying her to England, secured the captain and supercargo in the cabin, while his companions secured the American sailors upon deck; they were all soon overpowered, and Turner, who took the command, shaped his course for Liverpool, where he arrived the 29th instant. All the American papers were secured, and the cargo, at the present price of tobacco, is of very great value.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Paris Feby 1st 1777

Presented by Mr Lee alone at Versailles

Messrs Franklin, Dean, and Lee, Ministers from the Congress of the United States, beg leave to represent to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, that besides the general alarming Accounts of the Success of the English against their Country, they have just received authentic Intelligence from England, that Eight thousand Men, chiefly Germans under the command of General [John] Burgoyne, are to be sent early in the Spring to America, and to be employed, with some Ships of War in the Invasion of Virginia and Maryland.

That if not by some means diverted from this Design, it will be in their power to destroy a great part of those States, as the Houses and Estates of the principal Inhabitants are situated on the navigable Waters, and so separated from each other, as to be incapable of being defended from arm'd Vessels conveying Troops, the Place of whose Landing cannot be forseen,

and consequently Force cannot be assembled in all Places sufficient to oppose them.

That great danger is also to be apprehended, from the Blacks of those States, who being excited and armed by the English may greatly strengthen the Invaders, at the same time that the fear of their Insurrection, will prevent the white Inhabitants from leaving their places of Residence and assembling in such Numbers for their own Defence against the English, as otherwise they might do.

Thus the greatest Part of the Tobacco of those States is probably collected, as usual in the Warehouses of the Inspectors, which are also situated on navigable Waters and will be liable to be taken and destroyed by the Invaders. That the destruction of these two States probably may make a great impression on the Minds of the People in the rest, who seeing no prospect of Assistance from any European Power, may become more inclined to listen to Terms of Accomodation.

That the Supplies of Arms and Amunition of War, which they have been made to expect from France having been by various means delay'd and retarded, are not likely to arrive before the Commencement of the next Campaign, and may perhaps be despair'd of, especially if those Supplies are to be carried first to the French Islands.

That notwithstanding the measures to convince the Court of Britain that France does not countenance the Americans, that Court, according to our Information, believes firmly the contrary; and it is submitted to the consideration of your Excellency, whether, if the English make a Conquest of the American States, they will not take the first Opportunity of shewing their Resentment by begining themselves the War that would otherwise be avoided; and perhaps begining it as they did the last, without any previous Declaration.

Upon the whole, we cannot on this Occasion omit expressing our Apprehensions, that if Britain is now suffered to recover the Colonies, and annex again, their great growing Strength and Commerce to her own, She will become in a few Years the most formidable Power by Sea and Land that Europe has yet seen, and assuredly from the natural Pride and Insolence of that People, a Power to all the other States the most pernicious and intolerable.

We therefore would with all Deference submit it to the Wisdom of his Majesty and his Ministers, whether if the Independance of the United States of America with the consequent Diminution of British Power and the Freedom of Commerce with them be an object of Importance to all Europe and to France in particular, this is not the proper time for effectual Exertions in their favour; and for commencing that War which can scarcely be much longer avoided, and which will be sanctified by this best of Justifications, that a much injured, and innocent People will thereby be protected and delivered from cruel Oppression and secured in the enjoyment of their just

Rights; than which nothing can contribute more to the Glory of his Majesty and of this Nation. –

1. Lee Family Papers, 1742–1795, UVL.

BEAUMARCHAIS TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris, 1st. February 1777

. . . my yesterday's letters have informed me of the departure of three of my vessels in three days; one from L'Orient, one from Nantes and the other from Havre. But without the cannon there is no pleasure. M de Sartine summons me this evening to Versailles. May he at last, with a stroke of the pen, save me from the perpetual and insupportable reproaches which I receive without complaint . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 521, 160, LC Photocopy.

VERGENNES TO THE MARQUIS DE NOAILLES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

at Versailles the 1st Feby 1777.

The King has strongly approved, Sir, the particulars which you discussed with the Earl of Suffolk regarding letters of marque; you have made that Minister feel and see the ill consequences resulting from such an extreme recourse; it seems that he perceived them by assuring you that our merchant ships would not be called upon for compliance. I most sincerely desire that the instructions to new privateer owners conform to this assurance; we can only judge them by the Bill to be offered in Parliament.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 521, 161–63, LC Photocopy.

2 Feb. (Sunday)

RESOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Paris, Feby 2d 1777.

It is considered that in the present situation of things at the Courts of France and Spain, we find no probability of obtaining any effectual aid, alliance, or declaration of War against Great Britain, without the following stipulation; therefore

We the Commissioners plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States of America, are unanimously of Opinion, that if France or Spain should conclude a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with our States, and enter into a War with Great Britain in consequence of that, or of open aid given to our States, it will be right and proper for us, or in absence of the others, for any one of us, to stipulate and agree that the United States, shall not separately conclude a Peace, nor aid Great Britain against France or Spain, nor intermit their best exertions against Great Britain during the



*Lord Suffolk*

continuance of such War. Provided always that France & Spain, do on their part enter into a similar stipulation, with our States.

B Franklin Silas Deane Arthur Lee

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 9, 1-2, UPL.

3 Feb.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1777

London [February 3].

The American Dispatches brought over in the *Aurora* have afforded the highest Satisfaction to our Ministry. The Vessel was taken by the bravery of Four Englishmen, who happening to be upon Deck with their loaded [fus]es, whilst the American Sailors were up in the Shrouds, presented their Pieces, and ordered them to come down singly, secured them under the Hatches, and steered their Course for Liverpool. They then seized the Captain's Dispatches, whose Orders were to bear away for Nantz, and to avoid speaking with any Vessel in his Voyage.

Enclosed was a Packet from the Congress, for Dr. Franklin, sealed with their Arms, which with a Delicacy, not always to be met with in British Tars, they forebore to open, rightly judging it improper for the Contents to be made known to any other than Administration.

This Packet they brought to London, and on Saturday Morning delivered into the Hands of Lord North. The Contents of this Packet will inform Government of what they have long wished to know, the true Motive of Dr. Franklin's Journey to the Coast of France.

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 5.

Madrid 3d Feby 1777.

An American Merchantman has brought Accounts from America of the 2d of last Month, which tend to confirm the expectation of the best Consequences of the Success of His Majesty's Forces, and the Captain, one Gordon, is persuaded, that from the Discontent of Washingtons Army, the Difficulty of keeping them together, and other Causes, the several colonies will return to their Allegiance.

This Intelligence came to Persons too well affected to the Americans, who betrayed their concern and surprise at it. I know that in the Northern Ports of this Country, and at Cadiz, the Spaniards and French have been very sanguine in favour of America, but have lately very much lowered their Language. At this Court, however, I must observe that nothing of that kind has ever broke out, and that the Sentiments of the Ministers have, as far as they have been known, been consistent in wishing that no change should finally take place on the Continent of America. It is to be hoped that, if the same opinion is not sincerely entertained at the Court of France, it may, however, out of Policy, be adopted.

I am informed, that lately more vessels have come into the Ports of this Country without meeting any American Enemies, than had before, which leads one to hope, that the Number of their Privateers must be greatly diminished.

1. PRO, State Papers, 94/203.

4 Feb.

THOMAS WOOLDRIDGE TO JOHN ROBINSON, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY <sup>1</sup>

Sir

When I had the honor of attending the Board on the 23d Ulto I understood, that it seemed to be the wish of their Lordships, that I should appeal to the Court of Admiralty in America for the value of our Ship & Cargo, which Lord Dunmore originally detained for the use of the Army & Navy under his Command in Virginia, and as his Lordship has acknowledged that the Flour had been made use of in Virginia before the Tryal and acquital of the Ship & Cargo by the Commissioners whom his Lordship appointed, & that the Wheat has also been made use of for the Supply of the Navy & Army at New York, where the Ship is now unjustly detained by the Master of a Transport whose Authority for taking or detaining I confess myself to be a Stranger to, not knowing that Letters of Marque have yet been granted. I must now beg leave to make application to The Lords Commissioners of His Majestys Treasury for the payment of the Ship & her Cargo upon entering into Bonds of Indemnity with sufficient security to their Lordships, against any payment to be made by the present Piratical Captor, or by any other person whatever I need not again Sir, trouble you, or their Lordships with what I have suffered by this illegal detention of my property, nor repeat the fatal consequences which have attended it, as I presume they are already so well known that they need no further command. I shall only add that I am Sir [&c.]

Tho<sup>s</sup> Wooldridge <sup>2</sup>

Treasury Chambers Feby 4th 1777.

[Endorsed] Read 4th Feby 1777 – Done

1. PRO, Treasury 1/533, 262–64.

2. Wooldridge, a London merchant, claimed ownership of the ship *Molly*. Seized by Dunmore she was not condemned when it was determined that Jonathan Hudson of Baltimore was not the owner, but merely the factor for Wooldridge. Later captured by the Continental Navy brig *Andrew Doria* (see Volume 6), *Molly* was retaken by a British transport and carried into New York.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER ATKINS, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we intend that His Majesty's Ship under your command together with the *Sylph* Sloop now on her passage to Spithead shall convoy the Trade bound from thence to the West India Islands; You are hereby required and directed to take the said Sloop under your command (her Commander being directed to obey your Orders) and so soon as the Wind shall have been fair to bring the Trade from the Downes for the Space of 48

Hours after the 5th instant, if the *Sylph* shall have joined you, if not, as soon afterwards as she does, make enquiry for, and take under your Convoy all Ships and Vessels bound to the Leeward Islands and Jamaica, and make the best of your way with them to the Island of Barbadoes, and having seen the Trade bound to that, & the neighbouring Islands, safe into Carlisle Bay, you are, in case you should not find Vice Admiral Young, or any part of his Squadron there, to leave the *Sylph* Sloop in that Bay, with Orders to her Captain to take under Convoy such Ships as are bound to the neighbouring Islands, and having seen them in safely thither, to make the best of his way to join Vice Admiral Young wherever he may learn he is; But in case you find Vice Admiral Young, or any of His Squadron in Carlisle Bay, you are to leave the Trade bound to the Islands in that neighbourhood, to his, or their care, and take the *Sylph* with you as far as Antigua, leaving her there, under Orders to join Vice Admiral Young as above directed.

You are then to proceed to the Island of St Christopher's, where you are to leave the Trade bound to that Island, and then proceed with the remainder of your convoy to Port Royal, in the Island of Jamaica, where on your arrival, you are to put yourself under the command of Vice Admiral Gayton, and follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

And Whereas the West India Merchants of London did at a general Meeting on the 1st of October last/ Resolve that they would discourage the further employment of any Persons, who having the Conduct of Vessels shall seperate from their respective Convoys, or otherwise willfully disobey the Orders received from the Commanders thereof, We send you herewith a Copy of the said Resolution and require and direct you to take all possible Care on your part, not to seperate from the Ships & Vessels which shall put themselves under your Convoy, and to give such Orders and Instructions to their Masters, as you conceive may be most likely to prevent their separation from you; And in case any of them do loose Company with you, or disobey your Orders, you are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names, with the Circumstances attending such separation, or disobedience, that the Merchants may have full Information thereof. Given &c the 4th February 1777.

Sandwich. J. Buller. Lisburne.

Capt Atkins, *Aeolus*, Spithead

By &c PS.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 240-43.

RANSON & DELAMAIN TO GEORGE KNOWSLEY & CO., HULL<sup>1</sup>

Copy

Gentlemen –

Cognac 4th Februy 1777.

We confirm our last respects to you 1st Inst. since have none of your Favors –

We are yet without a reply from Lord Stormont, notwithstanding our frequent applications, and we last Post had advice from Nantes, that The

American Frigate was sailed, she has left The *Vine* entirely unloaded in that River, under The care of a sort of an Agent of The Congress, named [Nathan] Rumsey now residing in Nantes, he is a lubberly stupid Fellow, incapable of doing any thing clever of himself, Therefore we hope he will not have capacity to ward any off hand stroke, we Therefore have given orders to our friend at Nantes, directly to seize her, and to Capt Pratchell if he can once get Possession of her to bring her immediately to Rochefort; we have likewise desired our Friend if he shd meet with any of her Cargoe exposed to Sale to lay seizure on it, and throw every difficulty possible in the way of The Purchasers & Sellers, but we are sorry to say if we are not assisted as we shd be by Lord Stormont or other People in power all our efforts and trouble will be quite vain, and really that Nobleman has hitherto acted with very great neglect in that affair – We remain with sincere regard Gentlemen [&c.]

H Ranson & Delamain

We solicited The Capt of the American Privateer to discharge The Married Men of The *Vine*'s Crew which he did, Capt Pratchell don't mention whether they are at Nantes or gone off – the young Men he carried off in the Privateer. –

[Endorsed] Copy of a Letter from Messrs Ranson & Delamain to Messrs G Knowsley & Co of Hull dated Cognac 4 febyr 1777 Rd 24 febyr

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 301-02.

5 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL CLARK GAYTON <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we think fit that two Vessels shall be purchased for His Majesty to be employed under your command capable of carrying at least 12 Guns and 90 Men each; You are hereby required and directed to cause two of the best Vessels you can procure to be purchased for His Majesty accordingly upon the best and cheapest terms you can; directing the Naval Officer at Jamaica to draw upon the Navy Board for the Expence attending the same.

And whereas we intend that the said two Vessels shall be register'd on the List of the Royal Navy by the Names mentioned in the Margin, and that they shall be commanded by Masters and Commanders, you are to call them by those Names, and to appoint Captains with the Rank of Masters & Commanders, also Lieutenants and such other Officers as are allowed Sloops bearing the before mention'd Complement of Men accordingly.

You are to cause the said Vessels to be mann'd, arm'd, fitted, victualled and Stored in a proper manner for the Service on which they are to be employed, and to direct the several accounting Officers to take charge of, and Indent for the Provisions Stores and



Ordinance that may be supplied to them, that they may account for the same according to the Rules of the Navy.

As the manning these Vessels from the King's Ships may prove inconvenient to the Service, you are to take the most advisable means you can to prevent such inconvenience, calling on the Merchants &c settled at Jamaica to give all the assistance in their power towards procuring the Men wanted for them, in which it is expected they will be the more ready to comply, the Vessels being to be employed for their protection. Given &c the 5th February 1777.

Clark Gayton Esqr  
Vice Admiral of the White  
&c &c at Jamaica  
By &c PS.<sup>2</sup>

Sandwich.  
J Buller.  
Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 245-47.

2. Similar orders were issued to Vice Admiral James Young at Antigua to purchase two vessels, to be named *Comet* and *Snake*, PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 248-50.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL CLARK GAYTON <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 5 Feby 1777

The West India Merchants having upon an Attendance on my Lords Commrs of the Admty desired that Convoys may be appointed to proceed to England on the 15th May, 20th June, and 1st of August; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction that you appoint Convoys to be ready on those days accordingly directing the Commanding Officers of such Convoys to accompany them till their arrival in England; and in this they are pleased to recommend that you proportion the strength of the Convoys you appoint to the number of the Ships they are to take under their Care.

My Lords observing that the Fleet which sail'd last for England assembled at Morant instead of Blewfields they command me to signify their further directions that you inform them of the Reasons with [*sic* which] occasioned it and that you order the Convoys to assemble and depart from Blewfields in future.

And they are likewise pleased to direct that you Order the Commanders of the several Convoys to proceed with the Ships they have in charge through the Gulph instead of coming through the Windward passage, their Lordships being of Opinion, that in so doing, they will be less liable to fall in with any American Cruizers waiting to intercept them. I am &c P S

Vice Adml Gayton at Jamaica

By the Packet the same day -

Duplicate sent 8 Feb By the *Aeolus*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 537-38.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 5 Feby 1777

The West India Merchants having upon an Attendance on my Lords Commissrs of the Admty desired that Convoys may be appointed to proceed to England on the 30th April, 15th June and 1st of August, I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction that you appoint Convoys to be ready to sail from St Christophers on those days accordingly, directing the Commanding Officers of such Convoys to accompany them till their arrival in England & in this they are pleased to recommend that you proportion the strength of the Convoys to the number of the ships they are to take under their care

And it is their Lordships farther direction that you do all You possibly can for security of the Trade of the several Islands within the Limits of your Command, in protecting them on their Passage to the Island of St Christophers from whence they are to depart as aforementioned. I am &c

P S

Vice Adml Young at Antigua } Duplicate sent the 8 Feb  
By the Packet the same day } by the *Sylph*.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/553, 538-39.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO FERDINAND GRAND <sup>1</sup>

Sir/

Dover Febyry 5th 1777 -

According to Your Orders I left Paris, on Tuesday Morning 3 O'Clock & Proceeded to Boulogne and Callis, but could not find A Vessel at either of these Places to Suit your Purpose, I was detain'd at Callis from Wednesday Night till Friday by Contrary Winds. I reach'd Dover on Saturday Morning where I made all the enquiry after A Vessell in my Power, but could not meet with one to my likeing, Have likewise been at Deal and Foalstone where I was also Disappointed, for those Vessels that would Suit Your Purpose were not to be Purchased. I have now engaged to Stay here for one that is at Coalchester for Sale, this one I am to[l]d will Suit & is A very fine Vessel of the Sort, & has allways been employ'd by the Custom House as A Cruzer, & is now out of Employ & for Sale, on acct of A larger one of 200 Tons being built by the Same owners, in her Roome, She is eight years old built Here abt 85 Tons & every way A Compleat Cutter, (as She must have been to be employ'd by the Custom House to look after Smuggelers,) She is to be Shewn me here in the Course of next week at their expence & if I like her She is to be Valued by Mr Carmier's <sup>2</sup> Friend here, Mr Factor, and another Gentn, if I like the Price wch, I make no doubt will come within my limits, I Shall draw on You at Some few Days Sight for the Payment, I am afraid Shall not be able to get them to Deliver her to me at Havre, but be obliged to take her here, if so Mr Factor has promis'd me to Send her down to Havre, by his People - Capt [Joseph] Hynson is here with me Waitg for the Arrival of the Cutter here, wch make no doubt from her Character I shall like, if So Shall Immediately make the Purchase & Imbarke my Self, on my

leavg this I shall write You, & You may Depend Shall take every care to gard agnst every Difficulty may attend her Passage to Havre, at my arrival there Shall take Post for Paris I am Sir [&c.]

Sam Nicholson

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.
2. William Carmichael.

6 Feb.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS <sup>1</sup>

[London, February 6. 1777]

Lord *North* got up and said, that having a matter of some importance to communicate to the House, he could wish their attention for a few minutes; – it was upon a business which ought not to come detailed before so thin a House, but there would be several stages of the business which would give opportunity for ample discussion – the thing, was this; – there had been, during the present war in America, many prisoners made, who were in actual commission of the crime of high treason; and, there are persons, at present, guilty of that crime, who may be taken, but perhaps for want of evidence cannot be kept in gaol. That it has been customary upon similar occasions of rebellion, or danger of invasion from abroad, to enable the King to seize suspected persons; he would not be thought to hint at any necessity of trusting ministers at present with such a power in general; indeed, the times are different; we are very far from having any rebellion at home; and as to an invasion, we have not the least prospect of it; – for these reasons, it is not meant to ask the full power, usual upon former occasions of rebellion. But as the law stands, they were well informed, that it is not possible at present, officially to apprehend the most suspected persons. Another circumstance is, the persons made prisoners from the rebels, and also in the act of piracy, on the high seas; at present, they can be legally confined only to the common gaols, which would be entirely impracticable. It is necessary for the Crown to have a power of confining them like other prisoners of war. These and some other matters should be attended to in the bill he purposed moving, which was this:

“That leave be given to bring in a bill, to enable his Majesty to secure and detain persons charged with, or suspected of the crime of high treason committed in America, or on the high seas, or the crime of piracy.”

Leave was given accordingly.

1. John Almon, ed., *The Parliamentary Register or History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons . . . during the Third Session of the Fourteenth Parliament of Great Britain* (London, 1777), VI, 151–52.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 TO THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1777

[London] Thursday, Feb. 6.

The *John*, Barras, from London to Antigua, is taken by the Americans.

The *Reynolds*, Manchester, from Rhode Island to Curacoa, is carried into Antigua by the crew.

The *Nancy*, Keys, from Antigua to London, which was taken by the Provincials and carried into New England, after landing part of her cargo, and was sailing to make another port to discharge the rest but was re-taken and is carried into Halifax.

The *Dorothy*, Capt. M'Donnogh, from Honduras, that put into Corke in distress after being retaken from the Rebels, is safe arrived at Bristol.

#### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H. M. S. *Belle Isle*, off Plymouth]

[1777] February 5. It is a pay-day for bounty, on board this ship, (the *Bellisle*,) which occasions a great market on board

6. We begin to grow very sickly, and twenty or thirty of us are suffering with the itch, and we are all dreadfully infested with vermin. I make a constant practice of examining my clothes every day, when we are permitted to go upon deck. I often find them swarming with these.

We are informed that the Admiral was heard to say, that no favor was to be shown to us, on account of our orders. We are also told by some, that we are to be removed, soon, on board the *Ocean*, which is the Admiral's ship; by others, that we shall be removed to prison.

This afternoon about *one hundred* pressed men were brought on board this ship.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 22.

#### AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Paris, February 6. 1777.

Since our last, a Copy of which is inclosed, Mr Hodge is arrived here from Martinique, & has brought safely the Papers he was charged with. He had a long Passage & was near being starved. We are about to employ him in a Service pointed out by you at Dunkirk or Flushing. He has delivered us three Sets of the Papers We wanted. But We shall want more, & beg you will not fail to send them by several Opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

... We are about purchasing some Cutters to be employed as Packets. In the first We dispatch, we shall write more particularly concerning our Proceedings here than by these Merchant Ships We can venture to do, for the Orders given to sink Letters are not well executed. One of our Vessels was lately carried into Gibraltar being taken by an English Man of War, and We hear there were Letters for us, which the Captain just as he was boarded threw out of the Cabin Window, which floating on the Water, were taken up; and a Sloop dispatch'd with them to London. We also just now hear from London, thro' the Ministry here, that another of our Ships is carried into Bristol by the Crew, who consisting of 8 American Seamen with 8 English, and 4 of the Americans being sick, the other 4 were overpower'd by the 8 English, and carried in as aforesaid: The Letters were dispatched to Court.

. . . The *Amphitrite* and the *Seine* from Havre, and the *Mercury* from Nantes are all now at Sea laden with Arms, Ammunition, Brass field Pieces & Stores, Cloathing, Canvas &c. which if they Safely Arrive, will put you in a much better Condition for the next Campaign than you were for the last. . . .

. . . that which makes the greatest Impression in our favour here, is the prodigious Success of our arm'd Ships & Privateers. The Damage We have done their West India Trade has been estimated in a representation to Lord Sandwich by the Merchants of London at 1,800,000 £ sterling which has rais'd Insurance to 28 P Cent, being higher than at any time in the Last War with France & Spain. This Mode of exerting our force against them should be push'd with Vigour. It is that in which We can most sensibly hurt them: And to secure a Continuance of it, we think one or two of the Engineers we send over may be usefully employ'd in making some of our Ports impregnable.

As We are well inform'd that a number of Cutters are building, to cruise in the West Indies against our small Privateers, it may not be amiss, We think, to send your larger Vessels thither & ply in other Quarters with the small ones.

Finding that our Residence here together is nearly as expensive as if We were separate; and having Reason to believe that one of us might be useful in Madrid, and another in Holland, & some Courts farther northward, We have agreed that Mr Lee go to Spain, & either Mr Deane or Myself to The Hague. Mr Lee sets out to-morrow, having obtained Passports & a Letter from the Spanish Ambassador here to the Minister there. The Journey to Holland will not take Place so Soon: The particular Purposes of these Journeys We cannot prudently now explain.

We hope your Union continues firm & the Courage of our Countrymen unabated: England begins to be very jealous of this Court; and We think with some Reason.

1. HU.

2. Blank letters of marque to be filled in and issued by the Commissioners.

7 Feb.

#### LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 9

My Lord

St James's 7th February 1777

I cannot doubt of Your Excellency's attention to the Applications made to You by the Owners of the Vessels taken by the *Reprisal*. The Conduct of the Master of that Vessel is so truly piratical that it cannot be defended by the french Ministers and I should hope, that without presenting a formal Memorial, which it would be more desirable to avoid, the two Ships, the *Vine* and the *George* would be returned to their Owners. You have so discreetly entered into this business that it must be unnecessary to give your Excellency any Instructions on that head.

We are well informed of the Steps taken by the french to induce the Americans to supply them with Tobacco. Attention is paid here to that important object. A Vessel<sup>2</sup> has lately been brought in here by part of the Crew that had on board upwards of four hundred hogsheads consigned to France, and it is most probable that other Cargoes are at Sea for the same destination.

Your conversation with M. de Vergennes on the subject of the five ships was extremely able & well timed, and meets with His Majesty's entire approbation.<sup>3</sup> These are Points on which Your Excellency cannot receive immediate Instructions, and indeed such are unnecessary to You, who on all occasions are prompted by your zeal for His Majesty's Service to attend to every material circumstance that happens, and directed by a Judgment and Discretion that secures The King's Affairs entrusted to You from danger or difficulty. If these Vessels should sail notwithstanding your proper representation, it is to be expected, from the Vigilance of Lord Howe's Cruizers, that they will not arrive at their place of destination, as the Ports at present in the possession of His Majesty's Forces increase the difficulty of eluding the search that will be made after them.

As the Bill for granting Letters of Marque has passed through the Commons, and will not undergo in all probability any material alteration, I send a copy of it inclosed. I am &c

Weymouth

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 172-74.

2. *Aurora*.

3. See Stormont to Weymouth, January 29, 1777.

#### GIAMBATTISTA PIZZONI TO HIS GOVERNMENT IN VENICE<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

London, 7 February 1776 [*sic* 1777]

... Lord Norfolk having in the past few days in the name of his Sovereign solemnly thanked the Baron of Nolken, Envoy Extraordinary of Sweden, I learned that it originated from the Swedish King's refusal given to two American vessels flying the Hamburg flag, which arrived in Marstrand, a fortified city and a newly established free port near the city of Göteborg, to load artillery and war munitions, with orders to his own governors to block similar cargoes in support of the Colonies.

1. *Papers of the Senate, ASV*. Pizzoni was the Venetian Ambassador to Great Britain.

#### AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN<sup>1</sup>

To the Right Honble Lord George Sackville Germaine  
one of the principal Secretaries of State to the  
King of Great Britain.

Paris Feby th 7th 1777

Whereas the Snow *Dickenson* with her Cargoe, which was the property of the Congress of the United States of America, was by an Act of Piracy, in

some of her Crew, carried into the port of Bristol in England, & there, as we are informd, was converted to the use of the Government of great Britain, & the perpetrators of so base & dishonest an Action, the Mates &c were rewarded instead of being punished for their wickedness — & whereas another vessel with her Cargoe of Tobacco, being also the property of the United States, or of some Inhabitants of the same, was lately carried into the port of Liverpoole, in England, by a similar act of treachery in her Crew; and a third has in the same Manner been carried into Halifax.

We, therefore, being Commissioners plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States of America, do, in their name & by their authority, demand from the Court of Great Britain, a restitution of those vessels & their Cargoes, or the full value of them; together with the delivery of the Pirates into our hands to be sent where they may be tried & punishd as their crimes deserve.

We feel it our duty to humanity, to warn the Court of Great Britain of the consequences of protecting such offenders, & of encouraging such actions as are in violation of all moral obligation & therefore subversive of the firmest foundations of the Laws of Nations.

It is hop'd, that the Government of great Britain, will not add to the unjust principles of this war, such practises as woud disgrace the meanest State in Europe; & which must forever stain the character of the british Nation. We are sensible, that nothing can be more abhorrent from the sentiments & feelings of the Congress of the United States, than the authorizing so base a kind of war, as a retaliation of these practises will produce. We are, therefore, more earnest in pressing the Court of great Britain, to prevent, by the act of justice which is demanded, the retaliation, to which necessity, in repugnance to principles, will other wise compel.

B Franklin Silas Deane Arthur Lee

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, No. 335, LC.

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR., NANTES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

[Paris, February 7, 1777] <sup>2</sup>

... The sort of goods for compleating the *Concords* cargo, is Sail Cloth, of this kind the Russia & Holland are the best for our purpose They may be scarce & dear, if so the sail cloth of this Country answering to No 1. & 2. of English, of these a large Quantity. Light cloth such as Ravens duck, Ticklenburghs & Osnaburghs for light Sails, Tent cloths Sailors & Soldiers trousers &c. Linen suitable for Soldiers shirts Cordage assorted for a frigate of 36 Guns in particular large Cables with other sizes as they come in the way, Boxes of Tin if to be had reasonably. Ship Chandlery, but this is an article by the by — In laying out the Duck & Cordage have in view the fixing 2 ships of 36 Guns each Compleat & assort the Articles accordingly. If there is much spare room, Increase these articles in proportion as you judge they

are in price & quality to be purchased to advantage. Large Anchors are wanted & You may put in more than immediately for the 2 frigates.

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS. Continental frigates *Bourbon* and *Confederacy*.
2. Date is approximated.

8 Feb.

#### VERGENNES TO THE MARQUIS DE NOAILLES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Versailles 8th February 1777

. . . It is very difficult, in view of the armaments which England is preparing with almost incredible ardor, to be at ease respecting her intentions, and to deduce therefrom an augury favorable to the duration of peace. We cannot conceal from ourselves that they have no direct connection with her war in America, and we are also aware that some of the Ministers are pressing for war. It does not indeed appear that these are the most influential, but their influence, which does not preponderate at the present moment, may do so at another time. The Empire of Madness usually makes more progress than that of Reason; would it not be madness if England already greatly entangled in her war against her Colonies, should engage in another against two Powers which are not without strength? Where would England count on finding men to face all her enemies in all parts? The difficulty with which she makes her levies, the bad quality of men she takes, seems to show that they are not overabundant. It is said that she proposes a fresh despatch of ten thousand men. I do not know to what part of America. This transport will require a great number of sailors, strong convoys will also be necessary. Can this be done without weakening the great armament? In our uncertainty as to what may happen, we do not neglect the precautions which prudence recommends; we are not hurrying our armaments, but we are ready to prepare them at the first need. . . .

de Vergennes

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 521, 224-25, LC Photocopy.

9 Feb. (Sunday)

#### "EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, FEB. 9." <sup>1</sup>

. . . The Mill Prison, used during the French and Spanish War, is to be got ready to receive the American Prisoners.

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, February 14, 1777.

10 Feb.

#### "EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GLASGOW, FEB. 10" <sup>1</sup>

Last week the *Jenny*, Duncan, arrived from Antigua in ballast. She sailed from thence the 23d of December. Mr. Thompson of Greenock (who was carpenter of the *Carron*, Montgomery, when taken) came home in the



*Jenny* by the run, and was an active hand in retaking the *Ronals* of Bristol, loaded with about 500 hogsheads of sugar.

She had been taken by an American privateer, and was fitted out from Providence for Curasseau, pretending to load salt there, in return for beef, pork, fish, flour, staves, onions, and potatoes. The master and two mates were Americans; the crew, consisting of 14 hands, were English, Irish, and Scots, who, by necessity, had been driven to take employ in the American service.

During the voyage, they formed a resolution to carry the vessel to a British island; but having made Deseada, the master directed a man at the helm to steer S. and by E. but one of the crew called out to steer W.N.W: immediately the Captain laid his quadrant on the companion, and the sailors coming abaft, on the quarter deck, he said, "What do you mean, my lads." "To carry the vessel to Antigua," replied the tars. "You know, my lads," returned the Captain, "I have all along used you well, and now entreat you to desist from your purpose. I shall purchase you a sloop, or there's the long boat for you; take what you please out of the vessel, only carry the ship into a French island, and go where you will." "'Tis true," said they, "we have been well used, and will use you no worse; but as we are resolved to get among our friends, after being so long prisoners, arguments are in vain; you and the master may take the long boat, and what you will, or go with us to An[tigua]." They preferred the latter.

When they arrived at St. John's, a pilot set off to bring her in, of whom they asked if any ship of war was there, and being answered in the affirmative, they desired him to carry the vessel to Param, a place about 12 miles from St. John's, which he did, and when they came under the fort, the pilot clapt the broad arrow on the main mast, declaring her his seizure.

When the sailors got ashore, they applied to Mr. David King, a very considerable merchant in St. John's, and a firm friend to Government, who immediately embarked in their cause, entered a suit in the Court of Admiralty, and obtained a decree, viz. That the whole cargo and one eighth of the vessel was the property of the man of war, who alone had commission to seize her; but as it was a rule laid down there, for the encouragement of the seamen, to give the half of all captures made in that manner, the half was accordingly assigned them; the other seven-eight[h]s of the vessell fell to the owners at Bristol, and the pilot was to be discharged from ever acting there in that capacity.

The sentence was applauded, and the sailors share amounted to near thirty pounds sterling per man. The command of her was given to Mr. James, who had assisted three Scotsmen in taking and bringing in a schooner to St. John's, loaded with flour from Rhode Island; and was to proceed with her to Bristol.

When they took possession of the vessel, they searched the cabin, and found that the master's private instructions were, to dispose of the cargo, and bring in return, arms and ammunition.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN ROBERT SAWYER, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea, with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather, in the Ship you command, and proceed and cruize between the Lizard and the Start Point to procure Men for His Majesty's Fleet agreeable to the Press Warrant and Instructions which you have received, particularly from the homeward bound Merchant Ships Victualling all such new raised Men as your Ships Company during their continuance on board; And when you have procured as many as she can conveniently contain or have lent so many of her Men as she can spare to Merchant Ships to navigate them in lieu of those you may take from them; You are to repair to Plymouth and dispose of the said new raised Men as Vice Admiral Amherst or the Commanding Officer of His Majesty's Ships there shall direct; delivering with them Lists of their Names, with Notations thereon of the respective times of their coming into the Service that they may be entered for Wages accordingly on the Books of the Ships wherein they may be appointed to serve, and sending to our Secretary an Account of the Numbers procured.

You are occasionally during your being employed as aforementioned, to stretch over to the Coast of France, & endeavour to intercept such of the American Vessels as are alluded to in the Intelligence you will receive in a Letter from our Secretary of this date.

In case of bad Weather you are to anchor in Plymouth Sound or Torbay, and to enquire for Orders, and not finding any to the contrary to return as soon as the Weather will admit and cruize as above directed. Given &c the 10th Feby 1777.

Captn Sawyer, *Boyne*, Plymouth.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

Palmerston.

Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 257-59.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1777

London [February 10].

Three Men of War are ordered to cruize within a League of the Mouth of the River Garonne, to watch the Motions of the American Ships, and to seize all that they meet with, even if they are under French Colours.

The last Letters from Nevis, and other Parts of the Leeward Islands, mention that those Islands are so pestered with American Privateers, that scarce a Ship can go from one Island to the other without great Danger of being taken.

A Letter from Plymouth, of the 4th Instant, says, that five American Vessels are brought in there, and chiefly loaded with Rice and Tobacco, and were carried in by the Crews, who confined the Captains, and then made for England.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8 TO TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1777

[London] Monday, February 10.

The reason of such a number of ships of force being ordered for the Mediterranean, is on account of it being the determined resolution of government to put a stop to the American trade, by stationing ships to cruize at the mouths of the several sea ports.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT<sup>1</sup>

[H. M. S. *Torbay*, off Plymouth]

[1777. February] 7. We were removed from the *Bellisle*, after having been on board nineteen days, and were carried up to Ammores [Hamoze], and put on board the "*Torbay*," a ship of seventy-four guns, and confined in the bay, between decks, where there was not room for all of us to lay down; it is parted off, like a sheep-pen, and takes in two side-ports only.

8. Pleasant weather, but very cold for persons in our condition, as we are obliged to lay upon a wet deck, without either bedding or clothes, more than what we have on our backs – except a very few who have an old blanket apiece. As there is not room enough within our narrow quarters for every one to lay down at night, some are obliged to sit up all night.

9. There are now *sixteen* of our number on the doctor's list, and there are but very few of us but what are either complaining with bad colds or rheumatic pains; and if there are ten sick with as many different complaints, they give them all alike the same medicine.

10. Rough, cold, and some snow; all the way we have to keep ourselves warm, in the day time, is by play, and making ourselves merry.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 23.

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 6.

Madrid 10th Feby 1777.

. . . I am however to observe to Your Lordship that he [Grimaldi] concluded with saying that the extent to which our Armaments and others had now gone was owing to want of confidence and communication, in order to restore which this Court was ready and would be the first to induce such explanations to be brought on between us and France as should remove all seeds of mistrust whatever, and not occasion more preparations than such as related to their Disputes in South America, and to Ours in North America. Without adopting his proposition I confined myself to say that France having been the first Mover ought of course to be the first to lay aside the extraordinary preparations begun in her Ports and such a step on her part would doubtless give great satisfaction. This he said could not happen of itself without something being said or understood upon it, and repeatedly offered that this Court would very willingly speak first. This kind of Overture I apprehend may be owing to either the French finding that they

have brought too formidable an Armament out against them, and their Desire of saving through the Channel of Spain the point of Honour in retracting, or to the success of His Majesty's Arms shewing both Spain and France how desperate a task any open assistance to the Americans would become, and I presume to add that under these circumstances it looks as if the Court of France would be glad of a pretence to reassume a pacific Appearance, and perhaps both Spain and France might be more ready to give solid assurances of not assisting America. Your Lordship however is the best Judge whether the Language of France gives any sanction to this Idea.

1. PRO, State Papers, 94/203.

11 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN STOTT, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

*Surprise*  
*Slo Weazle*

Whereas we intend that you shall proceed in the Ship you command accompanied by H.M. Ship & Sloop named in the Margin whose Commanders are directed to obey your orders to the Coast of Africa, for the Protection and Security of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects in those Parts, and to endeavour to take or destroy any Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies in No America, or any Pirates which you may be able to come up with And whereas we have received a Memorial from the Merchants trading to Senegambia desiring Convoy for about Ten Vessels bound to that province with valuable Cargoes which are expected to be at Spithead by the middle of this month and at the same time desiring that a ship may be appointed to cruize upon the Coast of that province from Cape Blanco to the River Senegal to prevent illicit Trade being carried on by the Subjects of Foreign Powers at Portenderick & other ports within And that you shall take under your convoy a storeship belonging to the African Company. You are hereby required and directed to make enquiry for, and to take under your Convoy, any Trade bound to that Coast, or else where, which may be ready and willing to accompany you . . .

When you have finished the said inspection and examination, you are as long as your Provisions will admit of it, (after reserving a sufficiency to carry you to Jamaica,) to cruize between Whidaw and Cape La Ho, using your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned, and also any other Pirates which you may be able to come [up] with . . . make the best of your way to Jamaica, where you are to deliver the inclosed Packet to Vice Admiral Gayton or the Commanding Officer for the time being of His Majesty's Ships

and Vessels on that Station, and to follow his Orders for your further proceedings; And Whereas the Commander of His Majesty's Sloop *Weazle* above mentd will be directed, after having seen a Storeship belonging to the African Company to Cape Coast Castle, to cruize between Whidaw and Cape La Ho until your arrival; or until the state of his Provisions shall make it necessary for him to quit the Coast, in order to proceed to Antigua to join Vice Admiral Young, you are, if you find him on the Coast, to direct him to continue on the said Station so long as his Provisions will admit, after reserving a sufficiency for his Voyage to Antigua . . .

And Whereas it is difficult to procure Wood and Water on some parts of the Coast of Africa, some of the Men belonging to His Majesty's Ships having been formerly killed, and others Wounded for attempting to supply themselves therewith, without making some acknowledgement to the Natives, We do hereby empower your Purser, (and you are to direct him accordingly) to procure and carry thither Goods, such as you may judge may be most agreeable to the Natives of the Places where you may want to wood and water, not exceeding in value Ten Pounds, which the Purser is to dispose of as you shall direct, at such Places where Wood and Water cannot be got otherwise; And you are to let the Purser know that the said Goods are to be provided out of his standing Allowance of Necessary Money under the Condition of his being allowed Credit on his Accounts for such part thereof, as may be expended for the aforesaid purposes, upon his producing a Certificate under the Hand of the signing Officers of the Ship you command of the particular quantity and value of the Goods applied to that Service; and you are to cause Invoices of the Goods so provided by the Purser, to be lodged in the Office of the Commissioners of the Victualling.

And Whereas Complaints have been made that the Captains of His Majesty's Ships have made ill use of this liberty, by trading themselves on the Coast of Africa, and have even transported great Numbers of Negroes in His Majesty's Ships to the West India Islands for public Sale, to the dishonor of His Majesty's Service, the prejudice of the fair Trader, and in breach of act of Parliamt passed in the Eighth Year of King George the first, which prohibits under severe penalties, the Commanders of His Majesty's Ships to receive any Goods or Merchandize on board in order to trade with the same; We do hereby strictly require and enjoin you neither directly or indirectly to concern yourself in any sort of Trade whatsoever, as you will answer the contrary at your Peril; and in order to prevent any evasive excuses whatever hereafter, We do hereby

declare, that if we get any information of any Goods, Slaves or other Merchandize of what kind soever being received on board the Ship you command in the way of Trade, We shall esteem the same to be your own Act, and shall expect you to be accountable for it, in as much as such a Practice cannot possible be carried on without your knowledge and consent.

For the preservation of the health of your Ship's Company whilst you shall be on the Coast of Africa, You are to be careful to observe the following Instructions Vizt

- 1st – Never to lie 24 Hours in any River except Gambia and Sierra Leon, nor to suffer your Officers or Men to lie on shore or to drink Palm Wine.
- 2d – You are not to let your Men cut Wood or do any work on shore which the Natives can be hired to do for a small Expence.
- 3d – When any of your Men are on the recovering hand from Sickness, you are to cause them to be excused from Duty as much as possible, until they are perfectly recovered.

In case of the Death of any of your Officers during such time as you shall not be under the command of a Superior or Senior Officer, You are to appoint such other Persons to act in their room, as by the quality of their employment ought to succeed therein.

And in case of your inability by Sickness or otherwise, to execute these Instructions, you are to be careful to leave them with the next Officer in command to you, who is hereby empowered to carry the same into execution. Given &c the 11th February 1777.

Captn Stott *Minerva* – Spd  
By &c PS.

Sandwich.  
Palmerston.  
H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 260-68.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 11 Feby 1777

Having communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letter of the 7 Inst informing them of the diseased Condition of the Rebel Prisoners on board the *Belleisle* & of most of them being over run with Vermin for want of Cloaths to Shift themselves; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to cause those that are diseased to be sent on shore to the Hospital, taking care that they are guarded so as to prevent their making their escape, and such of them as are in want of Cloaths or Bedding, to be furnish'd with a Bed, a Jacket & two Shirts or such of those Articles, or any others that may be absolutely necessary for keeping them clean &

wholesome, transmitting an Account of the Particulars issued to them respectively, that orders may be given for the same to be allowed on the Ships Books I am &c  
 Vice Adml Amherst, at Plymouth P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 19.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8 TO TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1777

[London] Tuesday, Feb. 11.

The following is the substance of the bill to empower his Majesty to secure and detain persons charged with, or suspected of, the crime of high treason, committed in North America, or on the high seas, or the crime of piracy, viz.

Whereas a rebellion and war have been openly and traiterously levied and carried on in certain of his majesty's colonies and plantations in America, and acts of treason and piracy have been committed upon the ships and goods of his Majesty's subjects; and many persons have been seized and taken, who are expressly charged or strongly suspected of such treasons and felonies, and many more such persons may be hereafter so seized and taken:

And whereas such persons have been or may be brought into this kingdom, and into other parts of his Majesty's dominions; and it may be inconvenient in many such cases to proceed forthwith to the trial of such criminals, and at the same time of evil example to suffer them to go at large:

Be it therefore enacted by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in the present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that all and every person or persons, who have been, or shall hereafter be seized or taken in the act of high treason, committed in any of the colonies, or on the high seas, or in the act of piracy, or who are, or shall be charged with, or suspected, of the said crimes, and who have been, or shall be committed for the said crimes, or either of them, or for suspicion of them, or either of them, in any part of his majesty's dominions, to the common gaol, or any other place of confinement specially appointed for that purpose by warrant under his majesty's sign manual, by any magistrate having competent authority in that behalf (who is hereby authorised to commit such persons to the place so to be appointed) all and every such person and persons shall and may be thereupon secured and detained in safe custody, without bail or mainprize until the——— and that no judge or justice of peace shall bail or try any such person or persons, without order from his majesty's honourable privy council, signed by——— of the said privy-council, until the said——— any law statute, or usage, to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That this act shall continue and be in force, until the said ——— and no longer.

ARTHUR LEE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Feby 11th 1777

Whatever Orders you have for me, will be forwarded from the Ports of Spain, & I must beg a few blank Commissions for Privateers, as it will be one part of my endeavors, to excite the Merchants in Spain, to cruise against our Enemies.

... A large Cargo of Woolens, linen, cordage, & Sail Cloth will be dispatched from hence in three weeks, which, I hope will reach their destination in time.

The Corporation here, have lowered the City duty upon Tobacco brought from America into this port in order to encourage a commerce with us; for which I have thought it my duty to return them thanks.

1. Papers CC (Letters from Arthur Lee, 1776–1780), 83, I, 31–38, NA.

12 Feb.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 TO THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1777

[London] Wednesday, February 12.

At a meeting of the West India merchants, held last week, a state of the captures taken by the Americans was laid before them, when it appeared that they had taken 40,000 hogsheads of sugar, since the commencement of the war, besides a very great quantity of rum, cotton, and other articles.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, FEB. 12.” <sup>1</sup>

We hear that some large ships, laden with tobacco and indigo, belonging to the Rebels, are expected from Virginia, bound to some port in France, and that the *Courageux*, of 74 guns, *Augusta* of 64, and *Culloden* of 74, are ordered to cruise in quest of them; the two former are already sailed, and the latter, we hear, will sail in a day or two.

1. *London Chronicle*, February 13 to February 15, 1777.

STIPULATIONS OF CAPTAIN JACQUES BOUX FOR A COMMISSION IN THE  
CONTINENTAL NAVY <sup>1</sup>

Duplicate

Observation 1.

Monsieur Boux wishes to give up the comforts of his pension which he is enjoying after thirty years of service only because circumstance seems to call him to a new Glory, Grand as well as new. The establishment of a powerful military navy is what he proposes and for which he will aim and



Undertake all that is honorable to succeed, scorning all Grief and Hardships which are inseparable. Glory compensates for everything and is its reward.

2.

Mr Boux, Being a military man, he no longer wishes to cease being one; he requests upon this date to become an officer of the highest Rank in the navy of the United States of Western America, for he no longer wishes to command fleets or squadrons of this navy although he may become a legislator or minister.

3.

Mr Boux consents wholeheartedly to travel everywhere, wherever there is need for the construction of Warships of the United States of America, as well as for any honorable mission.

4.

Mr Boux requests that they obtain the king's agreement that he might depart from his country and to go to serve in America. Upon that the pension which he has been receiving is to be withdrawn.

5.

Mr Boux requests that he not be required to have the officers maintained aboard the Vessel that he might command, wishing to dine Alone.

6.

Mr Boux requests that he be allowed to name the captain or captains, of the Ships which he will have Built, as well as the first two officers of each one.

[Observation in the handwriting of Silas Deane]

We reserve to ourselves the Nomination of the Captain and Officers of one of the Ships, leaving the other to Mr Boux

7.

Mr Boux requests for His nephew a Lieutenant's Commission in the navy of the united States of Western America (to be Dated the Day upon which he will leave the navy of the king of france), with the appointment approved by Congress.

8.

That the travel expenses of this Young officer as well as those of His Sojourn in holland to supervise the construction work, or other will be paid accordingly.

At Paris, Feb. 12. 1777. The above Articles are agreed to by us, and we shall give M Boux a Commission when he sails from Europe, appointing him a Commodore in the Service of the United States of America, with the Pay belonging to that Rank; and we agree that the Pay commence from the Day of his Setting out from Paris in the Service of the said States

Agreement wt Boux<sup>2</sup>

B Franklin  
Silas Deane

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

2. Captain Boux was given permission to go abroad for four years, but there is no indication that he actually came to the United States.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Separate and  
Secret No 28  
My Lord

Paris the 12th feby 1777

I am secretly informed, that Mr Deane is going to Spain, by Mr D'Aranda's advice, and Mr Lee to Holland. Another Informer tells me, that Deane goes to Holland, and Lee to Spain. It is certain, that the Rebels are sending Agents to both those Countries, and if I am not greatly misinformed, they have already made agreements, with several individuals in Holland, for that sort of Assistance, which they have but too frequently received from this Country, and still continue to receive. I do not know particulars, but am Assured from pretty good Authority that the Rebels do draw Arms, and Ammunition, from Holland, and that too in large Quantities.

Mr [David] Allen, who during his Stay At Nantes, has given me every intelligence in his Power, informs me, that the American Frigate, the *Reprisal*, is Cruizing between Belisle and Nantes; He likewise informs me, that a Vessel is preparing to Sail for North America, Laden with Arms, and Ammunition; in order to conceal them, Bulkheads have been made fore and Aft, and Salt Stowed in the main-hatchway.

The Strong partiality of this Country to the Rebels, the thirst of Gain, and the intrigues of those, who wish to kindle a flame, would produce Attempts of this kind, even if the french Ministers sincerely endeavoured to check them. (How little that has been the Case hitherto, I need not say.) We shall I am confident, take the only effectual way to prevent these succours, by being very watchful to intercept them, off the coast of North America. Whatever french Ships are so intercepted, this Court, I am persuaded, will never Attempt to claim.

I am with the greatest Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 220-21.

13 Feb.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

Gentn

[Admiralty Office] 13 Feby 1777

Vice Adml Amherst having represented to my Lords Commrs of the Admty that many of the Rebel Prisoners who are now on board the *Belleisle* at Plymouth, are diseased and their Lordships having directed him to cause such of them as are under that description to be sent ashore to the Hospital, taking care that they are guarded so as to prevent their making their escape; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith and to signify their direction to you to cause them to be received into the said Hospital, & proper means used for their recovery, that care be taken that they do not make their Escape from thence; and that when cured they be

disposed of as Vice Admiral Amherst shall direct. I am &ca P S  
Commissrs for Sick & Hurt –

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 33.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 TO THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1777

[London] Thursday, Feb. 13.

All the ports which his Majesty's forces are in possession of in America, are to be provided with booms and chains across the mouths of the harbours, which are to be hove tight every night to prevent any vessels coming in or out without knowledge of the commandant.

#### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Torbay*, in Hamoze]

[1777. February] 11. We hear that General Lee is taken. I had to-day a handful of bread given to me by a woman, which I *joyfully* received.

12. We are informed that Parliament has passed an act that all Americans taken in arms against the King, shall be deemed rebels; and those taken in armed vessels, upon the high seas, as pirates.

13. Our company is in a very poor state of health. Last night I sat up with one at the point of death. We were removed to-day from the *Torbay*, after being on board six days, and carried on board the *Burford*, a ship of *seventy-four* guns. Thanks be to God for this removal, for here we have more room and there are but few men belonging to the ship besides the officers.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 23, 24.

#### JOURNAL OF SAMUEL CUTLER <sup>1</sup>

[On board H.M.S. *Burford*, off Plymouth]

Feb. 13, 1777. Third remove from the *Torbay* – after being on board her 6 days – to the *Burford* of 70 guns, George Bowyer, Esq, commander, a man of humanity, tenderness and compassion, which we have all experienced. When he found what a situation Fitzherbet<sup>2</sup> left us in, he expressed himself surprised, and told us he would do all in his power to make our situation as comfortable as possible, and give us all the indulgence he could, consistent with his duty. Capt Bowyer has taken our necessitous condition so much into consideration as to order all that are destitute of beds, bedding, clothes, &c, to a considerable amount, which we have reason to believe, by his own acknowledgment, is at his own expense. For which favor we are very thankful. Such humane behaviour demands our grateful acknowledgments.

1. "Cutler's Journal," *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXII, 43.

2. Captain Thomas Fitzherbert, commander of H.M.S. *Raisonable*, who had captured Massachusetts privateer brig *Dalton*. See Volume 7.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Nantes Feb. 13. 1777. –

Upon examination of the *Concord*, her Inventory was found very deficient, – those things which we thought would be a diminution of her price of at least 5000 Livres were not in her. It seems the owner has lately fitted out a large Ship for the Coast of Guinea and has taken from one to supply the other. This determined Mr Peltier to purchase the *Count de Vergennes* which is of the same size and age, the difference between them is, that this Ship is not so sharp as the other, and will require some addition to her Riggins &c; but she is more burdensome, & cost 10,000 Livres less money. –

No Time shall be lost in dispatching her which I expect to compleat in 3 Weeks from this Date. I mention this that the Charts & Dispatches may arrive in time

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 53, APS.

14 Feb.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 3.

St James's 14th Feby 1777.

Information has been received that a Mr Lee who is employed as an Agent for the Colonies in rebellion has set out for Spain. If he should come to Madrid, Your Excellency will pay such attention to his motions and applications as may be consistent with your situation. It has also been represented that a Mr Diggs [Thomas Digges] who is likewise an Agent from the American Congress has sent on board several Spanish Vessels to Bilbao, sundry Casks under the appearance of Nails which cover a large number of Musquet Locks, from thence it is proposed to send them to America. Your Excellency will endeavour to find out whether this information is founded, and take such measures as may be proper to frustrate the Design.

1. PRO, State Papers, 94/203.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 11

My Lord

St James's 14th Feby 1777

The conversation Your Excy had with M. de Maurepas and the proper observations You made on the part they are now acting were extremely proper and may have some good effect. The great care the french Ministers take that the succours the American Rebels receive from France shall bear every appearance of being sent by private persons makes it inexpedient to remonstrate publickly on the subject, but Your Excellency very prudently represents to them the duplicity of their Conduct in such a manner as shews

them We are not ignorant of the unfriendly part they are taking, which is more disgraceful to their Honour than injurious to our Interest.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 229-30.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 14 Feby 1777

I have communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letter of the 11th inst informing them that the *Somerset* has been dock'd & the *Raisnable* taken into Dock in her room; that upon the *Torbay's* being order'd to Sea you have caused the Rebel Prisoners<sup>2</sup> to be removed to the *Burford*; that the Seven Prisoners on board the *Experiment*, who belonged to an American Vessel<sup>3</sup> taken by her on her Passage from Rhode Island, will be kept in safe Custody on board her 'til you receive their Lordships pleasure respecting them . . .

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 47-48.

2. Crew of the Massachusetts privateer brig *Dalton*.

3. Brig *Hannah*.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM GARNIER, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we intend that His Majesty's Ship under your command together with the *Cygnat* Sloop, now on her passage to Cork, shall convoy the Trade bound from thence to the West India Islands; You are hereby required and directed to take the said Sloop under your command (her Commander being directed to obey your Orders) and so soon as the Wind shall be fair after the 20th Instant if the *Cygnat* shall have joined you, and if not, as soon afterwards as she does, make enquiry for and take under your Convoy all such Trade bound to the West Indies as may be there, and ready to sail, and putting to Sea make the best of your way, consistent with their Security towards the Places of their destination; And having seen to Barbadoes such part of the said Trade as may be bound to that and the Neighbouring Islands safe into Carlisle Bay, You are, in case you should not find Vice Admiral Young or any part of his Squadron there, to leave the *Cygnat* Sloop in that Bay with Orders to her Captain to take under Convoy such Ships as are bound to the Neighbouring Islands, and having seen them in safety thither, to make the best of his Way to join Vice Admiral Young, wherever he may learn he is; But in case you find Vice Admiral Young or any of his Squadron in Carlisle Bay you are to leave the Trade bound to the Islands in that Neighbourhood to his, or their Care and take the *Cygnat* with you as far as Antigua; leaving her there under Orders to join Vice Admiral Young as above directed.

You are then to proceed to the Island of St Christopher's, where you are to leave the Trade bound to that Island, and then proceed with the re-

mainder of your Convoy to Port Royal in the Island of Jamaica (where on your arrival you are to put yourself under the Command of Vice Admiral Gayton and follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

And Whereas the West India Merchants of London did at a General Meeting on the 1st October last resolve that they would discourage the further employment of any Persons who having the Conduct of Vessels shall separate from their respective Convoys or otherwise wilfully disobey the Orders received from the Commanders thereof, We send you herewith a Copy of the said resolution, and require and direct you to take all possible care on your part, not to separate from the Ships and Vessels which shall put themselves under your Convoy, and to give such orders and Instructions to their Masters as you conceive may be most likely to prevent their separating from you, and in case any of them do lose Company with you or disobey your orders, You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names with the Circumstances attending such separation or disobedience, that the Merchants may have full information thereof.

It being of great consequence to His Majesty's trading Subjects that the Ships which proceed under your Protection should be conveyed safely to the Ports to which they are respectively destined you are to be particularly careful for their Safety, keeping them together by every means in your power, and on no Account to leave them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep Company, as we expect that in the course of your passage you accommodate your progress to the worst sailing Ship that may be under your care. Given &c the 14th February 1777.

Captn Garnier, *Southampton*, Cork.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

Palmerston.

Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 275-78.

GEORGE STANCOMBE TO GEORGE SIBLEY<sup>1</sup>

(Copy

Sir.

Port Lorient [Lorient] Feby 14. 1777

I have made so bold to send you these few lines to acquaint you with our misfortune of being taken by an American on the first day of February, called the *Reprisal* of 16 Guns and 135 Men, Commanded by one Weeks [Lambert Wickes], and was sent here to this port where we have got Subsistence to carry us to St Malo and the English Broker tells me that you may recover the Vessel & Cargo by sending to the English Ambassador at Paris. I have sent this Letter to you because our Captain is not arrived as yet for he was Carried on board the Privateer with 3 of the People, & I with the other 3 People was left on board & brought here and turn'd about our Business so I think myself in duty bound to acquaint you with the misfortune, as a Letter will Come to London two days before it will to Poole, so I thought

proper to acquaint you as being the highest Merchant. The Brokers Name is Praud at L'Orient, so I beg leave to Conclude and remain [&c.]

Geo: Stancombe

Once Mate of the *Poly & Nancy*

I shall be glad to receive a Letter from You at Saint Malo's to be left to the Commissarys, to know how to come to Poole without being Imprest – We was taken in the Latd 47D..31M & Longd 8D..48M by my reckoning – [Endorsed] address'd to Mr Geo Sibley No 24 Little Trinity Lane London

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 304.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Port Lewis [Port-Louis] Feby 14th 1777 –

This will inform you of my Safe arrival after a tolerable Successfull Cruize, having Captured 3 Sail of Brigs one Snow & One Ship, the Snow is a Falmouth Packet bound from thence to Lisbon she is Mounted with 16 Guns and had Near 50 Men on board She Engaged Near an hour before she struck I had one Man killed My first Leiut had his left Arm shot off[f] above the Elbow<sup>2</sup> & the Leiut of Marines had a Musquet Ball lodged in his Wrist.<sup>3</sup> They had Several Men wounded but none killed, I am in great hopes that both my Wounded Officers will do well, as there is No Unfavourable Symptoms at present; Three of our Prizes is Arrived & I expect the other two in to Morrow, As I am informed that there has been two American Private Ships Warr, lately taken and Carried into England, I think it would be a good oppertunity to Negotiate and Exchange Prisoners if it Could be done, but Submit to your better Judgments to Act as you think proper I Should be very Glad to hear from you as Soon as possible & Should be Much obliged if you would point out Some line or Mode for me to proceed by in Disposing of Prisoners & prizes As Nothing will be done before I Receive your Answer to this. I hope you'll excuse my being more particular at Present, from Gentlemen Your [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

A List of the Vessels & Cargoes taken Vizt

- No. 1, A Brig from Pool, bound to Cadiz, with a Cargo of Cod Fish –  
 2, A Brig with Wheat & Flour from Dublin bound to Lisbon –  
 3, A Brig from Sheetland wth Barley bound Cadiz  
 4, *Swallow* packet bound from falmouth to Lisbon in Ballast  
 5 A Ship from Bordeaux bound to London-Derry with Brandy, Claret & Hoops.

Three of those are Arrived and the Other two are not farr Off  
 L.W.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 62, APS.

2. Robert Harris.

3. John Elliott.

JOHN LLOYD TO RALPH IZARD <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes, February 14. 1777

. . . A large ship, last week, arrived at L'Orient, in six weeks from Charleston, bound to this Port; she has on board five hundred barrels of Rice – and upwards of sixty thousand pounds of Indigo; the Cargo (except fourteen thousand pounds of the Indigo, which is on private Account,) belongs to the State, and as it comes to a good market – it will produce a great profit, and neat at least Eighteen Thousand Pounds Sterling. . . .

1. Anne Izard Deas, ed., *Correspondence of Mr. Ralph Izard of South Carolina, from the year 1774 to 1804 with a Short Memoir* (New York, 1844), 241–49. Hereafter cited as Deas, ed., *Correspondence of Ralph Izard*.

15 Feb.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 15 Feby [1777]

Mr Pennant one of the Members for Liverpool having laid before my Lords Commrs of the Admty Extract of a Letter which he has receiv'd from the Chamber of Commerce at Liverpool desiring him to apply to their Lordships for some Protection for their Homeward bound Trade from Tortola, and that a Sloop of War may be appointed to attend their Ships til they can join the Fleet off Anguilla; I am commanded by their Lordships to recommend it to you to comply with the said request if you can consistently with the other services under your Care I am &ca

P S

Vice Adl Young at Antigua By the *Aeolus*, at Portsmouth  
Duplicate By the *Southampton* at Cork –

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 48.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG <sup>1</sup>

Copy

By the Commissrs for executing  
the Office of Ld High Adml &c.

In pursuance of His Majts pleasure signified to Us by the Earl of Suffolk, one of His Majestys Principal Secretaries of State, in his Letter of this days date, You are hereby required and directed to station proper Cruizers off the Harbour of St Eustatia, and to direct their Commanders to search all Dutch Ships and Vessels going into or coming out of the said Harbour, and to send such of them as shall be found to have any Arms, Ammunition, Cloathing, or Materials for Cloathing on board, into some of His Majts Ports within the Limits of Your Command, to be detained there until farther Order. Given under our Hands the 15 Feby 1777

Sandwich Palmerston H. Palliser



To James Young Esqr Vice Adml of the Red & Comdr in Chief of His Majs  
Ships & Vessels at the Leeward Islands  
By Command of their Lordps P. Stephens

1. PRO, State Papers, 84/555.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13 TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1777

[London] Saturday, Feb. 15.

The *Experiment* man of war has carried into Plymouth an American brig, which she took near Rhode-island, bound from St. Martin's to Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

The *Experiment* man of war arrived from Rhode-island, was a new ship when she sailed from England to America; she is built on a new plan, for though a 50 gun ship, she is just like a frigate, having no Roundhouse on the quarter-deck, and being to prove the utility of the scheme, was called the *Experiment*.

Postscript.

Capt. Wright, of the *Success*, arrived at Barcelona from Portsmouth, on the 16th December sailed from Falmouth under convoy of the *Worcester* man of war; on the 18th ditto parted company in a hard gale; on the 23d ditto fell in with an American private[e]r mounting 14 guns on one deck, who brought her too, and ordered the Captain to keep under their lee till the sea would admit of their boarding her; in the evening the weather came thick, with squalls and rain. Capt. Wright embraced this opportunity of escaping, which he effected by altering his course. On the 25th of December he saw the same privateer with a large ship, a brig, and a schooner, in company; but by again altering his course, was fortunate enough to escape.

1. *Hannah* with a cargo of salt, *London Chronicle*, March 1 to March 4, 1777.

16 Feb. (Sunday)

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 30

My Lord

Paris 16th feby 1777

I take the first opportunity of letting Your Lordship know, that I have very good Reason to believe, that Mr Lee, one of the Rebel Emmissaries here, has succeeded in making an Agreement with the Farmers General, and that it is actually Signed. By this Agreement, (which to avoid the appearance of treating with the Rebels, or their Agents, is made with a Monsieur Boileau, Huissier du Parlement, who is a mere prete Nom) the Farmers General engage, to take Six hundred thousand Quintals of MaryLand, and Virginia Tobacco at thirty two Livres the Quintal, delivered to them in France. Your Lordship Sees, that the whole Amount of the Six hundred thousand Quintals, is more than Nineteen Millions of Livres, which is to be paid as the Tobacco arrives. . . . It would ill become me My Lord, in writing

to your Lordship, to dwell upon the obvious importance, of frustrating this Agreement, and depriving the Rebels of this Supply, which I hope will be done, by our Cruizers intercepting the American Ships, that are to bring this Tobacco to France, and still more effectually, by an expedition against MaryLand, and Virginia. . . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 237-38.

17 Feb.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM BORROWSTOUNESS, FEB. 17.”<sup>1</sup>

Last Night arrived here John Grindlay, Mate of the *Isabella* of this Place, which was taken the 15th of October last, off the Coast of Portland, on her Passage to Minorca, by an American armed Schooner.<sup>2</sup> Mr Grindlay and one of the Crew were left in the Ship, and ten Men were put on board from the Schooner; they carried the *Isabella* into Marblehead, it being impossible for these two to rescue her. Mr. Grindlay left Marblehead on the first of December, having with much Difficulty obtained Leave to come home, by Way of Bilboa, in an American Brig loaded with Fish. When he was at Marblehead, the Ship that took the *Isabella* arrived with some more Prizes. There were a great many Prizateers fitting out at Marblehead, and the neighbouring Ports of Salem, Beverley, &c. mounting from 14 to 24 Guns, which would be all out early in the Spring.

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, February 27, 1777.  
2. Brig *Isabella* was taken by the Massachusetts privateer schooner *True Blue*, Captain William Coles, *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, November 28, 1776. See also Volume 7, 493.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN RICHARD COTTON, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas application hath been made to Us that the Ships named on the other side hereof, bound from the Port of London to the River Senegal with very valuable Cargoes, (part of which Ships are now supposed to be at, and the remainder on their way to Spithead) may proceed under your convoy, You are hereby required and directed to make enquiry for the said Ships, and taking them, or such of them as may be arrived at Spithead, when the wind shall have been fair to bring the Trade from the Downes for 24 hours after the 20th instant, under your convoy, put to Sea without a moments loss of time, and proceeding to the Coast of Africa in pursuance of our Instructions of the 11th Instant, see the said Ships and such others as you may have under your convoy in safety as far as your way and theirs may be together. Given &c the 17th February 1777.

Captn Cotton, *Pallas*, Spithead.

By &c

PS

Sandwich.

J Buller.

H. Palliser.

Ships Names.

Masters Names.

<i>Spence</i> .....	O'Hara.
<i>Philip</i> .....	Hicks.

<i>Black Prince</i> .....	Wallace.
<i>Polly</i> .....	Hinghorne.
<i>Two Sisters</i> .....	Smith.
<i>Polly</i> .....	Cornwall.
<i>Juilliott</i> .....	Calvert.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 280-81.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1777

London [February 17].

On Saturday Evening a Messenger arrived at Lord Viscount Weymouth's Office from Lord Viscount Stormont, his Majesty's Ambassador at the French Court, with an Account of Three capital Ships having sailed from Toulon, the Day before the Messenger was dispatched to England, laden with Arms, Gunpowder, and Cloathing for the American Rebels, under Pretence of being bound to the French Settlements in the West Indies. The said Dispatches were laid before his Majesty Yesterday.

A Letter just received from Bermudas informs us, that, in the Beginning of November, his Majesty's Frigate *Galatea*, Captain [Thomas] Jordan, took and carried into Bermudas a large Schooner from Bourdeaux to Philadelphia; she had on board 1050 Stand of Arms, 10 Tons of Gunpowder, 29 Tons of Lead, 2 Barrels of Oil, and about 2000 l. worth of Canvas, Silks, Wine, and Brandy.<sup>1</sup> The Goods, except the Arms and Ammunition, were sold at vendue.

1. Schooner *William*. See Volume 6, 1369.

18 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By the Commissioners for Executing the Office of  
Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c

Whereas Mr. *Robert Faulkner* has been Educated in the Royal Academy at *Portsmouth*, and is well qualified to serve His Majesty at Sea, you are hereby required and directed to receive him on Board His Majesty's *Ship* under your Command, and enter him as one of her Complement.

You are to take Care that he applies himself to the Duty of a Seaman; and he is to have the Privilege of walking the Quarter-Deck: You are to allot him a proper Place to lye in, without setting up any Cabbin; and you are to rate him Voluntier by Order, which will intitle him to Able Seaman's Pay.

You are to oblige him to keep a Journal, and to draw the Appearance of Head-lands, Coasts, Bays, Sands, Rocks, and such like; and you are to take Care, that the Master, Boatswain, and School-master, do instruct him in all Parts of Learning, that may qualify him to do the Duty of an Able Seaman and Midshipman.

After two Year's Service at Sea, you are to rate him Midshipman Ordinary, or Midshipman, if he shall be qualified for it.

When your Ship shall be at *Spithead*, or in *Portsmouth* Harbour, you are to direct him to attend the Mathematical Master, in order to his examining his Journals, and representing to Us how he has improved himself.

And, at the End of the Service in the Ship under your Command, you are to give him such a Certificate of his Sobriety, Diligence, and Skill in the Profession of a Seaman, as he shall deserve; as also, of the Length of Time he has served with you, either as a Voluntier by Order; or a Midshipman.

Given under Our Hands the 18th Day of February 1777 –

To *The Honble Capt. Cornwallis*

Commander of His

Majesty's Ship

the *Isis* *Portsmouth*

By Command of their Lordships,

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

*Sandwich.*

*J Buller.*

*H Palliser.*

1. Cornwallis Papers, II, NMM. This is a printed form. Filled-in words are here italicized.

### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H. M. S. *Burford*, in *Hamoze*]

[1777. February] 17. Very stormy. To-day we had delivered to us, by the purser of the ship, bedding and clothes. I received a shirt, and bedding, consisting of a *flock bed and pillows*, a *rug*, and *blankets*. Some, who were almost naked, had nearly a whole suit given them. When they gave us the shirts, they told us to take off our old ones and throw them overboard, "lice and all."

18. Those of us who did not receive clothes yesterday, have received them to-day, and those who did not receive beds, are to receive them in a few days. Our beds are a great comfort to our sore bodies, after laying fifty-five nights without any – all the time since we were taken – sometimes upon hard cables, sometimes upon boards laid over the cables, and at other times on a wet deck, with nothing to cover us but the clothes on our backs. Now we have good bedding for our comfort, thanks be to God! *and a good friend*; for we are told that the captain of the ship, whose name is Boyer,<sup>2</sup> gave us these clothes and beds, out of his own pocket.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 25.

2. Captain George Bowyer, R.N.

19 Feb.

### BEAUMARCHAIS TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris the 19 February, 1777

All the Examinations, inquisitions and surveys of arms and Merchandise, Sir, have doubtless an object of great usefulness, since they have been thought necessary. They have at least Served to refute all the base Suspicions which have been feigned as to the excellence of the articles

furnished; that is to say in good French, as to the honesty of Mr Hortalez. But was all this worth the time that it has cost us? . . .

*Le Mercure* and *la Seine* have sailed, one from Havre and the other from Nantes, at a season when they may make directly for the Continent . . . I would not like to expose immense riches, such as the cargo of *la Thérèse*, by sending it directly to the continent. *L'Amelie* and *la Thérèse* will go therefore with your approval to St Domingo I send in the *l'Amelie* Mr Carabasse, my correspondent at the Cape<sup>2</sup> with instructions to get there before the arrival of *la Thérèse*, and to buy three or four Bermudian vessels, for the voyage between the Cape and the Continent, to ferry my cargoes, divided into portions, and vice versa, with my several cargoes and their returns, delivering them to the Commissioners of Congress, until Congress itself shall send armed vessels to the Cape to empty the store houses, which shall take care to keep always filled, provided that suitable returns be promptly made.

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. Cape François.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

No 34

My Lord

Paris the 19 feby 1777

My Last Letters from Nantes say, that an American Vessel, called the *Success*, James Anderson Master, Burthen about two hundred Tons, Laden with salt and Arms, is on the point of Sailing from thence, for North America. Another American Ship called the *Elisabeth and Mary*, Capt. [Peter] Young Master, about 300 Tons Burthen, and Likewise Laden with salt and Arms, is also preparing to sail. It is supposed, that they are both bound to Philadelphia. Messieurs Pennet, and Rumsey, two American Agents, have been employed in fitting out these Vessels, which take in the Arms they are to carry at Corrine, Nine Miles below Nantes. This Intelligence, My Lord, comes to me from M David Allen, who seems very desirous, that I should make favourable mention of him, I have no personal Knowledge of this Gentleman, but must do him the Justice to say, that during his stay at Nantes, He has shewn himself desirous, of giving every information in his Power.

I am with the greatest Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 253.

#### CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

L Orient Feby 19th 1777

I Wrot you Last post Informing you of the Sucksess of my Last Cruize & take this Opertunity To Inform you of the Safe Arrival of All my Prizes I am in Great hopes youl be Able to Obtain Leav for me to heav Down and Repair my Ship at this port As that Will be Absolutely Nessessary prior To

my Departure from this as I Recd a Shott in Bottom when the *Swallo*[w] engaged me. When I Arrivd At this port the Captns of the Different prizes Applyd to me for Leav to Go on shore Which I Granted on thier promising me that they Would not Write to England or Else Where With out my permishon they further promised Not to Go Away or Do Anything Disagreeable With out my Consent Not Withstanding thier Giving me Thier joint Words and Honour that they Would Comply With those Requests I find that they have at the Request of Mr Perrit a merchant of this place Waited on the Intendant To Know by What Authority they Was Detained as Prisoners in this port I am further Informd that they Intend Going to the Admeralty Officer at Vans to protest a Gainst Me And Demand the Restitution of thier Respecktive Ships & Cargoes I hope you'l take Such steps As to Prevent any Bad Consequences Ariseing from those proceedings I Am very Sorry to See that thos Gentlemen are So Abandoned To Al Sence of Honour as I Am Well Assured it Can proceed from No Bad treatment that they Recd from me as they have All Publickly Acknowledged that It Was Impossible They Could have bin better treated If they had bin taken by Thier Own brothers as I have made them a present of their Own private Adventures those belonging to the Packet Are very Considerable they Amount to Near £700 Sterln first Cost Mr Perrit has bin very Acktiv in Doing me Every prejudice in his power I should Esteam it as a very Great favour If it is in your Power to Reward him According to his Deserts I Immagine the Consequence of thier Waiting on the Intendant Will be an Order for the Enlargement of the prisoners but hope you have had Suffishent time for the Negotiateing an Exchange if it Could be Done I Am to See the Intendant this Evening When I Shal Know his Determination & If Desired to Discharge the prisoners Shall Readly Comply With his Request at the Same time I Shal Request that He Will order them to St Mallo Immediately After They are Released which I make no Doubt but he will Comply with there is Several persons now treating With me about purchaseing the Vessails and Cargoes I am In hopes to Get Soon Clear of them on tolerable Good Terms my Wounded Officers are in A good Way of Doing very Well from Gentlemen your [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 64, APS.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes Feb. 19. 1777.

I went to Painbeuf on Sunday and returned hither last Evening. Mr Peltier and myself went on board the *Count de Vergennes* and gave the necessary Directions. As I consider Dispatch of the utmost Consequence, I desired that as many Workmen as could be procured should be immediately employed, these are at present Scarce but as a little more expence is no object in comparison to expedition, to insure a sufficient number it is concluded to give each one a little Gratification. I am fearfull that we shall not come

within the 3 weeks I mentioned but you may depend that not a moments time shall be lost. While the Ship is preparing we shall be providing the Cargo and I intend to have the most Bulky Bales repacked but in all this I shall govern myself by my Time to which I apprehend every other Consideration should give place. I beg leave to suggest whether it would not be an additional precaution worth observing to have liberty in the Clearances to touch at St pierre de michelon and some part of the Cargo to be aparently destined for that place, this will insure safe Conduct as far as Newfoundland and give the Captain more opportunities of getting into some part of the Massachusetts, and at the same time be a good excuse for his being so far to the Northward in case of Examination. This I humbly submit & shall not presume to add it to your directions without leave.

I have the pleasure to confirm the acct of Capt Weeks having sent in a prize laden with Codfish from Poole for Spain into L'orient, and to inform you further that he has brought in 4 more, two from England & Ireland for Cadiz, one with Barly the other with Flour, one from Bourdeaux for England with Wine and Brandy, and the Packet from Falmouth for Lisbon; this last mounts 16 Guns and engaged Capt Weeks  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour – Weeks I am told behaved heroically, he was the first man who boarded, and sword in hand obliged the English Capt to strike; he had only one man kill'd, the first Lieut lost an arm, & the Lieut of marines has a musquet Ball in his wrist, but both are likely to do well. The Packet had many wounded but none killed, she had 50 men on board. It is said that Weeks has sailed again on another Cruise but of this I am not certain. Mr [Thomas] Morris is going off directly for L'orient and no doubt has given you the necessary Information. I understand that the Ships cannot be disposed of in French Ports, although the Cargoes may, in this Case it would be happy if you had a sufficiency of Sailors to send them immediately to America, especially the Packet which seems to be very oppertune for your purpose. I shall give you every information that comes to my knowledge, but as the Business does not come in my way I only know what passes in common with every indifferent person, so can't say what steps are intended, for every thing of this kind I must refer you to Messrs Morris &c &c –

I recvd Mr Deanes favour of the 12th and shall follow his Directions, but I apprehend it will not turn out adviseable to have anything to do with those arms, I have seen some of them before & did not think them worth having, however, I will have them examined very particularly, and if any of them are capable of being fitted and will stand a proof, I will report accordingly; but unless every individual Fuzil is tried & answers proof, they certainly would not be worth accepting even as a Gift. –

I have the Honor to be with great Respect Gentn [&c.]

J Williams Jr

20 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN RICHARD COTTON,  
H.M.S. *Pallas*, SPITHEAD <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

By &amp;c

Whereas Captn Cornwallis late Commander of His Majesty's Ship *Pallas*, at present under your command, did by his Letter of the 30th of January 1776 from Sierra Leon on the Coast of Africa, represent to Us, that having received information there, that several American Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies had got up the different Rivers upon that part of the Coast, and were hiding themselves there until he should be gone, when it was expected they would come out and probably get supplied with Powder and Ammunition from the European Vessels, he had judged it necessary, as the *Pallas*, could not go up those Rivers after the said American Vessels, to take into His Majesty's Service, a small Vessel for that purpose, and to guard that part of the Coast; and accordingly had hired a sloop called the *St John* belonging to the Proprietors of Bance Island; appointed Lieutenant Agnew to command her; established her with a complement of Thirty Men fifteen of whom he had discharged into her from the *Pallas*, leaving the remainder to be completed from the Merchant Ships on the Coast and the men who belonged to her before, and left her under Orders to keep constantly cruizing for the abovementioned purposes<sup>2</sup> . . .

. . . Given &c the 20th February 1777.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 289-95.

2. The Portuguese seized *St. John* believing her to be American. Portuguese authorities later agreed to release her, and the remainder of this long letter details the steps Captain Cotton is to take to effect the sloop's release.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN MONTAGU <sup>1</sup>

By &amp;c

Whereas we intend that His Majesty's Ships and Vessels named in the List hereunto annex'd (together with the *Surprize* already gone to Newfoundland, and the Sloops and armed Vessels which you left there last Year) shall be employed under your command in protecting the Fisheries of His Majesty's Subjects at, and about that Island, during the present Year, and have directed their Commanders to follow your Orders for their further Proceedings; You are hereby required and directed to take the said Ships and Vessels under your Command accordingly and employ them in such manner as you shall judge most proper for the protection of the beforementioned Fisheries, agreeable to the Instructions you have already received, and such others as you may receive from Us, for that purpose. Given &c the 20th February 1777.

Sandwich. J Buller. Lisburne.



To John Montagu Esqr  
 Vice Admiral of the White, and Commander  
 in Chief of His Majty's Ships and Vessels, employed,  
 and to be employed, at, and about the Island of  
 Newfoundland, the Islands of Madelaine and  
 Anticosti; and upon the Coast of Labrador, from  
 the River St John, to the Entrance of Hudson's Straits.  
 in Town. By &c PS.

Rate.	Ships.	Commanders.	At what Place
4. ....	<i>Romney</i> .....	Capt [George] Montagu	.... Portsmouth.
6. ....	<i>Fox</i> .....	[Patrick] Fotheringham	Woolwich.
.....	<i>Squirrel</i> .....	[Stair] Douglas	.... Portsmouth.
Slo: .....	<i>Pegasus</i> .....	[Hamilton] Gore	.... Chatham.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 298-99.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 TO THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1777

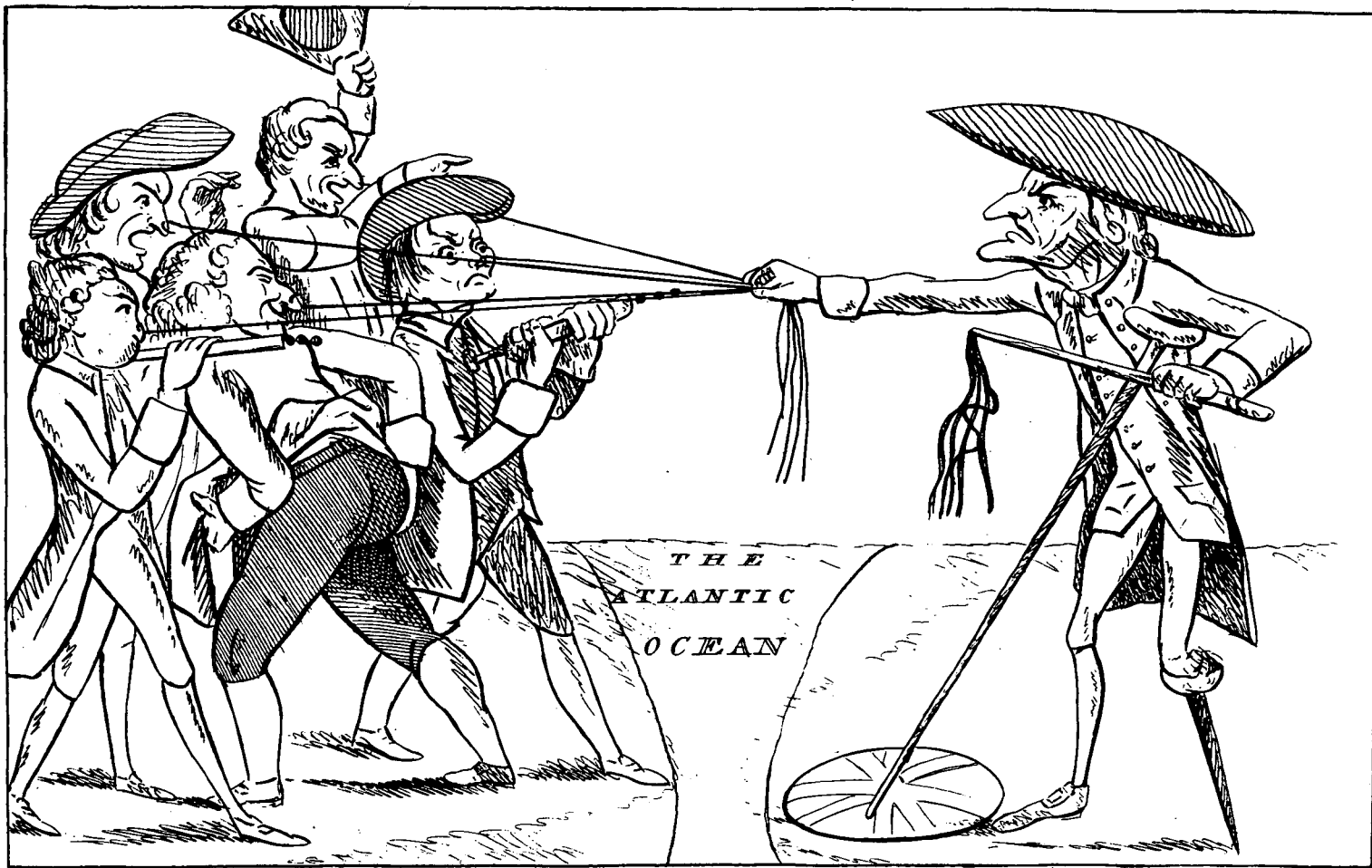
[London] Thursday, Feb. 20.

An American privateer of 20 guns, called the *Union*, is taken off Cape Finisterre by the *Liverpool* man of war, after half an hour's engagement, and carried into Lisbon.

#### JOURNAL OF SAMUEL CURWEN <sup>1</sup>

[Exeter] Feb 20 [1777]. The American high treason bill having passed through two readings and to be printed, giving the king power to imprison any person suspected of favoring, aiding or abetting the Americans, without liberty of bail or mainprise, has raised an alarm in people's minds universally, as it suspends the habeas corpus act, that great bulwark of English liberty, as it is called; And it is supposed to aim at some characters obnoxious to administration. Such is the language of those who do not effect the present ministerial measures respecting America, while the advocates on the other hand plead the necessity of such a bill to render government secure, as without it those who are and shall be hereafter taken, cannot be kept in custody and brought to trial for what they call piracy and treason. May the remains of English liberty and the constitution not be overlooked and lost in this fatal quarrel. Charles James Fox said on this occasion, that four acts were over, and this was the first scene in the fifth act, (alluding to the enormous power given to the crown,) and shows the precarious tenure on which the liberty of England is held.

1. *Journals and Letters of the late Samuel Curwen, An American Refugee in England, from 1775 to 1784* (New York, 1842), 98-99.



*"Poor old England endeavoring to reclaim his wicked American Children"*

MEMORANDUM BY THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE CONCERNING  
PRIZES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

[Paris] 1777 20 February

We have ordered no Prizes into the Ports of France, nor do we know of any that have entered, for any other purpose, than to provide themselves, with necessaries, untill they could sail for America, or some Port in Europe, for a Market. We were informed this was not inconsistent with the Treaty, between France, & Great Brittain, and that it would not be disagreeable to this Court; & further than this we have not thought of proceeding. The *Reprisal* had orders to cruise in the open Sea, and by no means near the Coast of France, & tho' we are well assured, that a number of British Men of War, are at this instant, cruising near the Coast of France for intercepting the Commerce of America. Yet if the *Reprisal* has taken a Station offensive to the Commerce of France, it is without our Orders or Knowledge, and we shall advise the Captain of his Error. Though we learn his Cruise has been on the Coast of Spain & Portugal, & the Vessels he has taken, one charged with Cod fish, one with Flour, and a Packet Boat bound from Falmouth for Lisbon, demonstrate that the Cruise has not been on the Coast of France, nor detrimental to its Commerce. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 99, LC Photocopy.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Feb. 20. 1777 -

. . . It has been observed to me that Prizes instead of being brought into french ports might be sold with secrecy & care, by landing the Goods on an Island near the mouth of the Loire, where french Vessels might come & take them; & perhaps in this way it might be contrived to dispose of the Ships without making a noise, but at least they could be there easily destroyed. - I mention this because I think some precaution necessary, for you may depend that there are spies in this & other ports. . . . Lord Suffolk is so industrious that the *London Gazette* when it contains anything against us finds its way hither one or two days before any other news . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 58, APS.

21 Feb.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN SIR RICHARD BICKERTON <sup>1</sup>

By &amp;c.

You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the first Opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed and cruize between Ushant and Cape Finisterre for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects and diligently to look out for, and upon falling in

with, to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue upon the above Station for 3 Weeks after passing the Latitude of Ushant; and then return, without loss of time to Spithead; and remain there until you receive further Order. Given &c the 21st February 1777.

Sandwich. J Buller. Palmerston.

Sir Richd Bickerton, *Terrible*, Spithead.

By &c PS.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 300-01.

#### CAPTAIN CHARLES NEWMAN TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

L'Orient February 21st 1777

I had the Honor of writing your Excellency last Post to inform you of the taking the *Swallow* Packet, (lately under my Command) by the *Reprisal* an Arm'd Ship belonging to the American Congress, at the same time Mr [John] Hunter <sup>2</sup> inform'd your Excellency of the method I had taken to claim my Crew and that of the Merchant Ships, since which the Commissary has desired to have my demand in writing and has orderd the People to be set at Liberty to morrow morning on condition the[y] set out directly for St Malo to get a Passage for England under the conduct of my Officers, I shall supply the Crews belonging to the Merchant Ships with money to carry them there, as every method is taken to seduce them to enter for the Americans I find the Packet and Merchant Ships are not enter'd here as Prizes, but Vessells Wind bound belonging to Capt Wickes, Mr Hunter sat out this morning for Paris. I hope your Excellency will approve of the method I have taken to release his Majesties faithful Subjects. I have the Honor to be My Lord [&c.]

Chs: Newman

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 285.

2. Passenger on board *Swallow*.

22 Feb.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20 TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1777

[London] Saturday, Feb. 22.

The *Margaretta*, Biddescomb, from St. Ube's to Poole, is taken by a Provincial privateer, called the *Satisfaction*, <sup>1</sup> Stephens [John Stevens] Commander, of 14 guns, 13 swivels, and 100 men; the crew were put on board a French ship and sent to Lisbon.

1. Massachusetts privateer sloop.

#### CAPTAIN SAMUEL HOOD, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

(Copy)

Sir

*Courageux* Plymouth Sound 22d February 1777.

A few days ago I spoke with a French Ship from Brest bound to Havre she sailed from Brest the 8t Instant and the Master of her said, that Twelve

sail of the Line (all Seventy fours) and Six Frigates, were in all respects ready to put to Sea, and that twenty eight sail more of the Line were fitting; How far this may be credited, though the Master and the Crew affirmed it, I submit to their Lordships, thinking it my Duty to send the information to you, and I intended to have been here on Thursday morning had not a very heavy Gale of Wind the preceding Night prevented me. I am &c.

Samuel Hood.

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 55.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

No 35

My Lord

Paris the 22d feby 1777

I am Sorry to acquaint your Lordship, that I have received Authentic information that the American Vessel, the *Reprisal*, has taken the Lisbon Packet, and three other English Vessels, (one informer tells me, there are four Vessels besides the Packet) these ships have been sent into Port Louis, I shall not fail to make proper Representations to M de Vergennes, upon this Subject; And shall press as strongly as I can, for the Restitution of these Ships, Nothing certainly can be more Contrary to the friendship France professes for us, than the suffering the Rebels to make this use of Her Ports.

I forgot to mention to Your Lordship in my last Dispatches, that on Tuesday last, I complained to M de Vergennes, of the *Reprisal's* being suffered to Cruize between Belisle, and Nantes. His Answer was, that it was highly irregular, and directly contrary to the Intention of this Court, et qu'on y metteroit bon ordre, and took a Note of what I said to him. It was not till last Night, that I received the abovementioned intelligence, I thought it my duty to give your Lordship the earliest information of it, and have therefore availed myself of this opportunity of a private conveyance

I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 266-67.

LOUIS XVI TO ADMIRAL LOUIS CHARLES DU CHAFFAULT, BREST <sup>1</sup>

Monsieur le Cte Duchaffault, I am sending this Letter to you in order to inform you that my Intention is that you not Allow any Privateer from any nation whatsoever to establish, off the Coasts of my Kingdom and in proximity to my Ports, patrols which disturb the tranquility of the Commerce of my Subjects and stand in the way of the Safety of that which I allow to other Nations to carry on there. You will consequently issue orders to the Captains of the Ships, which you will detach from my Squadron, that they will be very heedful to scatter all Privateers from the waters edging away from my Kingdom, and that they declare to those whom they might encounter, that they must cease to establish their Cruises there, unless they wish to expose themselves to seizure, to be carried into and detained in my Ports. What you will order, in effect, are instructions the Captains of my

Ships are to carry out, in the case that they encounter for a Second time, any Privateer established on a Cruise to whom they had Indicated my intentions on their first encounter.

The present being for no other purpose, I pray God, &c.  
Written at Versailles this 22nd of February 1777.

Approved.

Authorized by the King's hand.

1. AN, Marine, B<sup>1</sup>, 129, 12, LC Photocopy.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Feb. 22. 1777.

. . . It is reported here that several Sail of english Men of War are cruising between Bellisle & Brest. this Information I thought proper to send to Capt Weeks that he may keep a sharp look out. It is also said that a french Ship bound from the West Indies to St Malo has been searched by an English Frigate, and it is thought that outward bound Ships will of course meet with the same Fate. It seems to be the opinion here that these circumstances will occasion the two powers to stumble on a War whether either really intends it or not. . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 59, APS.

NATHAN RUMSEY TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Feby 22d 77

One of the former Prizes of Captain Wickes is now in this Port, & Captain [James] Pratchell, who is yet here, has made a reclamation, and demanded the Vessel. Upon his being refused the Vessel, he has obtained a summons for Mr Penet & Self, signed by the first Judge of the Admiralty, to appear at the first Audience & give our Reasons for detaining his Property. The summons also includes you Sir, but doubt not but the Judge will have politeness enough to dispense with Your personal appearance. <sup>2</sup>

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 67, APS.

2. Brig *Vine* taken by *Reprisal* on her passage to France, carried into Quiberon Bay and sold.

23 Feb. (Sunday)

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *Bristol*, CAPTAIN JOHN RAYNOR <sup>1</sup>

February 1777                      Start NE    6 Leagues

Sunday 23d                      At 7 AM Peverall Point NWbN 2 Leags    at 8 Do saw the  
Needle point EbN 3 or 4 Leags    Sett studding Sails &  
kept running betwn the Needles.    At 11 Do we pass'd by

His Majesty's Ship *Eolus* & Sloop *Elf* in Yarmouth Road who saluted us with 13 Guns we return'd 11, At Noon abreast of Cowes,  
 Fresh Gales & Squally  
 At 1 PM Saluted Vice Admiral Douglas with 13 Guns, who return'd an equal Number,<sup>2</sup> At 1½ past came too at Spithead in 13 fathom, Veer'd away to ⅔ of a Cable. Hoisted the Cutter out & sent the Passengers on shore.

1. PRO, Admiralty 51/137.

2. Vice Admiral Shuldham was returning from New York on board *Bristol*.

CAPTAIN JOHN RAYNOR, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

*Bristol* at Spithead 23d February 1777.

Please to acquaint Their Lordship I am just arrived here in His Majesty's Ship *Bristol* under my Command from New York after a passage of Six weeks and four days, Lieutenant Robertson of the *Bristol* who is charged with Lord Howe's Dispatches will deliver you this.<sup>2</sup> Inclosed waits on you the State and Condition of the Ship. I am with respect Sir [&c.]

J Raynor

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2390.

2. Lord Sandwich sent Howe's dispatches to the King with the notation that they "contain nothing of particular importance." Sir John Fortescue, ed., *The Correspondence of King George the Third from 1760 to December 1783* (London, 1928), III, 420. Hereafter cited as Fortescue, ed., *Correspondence of George III*.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO LORD STORMONT<sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Paris, Feb. 23. 1777.

Captain Wickes of the *Reprisal* Frigate, belonging to the United States of America, has now in his Hands near 100 British Seamen, Prisoners. He desires to know whether an Exchange may be made with him for an equal Number of American Seamen now Prisoners in England? We take the Liberty of proposing this Matter to your Lordship & of requesting your opinion, if there be no Impropriety in your giving it, Whether such an exchange will probably be agreed to by your Court. If your People cannot be soon exchanged here, they will be sent to America. We have the Honour to be [&c.]

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, 340, LC. Printed in the *Public Advertiser*, London, November 7, 1777.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES<sup>1</sup>

Captn Weeks

[Paris, February 23, 1777]<sup>2</sup>

Your first we did not receive till eight days after it was dated—Your last of the 19th last Evening. We wish to know if the Captns Who have so little regard to their Parole sighnd a written parole or not – If they did we advise you to show it to the Intendant & desire they may be obligd to live up to it – We have applied to the British Embassader for an exchange

of Prisoners, but have receiv'd no Answer and are apprehensive no exchange will be made. As the Sailors must on their return to England be instantly pressd if they are exchangd & return, will they not consent to enter into the Service of the united States in preference to being pressd or sent Prisoners to America – one of which must be the Consequence – We advise You in future to permit no Officer that is a Prisoner to Go on Shore without a Parole written, which will oblige him to return tho' his word of honor will not – We are sorry that you should meet wth difficulties in disposing of either your prizes or your Prisoners, but by treaty between France & England you may not sale [*sic*] farther than is sufficient to repair & to put you & your prizes in a proper state for going elsewhere – For this You can have liberty of the Intendant – You say you have an offer made for the prizes – We do not Advise you to sell at any time Untill American affairs are on a more settled & regular establishment here – lest on Condition of the Purchasers running all risques of any reclaimer. Respecting the Cargo's taken we are not sufficiently informd to advise you – so particular as we wish to do – But the bearer of this will afford you all the Assistance in his power – & Whatever he purchases of You giving his receipt for & on acct of Roderique Hortales & Co or Mr Beaumarchais, we will be accountable for – As to the Pack[et] If she will answer to cruise with being refitted. We purpose that you shld have her valued & the Congress to be accountable for your & Peoples Shares after which that She should be fitted as soon as possible for a cruise – Your first Lieutenant is wounded & the State of your Officers is not so Particularly known to Us, if She is equippd it will be probably at the Expençe of some private person, who would wish to have & must have an American to command & will be pleasd we doubt not to have an officer of your recommending – Captn Nicholson is here at present <sup>3</sup>

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. Date is established by Wickes' acknowledgment, March 3, 1777, to American Commissioners, Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 85, APS.

3. Apparently the draft is incomplete.

#### JOHN HUNTER TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Rennes 23d Febr 1777

The reason that induced Capt Newman to be so precipitate in demanding The prisoners <sup>2</sup> without waiting for Your Excellencys instructions, was a Report that was circulated in L'Orient, & supposed to be pretty well founded that Wickes had received orders to quit the Port in 24 hours – Had this been the case, there was no other expedient left to save 77 British subjects from being carried to America, & possibly prevailed on to serve against their Country being daily solicited to enter by the Officers of the *Reprisal*.

Another Consideration was that by depriving Wickes of such a numb[er] of hands, he would find it next to impossible to Man his own ship & all the prizes. When I left L'Orient the 5 prizes were all unmoored, and Wickes gave out that he intended to dispatch them immediately to America but



we suspected the men to be ordered into some other port in France or into Quiberon Bay –

We could not learn precisely how Wickes had reported the vessels, but it was Assumed that only one of them, we arrived before us (the *Polly & Nancy*, Kentisbear) had been entered as a Prize, and the other 4 were reported as forced in by stress of weather –

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 282–83.
2. Taken by Wickes.

24 Feb.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

My Lord,

Whitehall, 24 February 1777.

I have awaited the instructions of my Court to resume with Your Excellency the last topic of my conversation with You concerning the Seizure of the French Ship *Thamas Koulikan*, which is presently at Portsmouth, taken in the Gulf of Gascony by the English ship of the line *Hector*. The enclosures are documents which protest the injustice and harm done to this Ship. Your Excellency will please permit me to add the following remarks.

According to very accurate Accounts given by the owner of *Thamas Koulikan*, this ship was purchased in Le Havre. It was bound on the 18th of October last for St. Domingue, having planned to call at Croisic to take on Salt. It departed from there on the 8th of January last, furnished with French clearance papers, stating its departure from a Port of the Kingdom and its destination to a French Colony. Consequently it could not have been any more legitimate. One could not validly confront its Master with the fact that cannon were found in the hold of his Ship, if in truth their number did not exceed the number of ports for which the Ship was pierced. The Circumstances seemingly not requiring their emplacement in battery, they could be placed indifferently in any part of the Ship, and perhaps it did matter to the Ship's speed to have them in the Hold.

Between friendly Powers, My Lord, there are procedures which one does not set aside; these procedures are founded on either International law or on formal Treaties; or lastly on the desire to keep Peace and good Relations. As soon as one deviates from this triple foundation, one would manifest suspect intentions, and invite the offended Power to be on guard. Such Would be, My Lord, the position in which we would be placed by the offence causing our complaint, and which Would be followed by a denial of Justice.

The general regulations of Navigation and Treaties determine the cases and the form of Searches to which the Ships of either Nation may be subject, and nothing may authorize the evasion of what these regulations prescribe. My Court, as well as all the other Nations, holds to the maxim that the Sea is completely free, and that no Power has or may have Superiority over the other on it. This maxim is a Result of the absolute Independence in which the

Nations are one from another; and it is this same maxim which establishes and assures freedom of Commerce and Navigation. If usage and Treaties have set restrictions, which are merely an exception to the general rule, it is not at all permissable to extend them for that reason, and still less to interpret them arbitrarily.

For example, the custom has been that the waters, which wash the Coasts of a State, are considered to be under its dominion out to a certain limit; and it is for this reason that a Ship which finds itself within these limits is in that case liable to search and valid seizure by the territorial Power, if it is carrying Contraband. As to Searches on the high seas, they are regulated by Treaties.

You will conclude from this, My Lord, that Officers of the English Navy do not have the right to seize French Ships, for Simple Contraband, except off [your] Coasts; and within the areas where English dominion is considered existent, and that this right is absolutely null on the high Seas. It is in this Sense that the Ministers of the King my Master have always spoken to His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, and as I personally have explained to Your Excellency several times.

With these principles well defined, My Lord, the Seizure of the Ship *Thamas Koulikan* can only be regarded as illegal. Accordingly I cannot avoid, Following the instructions of my Court, making the most formal Claim, demanding damages and interest for the Proprietor, and insisting on the punishment of the Captain of the Ship of the line *Hector*. The Behavior of this officer proves either total ignorance of the Laws of the Sea, or a decided intention to break them. In fact, if the Ship in question was rightfully Suspect, although no evidence at all has been given against it, was it not the English Captain's duty to limit himself to taking it to England to get a Ruling on the Prize? Instead of behaving in this manner he abducted 40 Seamen from the Ship, and forced them to Serve in his own ship. This kind of action is too serious in nature not to appear extremely reprehensible, and not to merit being swiftly checked.

I enclose here, My Lord, a Complaint concerning a French Ship named *Ceres* attacked in the Seas near Martinique by three English Shallops. At the same time I shall repeat to Your Excellency the complaint I addressed to You on the Subject of *Aimable Reine*. The restitution of these two Ships is all the more proper to Press, as nothing could have justified their Capture, the first having been taken by Ships with Letters of Marque, and the second for having loaded Tobacco at Martinique.

Regarding the first, according to the reiterated assurances of Your Excellency, the English Ships, furnished with Letters of Marque, were to use them solely for their own Safety, and not to take Prizes from Neutral Nations.

On the second, I shall remark, or rather repeat to Your Excellency what I have had the honor of telling You; that Tobacco loaded at Martinique, whenever it is not the Produce of that Colony, becomes French property, be-

cause of the unchanging principle that all goods traded in a neutral Country, lose their foreign identity, and assume the native one of the exporting Country . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 521, 345-48, LC Photocopy.

GEORGE GOSTLING TO SAMUEL SEDDON <sup>1</sup>

Copy.

Sir D[octo]rs Commons [London] 24th Feby 1777

The cause of the Ship the *Twee Gebroeders* Hendrick Terhorst Master came on this day for adjudication: The Judge upon summing up the evidence, after observing that this Ship was bound from Rotterdam to the Dutch settlement of St Eustatia, called upon me to declare, whether my Lords Commissioners were willing to purchase the Gunpowder Arms, and Ammunition on board: By the advice of their Lordships Council (consisting of His Majts Advocate, the Advocate of the Admiralty & Dr Wynn) I declared that their Lordships were ready to purchase the same at a fair price; the Judge then called upon the Claimant for the answer, whether he would accept my proposal; the consequence of which was, the Agent of the Owners desired the cause might be adjourned till he could hear from his Principals; the cause was accordingly adjourned to the 12th of next month – The Agent pressed to know whether if the Claimant consented to sell the same, I would undertake to pay the damages & expences the Ship & Cargo have received by their seizure & detention, but this I would not presume to do, without previously submitting the same to their Lordships for their consideration and directions which you will be pleased to signify to me

Upon the whole as the great & indeed the sole object in this cause was to prevent the Gunpowder & other stores on board reaching St Eustatia, and as that end will be obtained by obliging the Claimant to sell the same, I hope their Lordships will approve of my conduct, which not only had the sanction of their Council, but I have reason to believe was much in conformity to the sentiments of the Court I am Sir [&c.]

Geo: Gostling <sup>2</sup>

1. PRO, State Papers, 84/555.

2. On this date, Lord Suffolk wrote the Admiralty as follows:

In case the Decision of the Admiralty Court in regard to the Vessel called the *Tweege Broeders* [*Twee Gebroeders*] should not be in favour of the Seizure, It is His Majesty's Pleasure that Your Lordships forthwith direct a Cutter to take out of the said Vessel all such Parts of her Cargo as come under the Description of Ammunition, Arms, or Military Stores, and that the same be deposited in a proper and safe Place till farther Signification of His Majesty's Commands.

I have only to add, that Your Lordships will instruct the Commander, when the abovementioned Service is compleated, to suffer the Vessel to proceed upon her Voyage.

PRO, Foreign Office, 95/355, 323.

SILAS DEANE TO BEAUMARCHAIS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Paris Feby 24th 1777

I have been for some time past very Apprehensive of the risque in sending Shipp's direct to the Continent of America at so late a season and

with such valuable Cargoes; they must if they go direct arrive on the Coast of America, in the midst of the Cruising Season of the Enemy's Shipp's & as the ship *Therese* has on board, between sixty & seventy Thousand Livres of Goods, purchased by the Commissioners jointly, independent of the Cargo, furnished by You, I have consulted my Colleagues on the subject and laid before them Your proposal of sending her by the West Indies.<sup>2</sup> They are fully with Me in Opinion that it will be the safest, & best way, and as the season is so far advanced, & as this Rout will take a much longer Time, for the Goods to Arrive on the Continent, they join Me in urging that The utmost Dispatch may be made. I have the honor to be, with great Respect [&c.]

Silas Deane

P S With respect to the *Amelia* you have my Opinion express'd in the Above.

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. See Beaumarchais to Deane, February 19, 1777.

25 Feb.

*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1777

London [February 25].

John the Painter was Yesterday examined before Sir John Fielding. Many Circumstances came out that seem to leave scarce a Doubt of his being the Incendiary at Bristol and Portsmouth; he is to be sent to Winchester to take his Trial at the ensuing Assizes. It is found that he has been in France, and came from thence by a Passport under the name of John Atkins. He was brought to confess that he had received Money from Mr. Silas Deane.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Confession of John the Painter.

GUIRAUT TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Bordeaux, 25th February 1777

Having shipped on my Account, to a destination in Dublin in Ireland, to the address of Madame Tramassé of the same place, in the Vessel the *Barbara*, Captain Welsh, three barrels of vinegar with my name branded on the heads of the barrels and on the bungs G.V., I have just learned that this Vessel was stopped Enroute, seized and then Carried in by another Vessel, or American privateer, to the Port of L'Orient, where this prize is Detained. Being French and Entitled to enjoy all the favors which the French enjoy, I think that I have a Right to Claim my Merchandize, and in order to obtain its Withdrawal, Surrender & Delivery, I am taking the liberty, Sir, of writing to you in order that your Excellency in your goodness will be pleased to give the necessary orders to L'Orient, to those who are Holding and Detaining my merchandize, to Turn the same over to my legal representative, or the full value thereof as per the invoice which I

shall submit, and your Excellency will oblige him the said <sup>2</sup>

Very Respectfully, Sir [&c.]  
Guiraut the Elder  
Merchant at Chartrond  
Borde[aux]

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 69, APS.

2. Guiraut's plea was in vain. *Barbara* was recaptured by H.M.S. *Foudroyant* and carried into Plymouth, *Public Advertiser*, London, May 8, 1777.

26 Feb.

WILLIAM KNOX TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir Whitehall 26th February 1777

The Board of Ordnance have by the King's Command, prepared a Supply of Ordnance Stores for St Augustine the Tonnage of which will Amount to about 87 Tons, and they have likewise prepared a Supply of Ordnance Stores for St Vincent which will require about the same Quantity of Freight; and as neither of these Supplies are sufficient to load a Vessel capable of making a good Defence against a Rebel Cruizer, and the Board being restrained by His Majesty's Command from Shipping Ordnance Stores in any other, they have represented the difficulty they are under to Lord George Germain, and his Lordship has directed me to state the matter to you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in the hope that their Lordships will be able to point out some safe mode of conveying the said Stores to the places of their destination; And you will be pleased also to acquaint their Lordships that there are about 50 Tons of Goods suitable for presents to the Indians, provided by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to be sent to St Augustine, which consist of Articles equally important to His Majesty's Service, and the Capture of which by the Rebels would be of equally mischievous Consequences with that of Ordnance Stores; and therefore demand a Conveyance equally Safe. I am further directed to add that there is a Party consisting of 25 Recruits for the Garrison of St Augustine, which want a Conveyance to that place, and that there are about 200 Recruits for the 48th Regt at Grenada, also ready to be sent out to that Island. I am &ca

Will<sup>m</sup> Knox

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 1, 97-99.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN MILLIGAN, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas the Merchants trading to Portugal, Spain & the Mediterranean have requested that a Convoy may be appointed to proceed with the Trade bound thither from the Port of London, all of which (except the *Love* John Wellen Master bound to Lisbon and the *Providence* Robert Crawford Master bound to Oporto,) it is expected are now at Spithead; and that the said Convoy may be permitted to call at Falmouth for the Out Port Ships

which may be there in readiness to sail; And Whereas we think fit that the Ship you command shall perform the above Service, You are hereby required and directed to make enquiry for the said Trade and so soon as the two Ships abovementioned shall be arrived at Spithead, to take the whole under your convoy, and then putting to Sea with the first Opportunity of Wind and Weather, proceed down Channel, and calling off Falmouth for any Ships or Vessels which may be there in readiness to join you, take them under your Convoy also, and make the best of your way (consistent with their safety) towards the places of their respective destinations; And having seen such as may be bound to Oporto and Lisbon as near to those ports as may be necessary for their Security, and to the Streights mouth such as may be bound up the Mediterranean, you are to proceed without loss of time to Madeira where you are to take in a sufficient quantity of wine for the use of your Ship's Company and then go on with all possible expedition, to Antigua in search of Vice Admiral Young Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, and not finding him there you are to make the best of your way to join him wherever he may be; And, upon so doing, deliver to him the inclosed packet, and follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

You are to be particularly attentive to the Ships and Vessels under your Convoy; keeping them together by every means in your power; and, on no account, leaving them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep company with you; as we expect that, in the course of your voyage, you accommodate your progress to the worst sailing Ship which may be under your Convoy.

You are, at the same time, to take all possible care, and to give the Masters of the said Ships and Vessels such Orders and directions as you shall judge most likely, to prevent them from seperating from you, til you make the signal for that purpose; And, in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part Company with you or disobey your orders, You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names with the circumstances attending such seperation or disobedience; that the Merchants may have full information of it, and take such measures thereupon as they shall judge necessary. Given &c the 26th February 1777.

Captn Milligen, *Blonde*, on her arrival at Spithead.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

Palmerston.

Lisburne.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 307-10.

#### JOHN ROBINSON TO SIR STANIER PORTEN <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Having this day received the following Information in a Letter from Bourdeaux dated 15 Feby 1777—Vizt "there are Two Ships of Force fitting out here for the Americans & Actions in them offer'd publicly. We are

sorry to find some of our Countrymen have accepted the offer Both Ships mount Twenty Guns they clear out under French Colours for Miquelon & until they arrive there will appear French Property" – I am desired to transmit this Intelligence to You to be laid before Lord Weymouth I am Sir [ &c.]

Treasury Chambers Feby 26th 1777

John Robinson

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 272–73.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1777

London [February 26].

The *Swan*, Stoddart, from Dominica, is arrived at Dover all well, after being chased by an American Privateer.

The *Tartar*, Russell, from New York to Cork was taken by the Americans, and after retaken by the People and carried into Hallifax. <sup>1</sup>

The *Friendship*, Shotten, from Quebeck to Barcelona, was taken by the *Washington* Privateer, and re-taken by the *Loyal Nova Scotian*, and carried into Hallifax.

The *Hetty*, Ross, from Chaleur to the West Indies, was taken, but re-taken by the *Unicorn* Man of War.

The *Thomas and William*, Smith, from New York to Cork, was taken by a Privateer but re-taken by the *Unicorn* Man of War, and carried into Hallifax. <sup>2</sup>

1. The master of the *Tartar*, William Marchant Bustle (not Russell), had been left on board after the capture and a prize crew of four men was insufficient to prevent the prisoners retaking the vessel, N. S. Arch., vol. 495, Vice Admiralty Register, vol. 5, 1769–1777, 484.
2. Brig *Thomas and William* had been taken November 20, 1776 by Massachusetts privateer schooner *Warren*, Captain Israel Thorndike, and retaken by H.M.S. *Unicorn* November 27, *London Chronicle*, February 22 to February 25, 1777.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 TO THURSDAY,  
FEBRUARY 27, 1777

[London] Wednesday, February 26.

One of the vessels carried into L'Orient, by the *Reprisal* privateer, is the *Polly and Nancy*, Kentish, bound from Poole to Spain.

A private letter from L'Orient says, that the master of an American privateer has applied for leave to bring his five prizes into that harbour, that he might dispose of the cargoes; but was told by the Governor, that he could not be permitted to come in until an order was procured from Court for that purpose, but that he might lie secure in the road.

The *Argo*, Ward, an American brig, with rice and indigo, is taken and carried into Lisbon.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Burford*, in Hamoze]

[1777. February] 24. Mr. Holland, the master-at-arms of the ship, has been on shore; he informs us of the death of one of our company—*Ebenezer Hunt*.

He died on the 20th of this month, in the Royal Hospital; he was one of the nine that were sent on shore the 15th inst.

25. This morning Mr. Holland came into our apartment inquiring for a joiner. I offered myself, and went upon deck to work for him. He obtained the liberty of the carpenter's bench and tools, and I went to work, getting, also, permission for one of my acquaintances to come upon deck and work with me. We made him a table, for which he gave us a bag to put our clothes in, half of a salt fish, a quart of potatoes, six biscuits, and butter to eat with our fish, besides a good hot supper.

26. I had an opportunity of reading a newspaper wherein was a confirmation, in several different places, of General Lee's being taken. I saw, also, an Act that was moved in Parliament and passed in the affirmative, 112 to 35; according to which we are guilty of high treason, and are sentenced to prison, there to lay, without bail, until the first of January, 1778, and then to have a trial.

As we are prisoners in a cage,  
It's our misfortune sure;  
'Tis folly to be in a rage,  
Though hardships we endure.

God grant that we may live to see  
Once more our native place,  
For to enjoy our liberty,  
Before we've run our race.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 27-28.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

particular No 37

My Lord

Paris feby 26th 1777

I hope Your Lordship has received my letter by Mr Hobart, informing You, of the American Privateer, the "*Reprisal*," Having taken the Packet from Falmouth, and four English Merchantmen: These Ships the *Reprisal* carried not into Port Louis, as my first Information Said, but into Port Lorient.

I told you my Lord, that I should press M de Vergennes strongly, for the Delivery of these Ships with their Crews, Cargoes &c I went to him Yesterday Morning, with that Intention, But I had Scarce begun to state the Fact, when He interrupted me to say, that immediately upon the Receipt of this News, a Resolution was taken, to order the American Ship, and her Prizes, instantly to put to Sea, and that orders were given in Consequence. I asked him if the Orders were actually gone. His answer was, that they are not only gone, but probably carried into execution by this time. I then told him My Lord, that the Object of my Visit to His Excellency was, to apply for the Restitution of these Vessels; particularly the Packet, which was to be Considered as a King's Ship, but that, it was in vain to make that application now, as the orders they had given, if carried into Execution, as He presumed they were, evidently put it out of their Power, to comply with my Demand. He repeated, what he had said, relative to these Orders, and added, that M du Chaffault was instructed, not to suffer any American Vessel, to cruize near the Coast of France.

I expressed a wish, that these Instructions had been sent sooner, and



observed to M de Vergennes, that the *Reprisal*, had been much too favourably treated at Nantes, that she had not only been furnished, with every thing she wanted, but had been suffered to go in, and out of the Port of Nantes, *et de faire ce qu'on appelle ici la Navette* I added, that as this was irregular, I was persuaded it was without his Excellency's knowledge. He assured me that it was, and then My Lord, after a short pause, He, entirely of his own accord, and without my having dropped a Word that could lead to it, added what follows. "I will deal Confidentially with You, I never conceal what I do. I have seen Franklin once, and but once, I assure You, since his Arrival here, in my situation, *il faut voir tout le monde du moins une fois*. The only time that I did see him, I observed to him that He was come in a ship of War, and that it was not our Intention to receive, such American Vessels, into our Ports, that there were many Strong objections to it; nay more My Lord, I read him the Articles in the Treaty of Utrecht, which I told him, we considered, as applicable to the present situation of things, and which we were determined religiously to fulfill. Notwithstanding this fair Warning *Ils y ont contrevenu*. We send as you see their Armateurs out of our Ports, *et ils n'y retourneront pas*." I applauded this Resolution, as worthy of their Justice, and agreeable to the friendship, that subsists between the two Courts.

Your Lordship sees, that no Application of mine, for the Release of the above-mentioned Ships, could have come time enough, as the orders of this Court were issued immediately, upon the Information they Received, which of course preceeded mine. My intelligence did not reach me till friday night, I was tempted to go the Next Morning to Versailles, but as the Matter was of importance, and I wished much to have a favourable Answer, I thought it better to prepare the Way, by a previous Conversation with M Maurepas friend, and mine. To Him, I went on Saturday Morning, and Spoke very Strongly; I found him going to Versailles, when He got there, he was told, the above-mentioned orders were actually gone.

I think it my Duty to transmit to your Lordship, the inclosed Letter from Messrs Franklin, and Deane, which was left at My House on Monday Last, and to which I have returned no answer.<sup>2</sup> The person who left the letter made no mention from whence it came. I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont

P.S: I have just received the two inclosed Letters, from the Captain of the *Swallow* Packet, and Mr Hunter, I have no personal Knowledge of this Mr Hunter, but I must do him the justice to say, that He has been very Active, and useful, upon this Occasion.<sup>3</sup> S.

[Endorsed] Paris 26 Feby 1777 Lord Stormont (No 37) Particular R  
2 Mch by Express from Dover 3 Inclosures

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 278-81.

2. See American Commissioners to Lord Stormont, February 23.

3. Charles Newman, captain of the packet, and John Hunter wrote regarding release of the prisoners.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

L Orient Feby 26th 1777

I hav this Day Rec'd very Extraordinary Orders from The Intendant of This port Demanding me to Leav this port in 24 Hours he Says This Order is Given in Consequence of A possitiv Order Recd. this Day from the Minister at Parris I Asked Liberty To heav Down my Ship and Repair her on my Arrival but it has never Bin Granted on being told That I mus[t] possitively Depart in 24 Hours I Told the Intendant that it Was not in my Power to Depart in So Short A time as my Ship Was not fitt To proceed to America Without heaving Down and Repairing & Beg'd he Would Send Carpenters Of[f] to Exammine the Ship & Take Thier Report Accordingly this he Consented to and Sent them off they Return'd and told the Intendant That they thought It highly Necessary to Carreane & Repair the Ship Before She Departed for America he then possitively Refused to Grant me Liberty to Refitt Unless the Carpenter & Caulker Would Signn A Certifycate that We Should be in Emminent Danger of Loosing the Ship If not Repaired this Certifycate they Could not Sign, As they had not bin to Sea in the Ship & it Was not in thier power to See the Ships Bottom Without heaving her Down he then told me I Must Depart Immediately We are Now takeing our Water on bord & Geting Ready to proceed but shall not be Able to Sail before Friday the 28th in the Evening & Am in hopes of I Shal have the pleasure of Receaving your orders and Instrucktions on this hed by that time but If Oblig'd to Depart Sooner or before I Recv. your orders I Shall Run into Nantz & there Enter A protest and Ask Liberty to heav Down & Repair Tho I Am Ordered by the Intendant not to go in to Any port in France These are very Extraordinary orders & such as I Little Expected to Recv. in Fra[n]ce

I Beg Leav to Congratulate you on Our Late Suckses in America as I Am Informd We have Gained a Very Signal & compleat vicktory Over our Enemies At Trenttown you'l See by my Declaration Made on my Arrival That I then mentioned my Ships being Leaky & beged Liberty To heav Down & Repair If this favour Cannot be Granted as it is Absolutely Necessary prior to my Departure I Should be Much Obliged If you Would forward your Dispatches as Soon and Send me of[f] for America as Soon As Possible from Gentlemen your [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 72, APS.

27 Feb.

CAPTAIN GEORGE VANDEPUT, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir.

Asia, Spithead Feby 27th 1777.

Please to inform their Lordships of the Arrival of His Majs Ship under my Command from Rhode Island having been forty five Days on our Passage. at the Time We were Abreast of the Lizard the Weather being extremely hazey, & the Wind at South, I thought it more proper to

proceed to this Port, than to stand in with the Land to go for Plymouth. I send enclosed a Journal of our Proceedings on the Voyage, a Copy of the last Orders I receiv'd, & an Account of the State & Condition of the Ship – Lieut Genl [Henry] Clinton, The Lord [Francis] Rawdon Deputy Agt Genl, & Lieut Chas Knowles of the Navy came Passengers in the Ship, being receiv'd by Order of Sr Peter Parker. Commodore Hotham in the *Preston* accompanied by the *Brune* Captn Ferguson saild from Rhode Island on the same Morning that we left It – In Consequence of my Orders to send the Acct of the Arrival of the Ship, by Express you will receive this by the Hands of Lieut Lechmere – I am Sir [&c.]

Geo Vandeput

[Endorsed] 28 Feby Own rect To be cleaned graved & refitted at Porto for For. Service victs to 6 Mo except Beer & stored accordgy

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2628.

SIR GEORGE GRAND TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Amsterdam 27 February 1777

I arrived last Evening in good Health with my Traveling companion, in spite of the bad roads and the hardships of passage. We began the Visit to the shipyards, and we shall immediately have a meeting with the best Builders in order to start the work; there is neither a lack of material nor of good labor; M B[oux] seems very satisfied with their way of working which he finds vastly Superior to that of the French. <sup>2</sup>

The news of the arrival of Your Captain, in Port Louis, with 5 Prizes one of which is the Lisbon Packet boat, is giving rise here to many rumors; Sir should You be able to send here in French Ships, or others, the Cargoes which You are not able to Sell in France, You may depend upon my House, to take full advantage of the opportunity, & to Give you an excellent Price. <sup>3</sup>

I have ordered that You be Sent a Copy of the Leyden Gazette, at my brother's address. It is important to your Interests, that You send me all the good news that You Receive to have them inserted, in our Dutch & French Papers, in order to uphold Your credit & to cultivate the good will of the Country, which I find favors Your cause more than before, which pleases me very much.

It is very much wished that the Famous & Respected Doctor decides to come next month, to warm us with His presence, and to revive that Interest we have in matters pertaining to You. I am certain that he will succeed in everything & that he will be able to find the right time to obtain some money from our Capitalists under reasonable conditions <sup>4</sup>

General York <sup>5</sup> has just presented a note, a Copy of which I shall try to send You; it was so Violent that it embittered many minds & I learned that the Reply will be fittingly firm; moreover I have been assured that new Warships will be fitted out, that the Resolution has been made to have our Flag Respected, Without Humiliation by the British. I have the honor with the most sincere and respectful devotion, Gentlemen [&c.]

Grand

Please advise me as to what you have done regarding the Farmers General, so that I may write accordingly.

To the Honble Benjamin Francklin & Silas Dean Paris

[Endorsed] Sir George Grand Amsterdam 27 Feby 1777

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.
2. See Stipulations of Captain Jacques Boux for a Commission in the Continental Navy, February 12, 1777.
3. Captain Lambert Wickes' prizes.
4. A suggestion that Franklin would be able to negotiate a Dutch loan.
5. Sir Joseph Yorke, British Ambassador to Holland.

SILAS DEANE TO JOSEPH HYNSON <sup>1</sup>

Capt Hynson

Sir

Paris Feby 27th 1777.

This by Mons Eyries I hope will find you at Havre with the Cutter: which you are to equip with all possible expedition for a Voyage. Mons Eyries will supply you with the necessarys, & you will take his advice in equipping, it is proposed that she should proceed for America as soon as possible; Mr Eyries proposes fixing eight or Ten Brass peices of three or four pounders with other necessities for defence against boats &c, you will be the best Judge what is suitable for her, & Mr Eyries will be able to procure it in a manner the least liable to rumor or objections from Government. We shall expect from you on the Receipt of this, an acct of the state of the cutter, what arming is necessary, and what goods she can carry, besides her provisions, without impeding her passage which is the first object this we shall want to be informed of, as soon as possible immediately after which particular Instructions with your Dispatches, shall be sent to you express, You will take care that every thing be conducted with the greatest Secresy and the choice of your Men requires your attention as several Instances of mutiny have lately happen'd – When you have consulted with Mr Eyries & made your general arrangements, it may perhaps be as well for you to come up to Paris, leaving the Execution in the hands of Mr Eyries, on the whole I think this will be the most sure mode of proceeding, as you can personally explain what may not be so proper to trust to writing, & not so easily express'd – The Sooner you can come up the better, as in case of putting in any goods by way of Ballast, The particulars ought to be fixed early I am for Dr Franklin & Self Sir [&c.]

Silas Deane

To Capt Joseph Hynson To care of Mons Eyries

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

28 Feb.

LORD DUNMORE TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

London 28th February 1777 –

I beg leave to inclose to your Lordship a list of Prisoners taken by the Rebels, belonging to the Troops and Armed Vessels raised and fitted out

by me in Virginia. The Cruel and inhumane treatment that I know some of them have met with from that Barbarous and Savage Enemy, confined in loathsome Gaols, and loaded with Irons, now upward of twelve Months, induces me to trouble your Lordship at this time, to request you will give the Necessary orders for their being exchanged.

I also beg leave to request your Lordship to give the like order for Colo Allan McDonald and his Son, who were taken Prisoners at the Cross Creeks in North Carolina, and now confined at Reiding [Reading] in Berks [Bucks] County, in Pensylvania. — Your Lordship is so well acquainted with the part this Gentleman and his Son Acted in Carolina, and what they must of consequence have suffered since, that I am persuaded it is needless for me to say any thing farther to induce your Lordship to have them speedily released from such Cruel and unrelenting Enemys. I am My Lord  
[&c.] Dunmore

## [Enclosure]

List of Prisoners taken by the Rebels, belonging to the Troops and Armed Vessels raised and fitted out by the Earl of Dunmore, Governor of Virginia.

Name	Rank	where confined
John Connolly	Lieut Colo of the Queens Rangers	Philadelphia
Allan Cameron	Lieut do	do
John Smith	Surgeon do	do
Jacob Elligard	{ Lieut Colo of the Queens Loyal Virginia Regiment }	Virginia
George Blair		do
John Hunter junr	Lieut do	North Carolina
Townshend	Ensign do	Virginia
James Parker	Engineer do	do
John Goodrich Senr	Commander of an Armed Vessell }	do
Bartlet Goodrich		do
William Goodrich	do do	Philadelphia
Bridger Goodrich	do do	do
Charles Robb	Mate of the Ship <i>William</i>	North Carolina

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/1353, 815-19.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN MITCHELL GRAHAM, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we intend that the Ship you command shall proceed forthwith to the Island of St Helena to Convoy from thence to England the East India Company's homeward bound Ships; You are hereby required and directed the moment you have completed her Provisions and Stores agreeable to our Order of the 26th Instant and Wind & Weather will permit to put to Sea and make the best of your way in her to that Island.

And Whereas you will receive herewith a packet from the East India Company addressed to the Governor of St Helena, and a Letter to yourself, containing some cautions and Signals necessary for your observance on

making that Island and before you proceed into the Road, whereby you may make yourself known there as a Friend, you are to observe those cautions and signals, and on your arrival to deliver to the Governor or Lieutenant Governor the abovementioned Pacquet agreeable to its address.

You are to continue at St Helena til it shall be represented to you by the Governor that it may be a proper time for proceeding homeward with the Company's Ships which may be there, and then taking them under your Convoy, make the best of your way (consistent with their security) with them to England; taking care, before you leave St Helena, to give a Copy of the Signals you will receive herewith to the Commanders of each of the said Ships for their information and Guidance; And on your arrival in England you are to see those Ships up the Channel as far as Spithead where you are to remain until you receive further orders; sending Us an Account of your arrival and proceedings.

You are to be particularly attentive to the Ships which may be under your Convoy; keeping them together by every means in your power, And on no Account leaving them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep Company with you, as we expect that in the course of your Voyage you accommodate your progress to the worst sailing Ship amongst them.

You are at the same time to take all possible care and to give the Commanders of the said Ships such Orders and directions as you shall judge most likely to prevent them from seperating from you til you make the Signal for that purpose; And in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part Company with you or disobey your Orders, You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names with the Circumstances attending such separation or disobedience; that the East India Company may have full information of it, and take such measures thereupon as they shall judge necessary. Given &c the 28th February 1777.

Captn Graham – *Thetis* – Plymouth

Sandwich.

By &c

C. Spencer.

PS.

H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 319–21.

# BRITISH ADMIRALTY PLAN FOR INTERCEPTING JOSEPH HYNSON'S VESSEL CARRYING AMERICAN DISPATCHES <sup>1</sup>

[Admiralty Office, February 28, 1777] <sup>2</sup>

Stations for Ships to Intercept American Vessells going to or from Haver de Grace

off Cape Barfleur	<i>Speedwell</i> Sloop	These ships should have all the Informations about the Tobacco Ships expected –
Between Cape Barfleur & Cape la Hague	<i>Courageux</i>	
off Cape la Hague	<i>Royal Oak</i>	
Between Cape la Hague & the Gaskets	<i>Ranger</i> Sloop	
North from Ushant	<i>Hector</i>	

If the Man <sup>3</sup> can be trusted he should be caution'd not to pass those

stations in the night, and advis'd to keep about 5 Leagues from that Land –

The most minute description should be obtain'd of the vessell & what Colours she is intended to sail under, it may be so contriv'd to make her Colours serve for know[ing] her, that is by loseing or breaking her Ensign staff as it were by accident, and on being chas'd, to hoist her Colours at her Gaff-end or mast head as may be agreed on, whether, French, Dutch or English. –

The orders to the Captains of the Ships to be Secret not to be open'd till they are without Dunnose, they should be furnish'd with all such particulars as may be thought proper. – The two Sloops to lie at St Hellens to receive orders and ready to sail at a moments warning such orders to be sent as soon as the Description of the Vessell is receiv'd & the Intended time of her sailing is known

The Captains to be directed in case of meeting with this Vessell, carefully to secure all the papers found onboard her & (without inspecting any that are Seald) to send them to the Secretary of the Admty by an officer in a Box or parcel under the Captain's own Seal –

Perhaps it may be of use in case of geting the papers to have it Reported that her secret papers were sunk with weights when she was chas'd and that nothing but the Ship papers were found onboard her, and this report might be favoured by Packets similar to the others in size &c, being so thrown overboard in sight of the rest of the men onboard her. Thus the Enemy may be persuaded that none of their Secrets are discovered –

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 47.

2. Stevens identifies this document as prepared in late February or early March; February 28 has been arbitrarily selected.

3. Hynson, an American, was secretly in British employ.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1777

[London] Friday, February 28.

Applications have already been made to the Admiralty, for letters of marque and reprisal on all ships belonging to those American colonies which are now in actual rebellion against the Mother-country; and they will be granted as soon as the bill now depending for that purpose receives the royal assent.

*London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 26 TO FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1777

London, Friday, February 28.

The *Milford* frigate, commanded by Capt. Mowat, during the sickness of Capt. Burr (who is since dead) cruised off Boston Harbour from the 26th of October to the 25th of December, in which time Captain Mowat took and destroyed twelve of the Rebel vessels, three had been taken by their privateers, and were upwards of 30,000 l. value; and six Capt. Mowat burnt in the Bay of Boston, in sight of the Rebel Commodore Manley, at the head of three

of their 32 gun frigates; Manley made signal once for coming out to engage the *Milford*, but on second consideration, thought it most prudent to remain in Harbour, where he continued during the whole time that the *Milford* cruised a single ship on that coast

Captain Mowat fell in with the *Alfred*, and her prize the *Mellish*, which was taken about 40 leagues to the southward of Halifax Harbour, in the latter end of November; Captain Mowat took an armed vessel in company with the *Alfred*, but the rest found means to make off, and escape.

It is thought that Captain Mowat's cruise has been the most successful of any during the whole war, He returned to Halifax for stores and provisions, and sailed again about the 10th of January, to the same destination.

#### BEAUMARCHAIS TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Paris, February 28, 1777.

I have the honor to fit out, for the service of Congress, by the way of Hispaniola, the ship *Amelia*, loaded with field and ordnance pieces, powder and leaden pigs. As the season is too far advanced, that the ship might go straightway to your ports, I have charged M. Carabasse, my correspondent at Cape Francois, to reverse the whole cargo on Bermudian or even on American ships, if he finds any at her arrival in that port, and to transmit to you as soon as possible.

This is the fourth ship I have addressed to you since December last; the other three have steered their course towards your eastern ports.

The first is the *Amphitrite* of 480 tons, Captain Fautrel, loaded with cannons, muskets, tents, entrenching tools, tin, powder, clothing, &c. Left Havre de Grace on the 14th of December, 1776.<sup>2</sup>

The second is the *Seine*, from the same port, Captain Morin, of 350 tons, loaded with muskets, tents, mortars, powder, tin, cannons, musket balls, &c.

The third is the *Mercury*, of 317 tons, Captain Heraud, from Nantz, loaded with one hundred thousands of powder, 12,000 muskets; the remainder in cloth, linen, caps, shoes, stockings, blankets, and other necessary articles for the clothing of the troops.

In my letters of August, September, and December last the duplicates of which have been delivered to you by the chief officer of those who went over to your service in the *Amphitrite*, I have requested you to order that my ships might not expect long for remittances; I ask for in the same letters, my design being to send you uninterrupted supplies, and such as may be of the greatest use to you. I hope on your side, you will be quick as possible, load again, and send me back my vessels.

1. State Papers, House Document No. 111, appendix, 15th Congress, 1st session, 23-24, NA.

2. "Invoice of Ammunition, Artillery and other Stores on board the ship *Amphitrite*, Captain Fautrel."

Namely: -

52 Guns, their carriages and fore-carriages, &c.



20160 4 lb. Cannon balls  
 9000 Grenades  
     24 thousand-weight of lead balls  
 2900 Spades  
     239 Iron shovels [a sort used in lime burning]  
 2900 Pickaxe Mattocks  
     500 Rock picks  
     484 Pickheads  
 1000 Mattocks  
     300 Hatchets  
 1500 Bill-hooks  
     5 Miners drills  
     12 Iron pincers  
     10 Pistols  
     4 Scoops  
     6 Priming Wires  
     2 Iron wedges  
     4 Pick-axes (sage-leaved)  
     15 Crescent-shaped axes  
     5 Shears  
     4 Punches  
     2 Rammers  
 6132 Muskets  
 255000 Gun flints  
 5000 Worms  
 12648 Iron balls for Cartridges  
     345 Grape-shot  
 1000 lbs. of tinder  
 200 Levers  
     37 bales of tent covers  
     12 thousand-weight of gun-powder

Invoice of Ammunition, Artillery and other Stores on board the ship *Amelie*, Captain Desmoniers de Barras.

Namely: -

19 Brass guns with their carriages & fore-carriages, &c.  
 288 Bombs  
 100 Spades  
 100 Mattocks  
 3369 Cannon balls  
     20 Cases of musket balls  
         For the Use of the Artillery  
 100 lbs of old cart grease  
     1 piece of camelot  
     4 lbs of thick wire  
 200 Needles  
     2 Reams of cartridge paper  
 4900 flat tiles  
 Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 240.

# CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

L'Orient February 28th, 1777 -

I wrote at my Departure from Nantz which I hope Came safe to hand & now imbrace this oppertunity of informing you of the Success of my last Cruize, We Captured five Sail, none of which will be very Valueable I brought them all Safe in here. One of them *Swallow* Packet from Falmouth bound to Lisbon in Ballast engaged 45 Minutes before she Struck We had one Man Kill'd & My first Leiut had his left Arm blow'd off by our own Gun

the Leiut. of Marines was Slightly Wounded in the Wrist, but they are both in a fair Way to recover – The Coming into any French Ports with prizes is Attended with so many difficulties that I have wrote to Doctor Franklin desireing him to Send me home & am in hopes he will do so as soon as possible – Soon after my arrival I received an order from the Judge of the Admiralty Court to depart in Twenty four Hours with all my Prizes I however found Means to evade those Orders and got soon the Matter Settled with the Judge – in Eight days after I received an order from the Intendant of this Port to Depart in 24 Hours with all my prizes and not to presume to enter into any other French port under pain of being Seized he further inform'd me, If I offered to Cruize on this Coast, that a French Frigate would be dispatch'd to take me. If those threats were all to be put in Execution my Situation would be truely deplorable as I am informed there is Now several Brittish Ships of Warr Cruizing for me, those orders from the French Ministry I look on as Fenness and only given to Save appearances and gain time, as they are not yet quite ready for a Warr, but I think it will certainly take place in May or June.

It was with much difficulty I could evade the last positive order from the Ministry, given me by the Intendant, I then begged leave to heave the Ship Down as she was very leaky, he told me it was not in his power to Grant me Liberty I then told him the prizes were all dispatch'd & if he chose to Send the *Reprisal* out he must put hands on board, as me & my Officers and Men were determined not to proceed in her, in the present Condition & Desired him to Send Carpenters and Caulkers on board to Survey her, This he consented to, when they return'd they told him they thought it highly Necessary to heave her Down, He then told me he Could not grant me liberty unless those Officers would Sign a Certificate that they thought the Ship would be in Emminent Danger if sent out without repairing this they Could not do as they had not been on board long Enough to know how much Water she made in an hour, they Came on board the Next day on a Second Survey when they remained 4 Hours on board, and on their return signed a Satisfactory Certificate, the Intendant then granted me liberty to Come into Port and heave Down as our prizes is all gone I am in hopes my troubles are nearly at an end, I Sold the Packett for 16,000 Livers clear of all losses reclamations or other Demands after Striping her of Every thing that was Valuable, I shall refer you to Thomas Morris Esqr for the particulars concerning the other Prizes as he Transacted that Bussiness personally.

I Recd a letter this day from the Honbles Doctor Franklin & Silas Dean informing me of those orders by the Ministry at Paris, but think they are only to Stop the Clamour of the British Ambassadors & says they hope I shall be able to stay longer than the time limitted. When I first Arrived I wrote to your Honble Commissioners at Paris Informing them of the Number of Prisoners taken, & as there had lately been two American Private Ships of Warr taken I thought it a good opportunity to Negotiate an Exchange of Prisoners. in thier answer they say they will emediately apply to Lord

Stormont for an Exchange but did not think it Could be done without orders from the Brittish Court – I was permitted to keep them on board 7 days after my Arrival & then obliged to Discharge them & take the Intendants Certificate for their discharge, from Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

P.S. Inclosed you have an Exact list of the Prizes & Cargoes <sup>2</sup>

1. Papers CC (Letters Addressed to Congress), 78, XXIII, 377–79, NA.

2. Enclosed list:

A Manifest of the Cargo on board the Ship *Betty* bound from Bordeaux to Londonderry – Vizt

95 Hheads Wine

55 Pipes Brandy

29 Tierces Vinegar

164 Cakes Rozin

53 Small Boxes

6 Bags made Corks

11 Kegs

21 Casks Pruens

35 Bags Nutts

Some Cork Wood

The Cargo on board the Brig *Hibernia* bound from Dublin to Lisbon – Vizt

200 Barrels Flour

730 Sacks Wheat

The Snow *Swallow* (a Packet) bound from Falmouth to Lisbon in Ballast

The Cargo on board the Brig *Generous Friends* from Sheetland bound to Cadiz – Vizt

3270 Bushels Barley

The Cargo on board the *Polly & Nancy* bound from Pool to Cadiz – Vizt

2100 Quintals Cod Fish

Papers CC (Letters Addressed to Congress), 78, XXIII, 381–82, NA.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes Feb. 28. 1777 –

. . . the principal intention of this is to inform you that Mr [Thomas] Morris has sold four of the prizes <sup>2</sup> (all except the packet Boat) Vessells Cargoes &c &c for about 90,000 Livres, all risque of reclaim & every difficulty to be the purchasers. Mr M tells me he has recvd the Bills for the amount & so finished the Business.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 62, APS.

2. *Reprisal's* prizes.

1 Mar.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1777

[London] Saturday, March 1.

The following ships were taken with the *Swallow* packet boat by an American privateer, and carried into L'Orient, viz. the *Polly and Nancy*, Keniesbear, from Pool to Cadiz; the *Hibernia*, Jefferson, from Dublin to Lisbon; the *Generous friend*, Duncan, from Shetland to Cadiz; and the *Betty*, Campbell, from Bourdeaux to Londonderry. <sup>1</sup> Capt. [Charles] Newman, of

the *Swallow*, writes word that he is detained until they hear from Paris, and that he is in hopes the prisoners will be released.

1. Prizes of the Continental Navy brig *Reprisal*.

#### MEMOIR OF THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Memoire

Paris March 1st 1777

In the several Memoires which Mr Deane had the honor of presenting previous to the arrival of his Colleagues, the history of the dispute, between the United States of America, & Great Brittain, was brought down, to the Time of presenting The Memoires, the situation, & resources of the United States justly stated; and Conjectures as to the issue of the Campaign, then depending were made, which Events have since justified. – The Turn which Great Brittain then meditated, and which she would finally exert her whole force, & influence to give to this War, was pointed out, Namely by an early subjugation of America to unconditional Submission by force of Arms, or an Accomodation, to be in a Situation of turning the War against France, which they would be able to enter upon with the Advantages of having their whole Force, by Sea & Land ready, their Magazines Stored, & the warlike spirit of the Nation raised by civil Contest, together with additional resources from America, in a State of Peace & Amity, & ready Armed, & disciplined.

That Great Brittain would endeavor To give the War this direction, & avail herself of these Circumstances has with submission been pointed out, in Memoires which Mr Deane had the honor of presenting in Addition to which Messrs Franklin and Deane <sup>2</sup> have only to add, that they are well assured that the present Moment labours with this Event, before hinted at; and that Great Brittain is employing Art as well as force to Accomplish, & compleat their favorite design.

Messrs Franklin & Deane Anxious for the Fate of their Country, and, wishing to employ every means in their power to Defeat the design of their Country's Enemies, take Liberty to observe, that without supplies of military, & other Stores, without Commerce established on which their resources greatly depends; and without the protection of any foreign power to their commerce, or Shipp's of War, it is hardly possible for the United States to prevent for any Time this Event; nor can it be expected when considered that under all these disadvantages they have to contend with the whole Force of Great Brittain, & her Allies.

In Consequence of Warlike stores, not being permitted to be shipp'd in French Bottoms, direct for the United States, the Cannon & Stores engaged by Mr Deane in August last are at this moment in the Ports of France; & finally obliged to send them by the West Indies, there to look for American or Neutral Ships, all hopes of their being in any Season for Service in America, are lost.

The Duties laid on certain Commodities coming from the Dominions of Great Brittain being continued on the same Commodities from The United States operate as a prohibition, on many important Articles of the American Commerce & can be remedied, only by some particular Regulation,

or Settlement of Rules for this Commerce. The Armed Vessels of the United States are under the Necessity of having some harbor in Europe to repair the Damages they may receive at Sea, without This it is impossible for Them to keep these Seas; and when permitted to enter the Ports of France, it is Necessary the Rules they are to Observe should be known.

It is a great Disappointment to Messrs Franklin & Deane, to find that they are unable to comply with the Proposals of the Farmers General respecting Tobacco, but greatly as they are in want of Supplies they Think themselves justified in rejecting offers which must Subject their Constituents to great and certain Loss in a Commerce which they hoped to establish on equal Terms.

Not to detain his Excellency longer than is absolutely Necessary, Messrs Franklin & Deane propose the following Points with all Submission to his Consideration

1. Military Stores being merchandize & subject to the same rules, as other Articles of Commerce, it is asked that they may be permitted to be transported direct to the United States in French Vessels, the proprietors running the risques Attending such a Voyage.
2. It is submitted whether, considering the different predicament under which many Articles of the Commerce of the United States now are, from what they formerly were, it is not Necessary they should be under different Regulations – & consequently whether the United States may expect their proposed Treaty of Commerce & Amity with his most Christian Majesty, will be accepted, & approved of.
3. All prospect, of Treating with the Farmers General for Tobacco being at present closed, & all hope of supply from that source defeated, Whether any other mode can be adopted, for supplying France with that Article at the price, it costs at its first purchase, & the unavoidable expences of transportation, that being the extent of the demand of Messrs Franklin & Deane.
4. It is requested that when Armed Vessels belonging to The United States enter the Ports of France, they may be permitted Time to repair the Damages they may have sustained, & to dispose of so much of their Effects as will enable them to do it, under such Regulations as are usual in such Cases; That the mode or Rules may be pointed out; and That they may be permitted to sell, or Freight to the Subjects of other Nations their prizes, without discharging their Goods on Shore, but transacting the whole on shipboard.
- 5th. A Port in Europe being Necessary for the Shippes of War of the United States and the Treaty subsisting between France & Great Brittain not permitting one to be granted in this Kingdom; it is hoped that it will not be disagreeable That Application should be made elsewhere, and on This Subject intreat his Excellency's advice & direction which in this & every other Concern will, be attended to by them in the closest manner – as well as be received with the utmost respect & Gratitude.<sup>3</sup>

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 111–13, LC Photocopy.

2. Arthur Lee, the third Commissioner, was on a mission to Spain.

3. Vergennes' undated reply to the Commissioners:

1. No notice can be taken of commercial operations made by private individuals. No one is restrained in this respect, while keeping within the limits of circumspection. But it is impossible to ignore the undertakings, which, having a purely offensive object, cannot be regarded as commercial; and to do so would compromise ourselves without any advantage to the party we desired to assist, since such exportations cannot have the certainty of the favour of any flag and could not, at least with success, be reclaimed.
2. The facilities experienced up to the present by American commerce ought to leave no doubt that we will lend ourselves to this with mutual confidence, when the time comes to form a reciprocal alliance by a treaty of commerce. The reasons which at present prevent this alliance have been already intimated. Meanwhile, if there are any articles of merchandize upon which some indulgence is requested, they may be pointed out and efforts will be willingly made to procure it.
3. There is nothing to be written concerning Tobacco, this point concerns the Farmers General.
4. Every vessel which takes refuge in the ports of France receives there without difficulty, the succour of which it may have need, to repair the damage occasioned by the length of the voyage or events at sea; but it would be to give too great an extension to such succour, to claim on this head for privateers the right of running from the high seas into the same ports, of leading thither their prizes, of registering them and of selling them without even breaking their cargoes. The Treaties which are a law between the Powers and from which the religion of the monarchs does not allow them to deviate, are opposed to this.

Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 1451.

2 Mar. (Sunday)

### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Burford*, in *Hamoze*]

[1777] March 1. Myself and one of my shipmates have again been upon deck to work. We made a chest for the master-at-arms, for which he gave us some biscuit. We mended, also, a table for the ship's cook, for which he gave us a supper and some spare bread and meat. It is in the paper that the ship which brought Dr. Franklin from Philadelphia to France, as she was returning, took a brig laden with fish, three days out of port, belonging to the same gentleman that bought the *Dolton*.

2. Prayers were read on board this ship to-day, and we were allowed to go on deck to hear them. A frigate arrived, after a six months' cruise, as we know by her firing a salute – which they are not allowed to do unless they have been six months absent. Myself and another have the liberty from the carpenter of the ship to work every day when we can get work to do.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 29.

### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO ARTHUR LEE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris, March 2. 1777 –

Capt. Wickes is return'd to L'Orient with 5 Prizes, taken on the Coast of Portugal: One a Packet from Falmouth to Lisbon, with 18 Guns & 50 Men. The others a Ship from Pool with Fish one from Shetland with Barley, one from Ireland with Flour, & one for Bristol with Wine and Brandy. He

has made near 100 Prisoners. At his Request we have proposed, to the English Ambassador here, an Exchange for as many Americans taken by the *Raisonnable*; <sup>2</sup> but have received no Answer; indeed we did not expect any. Wickes meets with Difficulties at L'Orient about his Prizes. We are soliciting here for Some Favour to him, but as yet have no explicit Answer. Mr Dean is gone again to day to Versailles. – Perhaps we might be more favour'd in Spanish Ports. Tho' People tell us that this Court is offended with the late Conduct of Britain, (which was insolent on its supposed Success in America) and begins now to use a Ton[e] that indicates a Rupture: But these are Notices not to be rely'd on.

I am now removed to Passi, but am almost every Day at Hotel d'Hambourg with Mr Deane, who begins to talk afresh of going northward. . . .

Capt. Nicholson is return'd and the Cutter with Capt. Hynson is arriv'd at Havre Mr [William] Hodge has not yet Succeeded at Dunkirk but expects. The taken Packet will I believe be fitted out as a Cruiser, being said to sail well. . . .

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

2. Crew of Massachusetts privateer *Dalton*.

3 Mar.

LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

St James's March 3d 1777.

The King's Assent having been this Day given to "an Act of Parliament to empower His Majesty to secure and detain Persons charged with or suspected of the Crime of High Treason committed in any of His Majesty's Colonies or Plantations in America, or on the High Seas, or the Crime of Piracy" and there being a Clause which makes it "lawfull for His Majesty by Warrant under His Sign Manual to appoint one or more Place or Places of Confinement within the Realm for the Custody of such Prisoners," I am to desire that your Lordships will Name and describe to me for His Majesty's Information such Place or Places of Confinement as you think most expedient to be appointed in the Manner and for the purpose aforesaid, instead of the Common Goals. I am &c.

Suffolk.

1. PRO, Foreign Office, 95/355, 323–24.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HOWE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Whitehall 3d March 1777

. . . a warm Diversion upon the Coasts of the Massachuset's Bay, and New Hampshire, would not only impede the Levies for the Continental Army, but tend much to the Security of Our Trade, and indeed, it scarcely admits a doubt but that these Benefits must inevitably result from such an Arrangement; For as, on one hand, it is scarcely to be expected that those Provinces will part with men when their Presence must be wanted for the

internal Defence of their own respective Districts; so, on the other, a salutary Check will unavoidably be put to the Successes of the Rebel Privateers, when we have destroyed or taken Possession of their Ports. . . .

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/94, 107-10.

PAUL WENTWORTH TO LORD SUFFOLK <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

My Lord

I have this moment fallen upon the exact state of the Busyness which is the immediate object of A Lee's journey to Madrid. The delegates at Paris, assisted by the Count d'Aranda, & the Weverial Minister I before described, had Adopted a scheme suggested by a M. de Rulle Cour to give the Congress an Establishment convenient for an admiralty Jurisdiction in Europe or rather Africa. The writings are drawn & signed by the Partys – Namely the delegates & Rulle Cour, who has Engaged to raise 1000 Men to Garison, & Mony to build a Fortification on one of the Zaferinos Islands near Melila on the Coast of Fez in the Mediteranian, wch belong to Spain, if to any body – they being considered as desolate: On the other Part, is stipulated that Rulle Cour shall have a Commission as Capt Genl & Gov. of the Island &c &c. And I believe MacIntosh, at Leyden, expects to be Judge-Advocate. Mony is offered by M. de Chaumont in France, & M. D'yrande at Madrid, & the two Ministers have Added all their power & sollicitation to give the scheme success. . . .

Poland street [London] 3 March.

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 144.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, DATED MARCH 3." <sup>1</sup>

Arrived here his Majesty's ship *Liverpool*, Capt. Henry Bellew, from America, the ship which has been so fortunate in retaking many West India ships from the rebels.

[Printer's note] It is said that the crew of the *Liverpool* man of war have received upwards of 40 l. each, prize money, for captures they have made since their being on the American station.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 4 to March 6, 1777.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL EDWARD SMITH TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Havre, March 3d. 1777 – 6 at night

. . . I see our Seamen disdain such trifling game as Privateers, but lett me assure you exclusive of the prejudice they do your trade they hurt the credit of your Marine & induce the French to enter willingly into these Ships for prize money. You see Weeks [Lambert Wickes] has never found a difficulty in disposing of his prizes in the ports of France notwithstanding any thing that Court may say to ours.



The Sloop Hynson brought here is hawl'd up into the most private part of the harbour and the King's Dock Men are at work upon her with all expedition. I mean that she shall be stuffed with every thing that is good, to make her a better, & more valuable prize, but observe she will be all French, Master, hands, cocketts, & even bills of laiding, and will hoist french Colours so lett your ships be well apprized She will be quite French, but Hynson will answer to his name willingly.

Many officers have gone these last six weeks from hence to America I should say Philladelphia and 300 artillery Men. A Capt Bell saild some weeks ago with his Ship loaded with powder, Lead, Cloth, small Arms, and brass Cannon, Franklin is trusted by the Court of France for all articles. A Ship for St Domingo Sails to Morrow from hence loaded with stores of all kind, salt and Cloth, & more brass artillery. Every port of France has provided America.

Success attend your ships, if they loose the Sloop, they must be sad hands indeed, and I shall have been a very useless and expensive Messanger. so rely upon them for any return of my voyage because Hynson will not give me the dispatches here, so take her.<sup>2</sup>

I sett off for Paris to Morrow

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 52.

2. See next entry for British plan to capture sloop commanded by double agent Hynson.

#### PLAN TO CAPTURE JOSEPH HYNSON'S SLOOP <sup>1</sup>

The Cutter Sloop was built at Folkstone bought at Dover from Factor, and paid for by Hynson. She will have a French Captain and Crew on board and will clear out for some French Foreign port Capt Hynson will pretend being a passenger, and will answer to his name. He is a lusty and a black looking Man.

She will sail the first fair wind from Havre after the tenth of this Month in an Evening so as to make Cape Barfleur in a Morning. carrying French Colours.

One Ship must be off Cape Barfleur, and another off Alderny, & if it is in nature these Ships should miss such a Cutter Sloop, you had better have Sixty Ships out, than loose her, besides the distance from Portsmouth is so short that there can be no difficulty in having the means at hand to Catch her. Your Ships should be upon their stations the 9th because after the 10th the first wind that she can Sail with, Hynson will most assuredly putt to Sea.

Hynson must not be much marked by respect, but confined, and putt in confinement when on shore till Somebody fetches him to London, He begs I may come to him.

Havre 3d March 1777

N.B.: She shall have fifty or sixty barrels of gunpowder on board

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 51. Enclosed in Lieutenant Colonel Edward Smith's letter of the same date to William Eden.

BUISSON DE BASSEVILLE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN<sup>1</sup>

tho' I Receiv'd no answer to the first letter I have had the honour of writing you this last month, give me leave to Send you this Second.

I was yesterday at l'orient where I have Seen the embarquations taken By one of your privetears: one of them is fit to be arm'd as a privetear, and if you please to trust me with the Commandement of it, I'll Sail in Company with the other, or else I'll go with it to Baston, as it will please you to order. if you have not Sailors enough for that purpos, I'll find you Brave fellows whose will Surely Serve your Country with distinction: But, if my demand is agreeable to you, you must be as good as to obtain me leave from the Court of france that I may absent my Self; and a power to engage frenchmen to Come with me.

be assur'd, Sir, that I'll neglect nothing to testifie you my agknowledgment. I am with all possible Respect [&c.]

Buisson de Basseville

the 3d day of mach 1777

from quimperlé in low Britain –

[Endorsed by de Basseville on verso]

Sir/ Be pleas'd to honour me with an answer that I may Know your intention towards me

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 84, APS.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A PERSON AT L'ORIENT TO MESSRS W. & N. JOHNSTON AT BORDEAUX DATED MARCH 3"<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact the Court has ordered that the English vessels captured by the American frigate must leave the port, but there is reason to believe that our Commandant has received other private orders because these prizes; instead of really leaving the roads, have merely changed their berth by placing themselves outside the harbor. Nevertheless, in order that everything shall appear to be correct, Captain Weeks, commander of the frigate the *Reprisal* has obtained clearance papers from the Farmers General; care was taken during the night to change the figure-head and the vessels have been painted. The cod ship and the wine and brandy ship (the *Betty*) have been sold for about 70,000#, cargo and vessels<sup>2</sup> They are now engaged in unloading outside the harbor at Bois du Blanc; the flour and barley ships are being taken to Noirmontier where they are to be sold<sup>3</sup> and the English packet ship is being guarded by the frigâte and will make a small privateer.

In Lord Stormont's No 50 Secret

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 380.

2. The "cod ship" was *Polly and Nancy*, of 150 tons.

3. The "flour and barley ships" were *Hibernia* and *Generous Friends*.

4 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 4th March 1777

I had the honor to receive on the 23d ultimo by the *Bristol* your Lordships Letter of the 12th and 18th of December last, giving accounts of the disposition you had made of the Ships and Vessels under your Command; and having laid the same before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that they entirely approve thereof; I at the same time received and laid before their Lordships your Letters of the 22d and 27th of December the former acquainting them with your motives for permitting Captain [John] Tollemache to return to England, the latter with those for sending home the *Bristol* both of which my Lords likewise very well approve of, and command me to inform you that not intending to send Captain Tollemache back to New York they are pleased to leave it to your Lordship to appoint a Commander to the *Scorpion* Sloop in his room. My Lords are also pleased to leave it to your Lordship to appoint a Lieutenant to the *Amazon* in the room of Lieutenant Paton who was ordered by Captain [Maximilian] Jacobs to command the *Lord Howe* armed Vessel in the absence of Captain [Thomas] Pringle, and who came home a Passenger in her upon Captain Pringle resuming the Command

In my Letter of the 14th of January last I had the honor to acquaint your Lordship that it was the intention of the Board to send out to Quebec a sufficient number of Supernumerary Seamen to supply the place of the Men who have been lent to the Craft upon the Lakes from the *Triton Garland* and *Viper* Sloop that those Ships and Sloop might not lie inactive but proceed on any Service for which they might be wanted. I am now to inform your Lordship the 200 Seamen will accordingly be sent out by the *Proteus* Armed Ship and *Porpoise* Sloop, two Vessels which have been purchased to carry to Quebec the Camp Equipage, Cloathing Ordnance and Naval Stores for His Majesty's Forces in Canada, the former mounting 26 Guns with 160 Men, and the latter 16 Guns with 125 Men; They will proceed under the command of Captain [Philemon] Pownoll of the *Apollo*, in which Ship General Burgoyne is to return to Canada, and as the General has upon an interview with my Lords represented that besides the Seamen which have been allotted for the Service on the Lakes in consequence of the Plan delivered to Sir Charles Douglas by Sir Guy Carleton, two or three hundred more may be wanted to man the Boats and for other Services there, their Lordships think it will be expedient for them to give discretionary Orders to Captain Pownoll to furnish such a further assistance of Seamen, if it shall be found absolutely necessary, until such time as he receives Instructions from your Lordship upon that head, as well as for the disposal of the Ships and Vessels in the River St Lawrence

The *Experiment* which arrived at Plymouth on the 9th and the *Bristol*

which came to Portsmouth on the 23d past are under Orders to be refitted, and will be sent back to your Lordship as soon as possible.

The *Isis* and *Swift* Sloop are now at Spithead in readiness to convey from hence 1000 British Recruits when the Transports which are waiting at Sheerness to receive them can get round. They will be accompanied by the *Camel* of 24 Guns, and the *Bute* hyred Armed Ship of 30 Guns, appointed to carry the Camp Equipage for the Army under General Sir William Howe, and to proceed afterwards to the West Indies to be employed as Convoys to the homeward bound Trade.

I have only to add that the *Ariadne* a Twenty Gun Ship lately built at Chatham with a Copper Bottom, is nearly ready for the Sea, and will be sent out to your Lordship without delay. I have the honor to be &c

P: S:

P: S: Since closing my Letter I have received your Lordship's Letter of the 15th of January, and shall lose no time in laying it with it's Inclosures before my Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty

Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Howe } By the *Albion*  
at New York

Duplicate sent by the *Ariadne*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 129-32.

#### PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admiralty Office 4th March 1777

In addition to the *Albion*, by which your Lordship will receive this Dispatch, I have it in Command from My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that the *Somerset*, *Nonsuch*, *Augusta* & *Raisnable* of 64 Guns each, are nearly ready for the Sea & will be sent seperately to reinforce the Squadron under your Lordships command without loss of time.

I have the honor to be &c

P. S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/1334, LC Photocopy.

#### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND SILAS DEANE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Paris March 4th 1777

We send you herewith, the draught of a Frigate, by a very ingenious Officer <sup>2</sup> in this Service, which appears to Us peculiarly suitable for Our purpose, and We are in hopes of being able to ship Cordage and Sail Cloth, & Anchors &c Sufficient for Five or Six such Frigates, by the time you can have them built.

Though deprived of any intelligence from you since the first of last November, & without remittances leaves us in a Situation easier to be conceived than described. The want of intelligence affects the Cause of the

United States in every department; such Accts of Our Affairs [as] arrive in Europe at all, come thro the hands of Our Enemies, & whether defeated or Victorious we are the last who are acquainted with Events which ought first to be announced by Us. We are really unable to account for this Silence, and while We are affected by the unhappy Consequences of it, must intreat the honorable Congress to devise some method for giving us the earliest and most certain intelligence of what passes in America.

The Ship<sup>3</sup> by which this is sent, is Loaded with Cloathing, and Cordage, and Duck, not having a full Cargo of the former. We ordered Mr Williams who acts for Us at Nantes to compleat [it] with the latter, for which We have obtained a Short Credit. Mr Williams will write You by this Opportunity. he has been of great Service to Us at Nantes, & it is but justice to say that his knowledge of business, probity, Activity & Zeal for the Interests of his Country, with the good Opinion justly entertained of him by Gentlemen in Business at Nantes, render him Very serviceable in Our Affairs there, & proper to be employed in Commercial Transactions.

It gives Us pain to be obliged to say, that the conduct of Mr [John Philip] Merkle is intirely the reverse. he left the Vessel he came over in at Bordeaux on Expençe in December last; has sent no Orders to her since. he passed thro Paris in January for holland, or rather spent a Month in the City, on his journey, where, as well as at Bordeaux, his character is marked by low debauchery, incompatible with the Gentleman or the Man of Business. Persons of such a Character giving themselves out for Agents of Congress, and producing Contracts in support of their Pretensions, hurt the Commercial reputation of the United States, and can be of no Service in any shape whatever.

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and England, 1777-84), 85, 29-32, NA.

2. Captain Jacques Boux.

3. *Comte de Vergennes*.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear & hond Sir

Nantes March 4. 1777.

I am highly pleased to find that my Inclination to settle in France meets with your approbation, and I will do my best endeavours to preserve the good opinion you are pleased to honour me with. This place seems to me the best calculated for carrying on the american Trade, especially in time of war. I understand that all vessells that come on this coast are obliged to make Belle isle, which being just off the mouth of this River, an immediate shelter is near either in case of Chase or bad weather; while those Ships that are bound to Bordeaux or other places, have a turbulent Bay to cross, & a dangerous Coast to sail along before they can reach their port. The shallowness of the River near the Town is the only disadvantage, but where operations are to be conceal'd, the Ships being at some distance is not amiss, & with proper management & previous arrangement, this circumstance may not lessen the Dis-



*Jonathan Williams, Jr.*

patch. The extent of the Loire is a great Benefit, it communicates to many manufacturing Towns & by Canals joins the Seine & so goes even to Paris. it has a very rapid Stream which is the means of quick transportation, & the Goods not being jolted by land Carriage may if properly packed come in great preservation. . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 64, APS.

5 Mar.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN MATTHEW MOORE, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we think fit that the Ship you command shall be victualled for four months only with all Species of provisions except Beer of which she is to have as much as she can conveniently stow, You are hereby required and directed notwithstanding former Orders) to complete her provisions for that time only accordingly. And when you have so done, in which you are to use the utmost dispatch, you are to put to Sea the first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed and cruize without a moment's loss of time off the Capes Ortegal and Finisterre (ranging about within Thirty Leagues from either of them) for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's subjects and diligently to look out for, and upon falling in with, to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue upon the above Station for one Month after the making either the above Capes or the Land near the same, and then return without loss of time to Spithead and remain there until you receive farther Order; sending Us an Account of your Arrival and Proceedings. Given &c the 5th March 1777.

Captn Moore—*Exeter*—Spithead.

By &c

PS.

J Buller.

Lisburne.

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 324-25.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1777

[London, March 5]

For the *Public Advertiser*.

An authentic List of Prizes taken, retaken, burnt and destroyed by his Majesty's Ship *Milford*, on the Coast of America, from the 20th of April to the 9th of December, 1776.

1. A Sloop from Speedwell to Boston, off Newbery, 90 Tons Burden, loaded with Wood.
2. A Schooner from Salem to the West Indies, off Cape Ann; 60 Tons with Fish and Lumber
3. A Sloop from Casco Bay to Boston, off the Isle of Shoal, 70 Tons, with Wood.

4. A Schooner from New London to —, in Boston Bay; 60 Tons, with Rye, &c. &c.
5. A Sloop from Casco Bay to —, off Cape Ann; 70 Tons with Spars for Masts, &c.
6. A Sloop from Nantucket to Casco Bay, sunk her; 60 Tons, with Ballast.
7. The *Yankee Hero* Privateer, 17 Carriage Guns, 10 Swivels, &c. 150 Tons, with Provisions, Stores &c.
8. A Sloop from Newbery to St. Peter's, off Sambro'; 60 Tons, with Tar, Flour, Sheep.
9. Ditto from C. Bay to Nantucket, off C. Cod; 80 Tons, with Lumber.
10. Ditto from Wood Island to Boston, off C. Ann; 90 Tons, with Wood.
11. Ditto from ditto to ditto, off ditto; 80 Tons, with ditto.
12. Ditto from ditto to Nantucket, near Cathes Ledge; 60 Tons, with ditto.
13. A Schooner from Kenebeck to Hispaniola, ditto; 70 Tons, with Fish and Lumber.
14. The *Princess Royal*, from Jamaica to London, retaken; 350 Tons, Sugars, Rum, &c.
15. A Schooner from Boston off Cape Cod, sunk her; 50 Tons, with salt Mackrel.
16. [Illegible]
17. Ditto from Salem, sunk her; 90 Tons, with ditto.
18. A Schooner from ditto, burnt her; 80 Tons, with ditto.
19. A Brig from St. Vincent's, re-taken by the Boats when at anchor; 120 Tons, with Rum, &c.
20. A Sloop from Mount Desert to Boston; 110 Tons, with Wood.
21. Ditto from Hispaniola to Newbery, off C. Ann; 100 Tons, with Molasses, Coffee and Cotton.
22. A Schooner from ditto to ditto, off ditto; 80 Tons, with ditto.
23. A Sloop from Boston to —, off Cape Ann Harbour; 50 Tons, with Ballast.
24. The *John* Transport returning from Quebec, retaken; 300 Tons, with ditto.
25. A Brig from Halifax to the West-Indies, retaken; 150 Tons, with Fish and Lumber.
26. The *Retrieve* Privateer, 11 Guns, 18 Swivels, 82 Men, 140 Tons, with Provisions, Stores, &c.
27. A Brig from Halifax to the West-Indies, retaken; 200 Tons, with Lumber.
28. A Snow from England, retaken; 220 Tons, with Lead and Copper Ore.
29. A Brig from Liverpool to Antigua, retaken; 150 Tons, with Corn, &c.
30. A Sloop from — to Boston, burnt her; 60 Tons, with Wood.
31. A Sloop from Falmouth to the West-Indies; 100 Tons, with Fish and Lumber
32. A Schooner from ditto to ditto; 70 Tons, with ditto and ditto.
33. Ditto from Boston, burnt her; 50 Tons, with Oysters, &c.
34. Ditto from ditto to Newbery; 50 Tons, with Dry Goods.



35. A Sloop from ditto, burnt her; 60 Tons, with Ballast.
36. A Brig from Marseilles, Cargo French Property, retaken; 200 Tons, with Oil, Cotton, Saffron, &c. &c.
37. A Ship of 14 Guns from Liverpool to Halifax, retaken; 300 Tons, with Butter, Cheese, Coals, &c.

N.B. By the Capture of the above Vessels, in the Space of eight Months, through the Means of one King's Ship only, the Americans have sustained a Loss of very near 100,000 l. Sterling. Besides which, the *Milford* has rescued from the Rebel Paw, a great Number of Transports, Victallers, and other Vessels, and greatly molested their Coasting Trade during the whole Summer.

Yesterday the Press was very hot on the River Thames; several Watermen were taken from Hungerford-stairs, and not a Waterman but what were old Men were seen at Blackfriars or Westminster Bridges the whole Day: All the Watermen at Milbank, Vauxhall Stairs, and Nine Elms, were pressed.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, MARCH 4 TO THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1777

[London] Wednesday, March 5.

An American vessel, with 500 barrels of rice and 200 of indigo, for a foreign market, is taken, and carried into Grenada.

The *Irwin*, Smith, which is arrived in the Downs from New York, was a Jamaica ship, and taken by an American privateer, but since retaken by a man of war.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Particular

No 45

My Lord

Paris March 5th 1777

Yesterday Morning I had the Honour of Your Lordships Letters No 14 and 15.

After what had passed last week, between M de Vergennes, and me, with regard to the American Ship, the *Reprisal*, and the Captures She had made, and carried into L'orient, I did not imagine that it would have been necessary to resume the Subject, but Information I received from L'orient of the 26th past, made me think it incumbent on me, to return to the Charge, I therefore My Lord began my Yesterdays Conversation with M de Vergennes, by telling Him, that I was surprized and concerned to find, that there must have been some mistake, or delay, in the orders He mentioned to me last week, as I knew that the *Reprisal* was still at L'Orient, the 26th of last Month, and that the Captain had sold two of the Prizes, which put to sea that Day, and it was said, was about selling the other three. I gave M de Vergennes an exact List of the five Ships, and marked the two that were actually sold, according to my Information

He interrupted me to say, that what he had told me, was exact, that the orders were sent At the time He mentioned, and that M de Sartines had

received an Answer from the Commissary who mentions the Departure of two of the Merchant Vessels, but says nothing of any Sale. The Commissary adds, that the other three ships were immediately to put to sea, together with the *Reprisal*, that the American Captain had fought for a Delay, and pretended the Necessity of having his Ship Careened, but upon examination, it was found, that there was no such Necessity, and the Commissary renewed the orders, for her immediate departure. He says positively in his Letter, that Wind, and weather permitting, the *Reprisal* will put to Sea, the Day after to morrow, that is the 28th of last Month. This My Lord, is the Substance of the Commissarys Answer, according to M de Vergennes Account of it to me. His Excellency assured me, that he knew of no Sale, that none had been permitted, that no Part of the Cargoes had been suffered to be unloaded, and that if there had been any Clandestine purchase of the whole en Bloc, it was at the Risk of the purchaser, and was one of those Secret dealings in Trade, which it was scarce possible to prevent. He asked me, if I had any particulars with regard to the Sale, or could tell Him the purchasers Name. I was obliged to own My Lord, that my Information was very defective. It comes to me through Mr Hunter, who has it in a Letter, from his Correspondent at L'orient, but that Correspondent mentions no particulars. I have begged Mr Hunter, of whose Zeal I have had several Proofs, to get me the most particular Intelligence possible.

I told M de Vergennes, that I hoped soon, to be more exactly informed, that in the mean time, I asked the Restitution of the Packet, which was a Kings Ship, and of the other two Vessels if they were Still at L'Orient, and that as to any sale, that had been, or might be made, of all, or any of the five Vessels, I did as was my Duty, formally protest against it, and declare, that our Right could not be Affected, by any such Sale and that into whatever hands the Ships came, they must be considered as our indisputable Property. He did not at all Attempt to contravert this, but said, that as they had positively forbid the Sale, they certainly did not mean to justify the Purchase, if any Such Purchase had been made, which He assured me He did not know of, and which could only have been made en Fraude. He again assured me, that He had no Doubt, the orders were carried into full Execution before this time.

As to the Complaints of Messrs Ranson and Delamaine, all I shall Say My Lord is, that those Gentlemen are misinformed, M de Vergennes, who knows how repeatedly I have applied to Him upon the Subject, smiled, when I told Him they complained of my Negligence. I do not however at all mean to insinuate, that they have not Reason to be displeased, with the little success of my Representations; They have every Right to consider, the Captors as Pirates, and do not see how hard it is, to bring this Court to adopt, and avow the same opinion. Your Lordship is I know well aware of the Difficulty of the General Question, I saw it too, tho' imperfectly, when I transmitted You a kind of Memorial, which You so properly desired might not be presented. Since that time, My Lord I have constantly pressed the Restitution of the Ships, the Rebels take, and carry into the Ports of France, but I press

it upon the footing of friendship only, and without entering into any Discussion of the Matter of Right, which as Your Lordship sees better than I do, might carry us very far, and lead to such Disquisitions, as it is better to avoid. When I sent You the sketch of a Memorial, I did not see the nicety of the Question, in its full Extent, but was like an advocate who uses the most specious Arguments he can find, and is himself deceived, by the Arguments he employs. The Point now seems to me of such Nicety, that if any Memorial is to be given in with regard to it, I most earnestly beg, that it may be transmitted to me. In the mean time, I shall continue to follow the middle way I have taken, and press rather than Claim such Restitution, if the Case should again arise. I know that it should be granted, if this Court acted up to the friendship they profess, but they always protest the fear of Quarrelling with the Rebels, exposing their Trade, to the Insults of the American Privateers, and drawing on a Contest in which they could get nothing but blows. M de Maurepas, and M de Vergennes, have both repeatedly made use of this Expression, and said, that they must keep clear of Contests, in which there is much to lose, and nothing to gain.

I am with the greatest Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont

P:S: Mr Hunter has just received a Letter from L'orient, acquainting Him, that all the Prizes are Sold, but mentioning no particulars, so Soon as I know all the Circumstances, I shall again speak to M de Vergennes upon the Subject, and regulate Myself according to the information I receive. There can be no doubt, that the Commissary At least, has connived at this fraudulent sale, But they will deny, and I fear we cannot prove. S

[Endorsed] Paris 5 March 1777 Lord Stormont No 45 Particular R 10th by Express from Dover

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 322-25.

#### CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

L'Orient 5th March 1777 -

I received two of yours of the 25th by Mr Defrancy who I am sorry Came so late, as our Sales were compleat before his Arrival, I have strictly attended to your proposals & shall give you as full an Answer as in my power as to Cruizing in the Sound for the Baltick Ships I am afraid that will not do, as neither me nor my officers are acquainted wth those Sea's, nor have we any proper Charts for those Sea's. Another ob'ection is, the Certainty of being Soon discovered, as there is such Numbers of Vessels passing and repassing constantly, the Consequences of wch would be dangerous, as the Passage in & out are Narrow & we should be either blocked in or taken but if you should think proper to order us on this Expedition I think it would be highly Necessary to procure us Admittance & protection in some of the principal Ports in those Sea's, If this Cannot be done, I think it would not be Advisable to venture there

The Cruize on the coast of Guineay I think much Safer and better, but there is Such Difficultes Attending it, as cannot be got over, Our ship

will not carry Water & provision enough for to Cruize, as it will be Necessary to take 4 Months Water & provisions for that Cruize, and we Cannot take more than 2 Months Water & provisions – If you should purchase the *Marepaus* [*Maurepas*], I think this Cruize would then be Advantageous as the Ships [of] Warr are all Small that is on that Coast & the Guineay Men tho' they have all more or less Guns are not in a Condition to fight, as their Men are Generally very Sickly going off the Coast.

I join with you in Sentiments in regard to Cruizing on this Coast as there is very little prospect of any More Success here, I am Informed by the officers belonging to two French Ships [of] Warr, that arrived two days ago from a Cruize, that there is three British Ships [of] Warr Cruizing, between Cape Finnister and Ushant, one of 64 Guns one of 50, and one of 32 Guns, two of which they Saw & was told there was Another – The French Ships goes out again on a Cruize to Day.

I think if a very fast Sailing Cutter could be got & Stationed at Dunkirk they might soon make plenty Prizes by running into the Downs and Cutting Ships out from there, provided they would be received & protected in that port until it Suited you to Send them off for America or Elsewhere, And take the liberty to recommend Capt Hinson [Joseph Hynson] for that Service, as he is a Stout brave Man & I think well qualified for Such an Enterprize,

I am very glad to hear you intend to provide for Capt [Samuel] Nicholson, as I think him deserving yr Confidence and make no Doubt he will Merrit your Esteem in any Station you may think proper to place him. If you purchase the *Marepaus* and I am appointed to Command her, I know no Obstacle in Capt Nicholsons way, as my Officers would Chuse to Continue with me & of Course there will be room for him in the *Reprisal*. I think you may get the *Marepaus* £12,000 Sterg She is a Very fine Ship & has the Charector of a Very fast Sailor I would recommend the purchase if Convenient.

whatever may be your determination on those hints mentioned in your last I shall Chearfully Comply with any orders from you if in my power, the Officers did not Sign a Written parole, only give thier Word of Honour, as I have wrote you fully on this head, shall only Say they are all discharged. This comes by Mr Defrancy who returns emediately to Paris as you Trusted him I think I may safely do the Same from Gentlemen [&c.]

[Unsigned]

P.S. I shall take Care not let any more Officers on Shore at all. L.W.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 93, APS.

6 Mar.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD SUFFOLK <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admiralty Office 6th March 1777

Your Lordship having, in your Letter of the 3d Instant, acquainted Us that the Kings Assent had been that Day given to "An Act of Parliament to empower his Majesty to secure and detain Persons charged with or sus-

pected of the Crime of High Treason committed in any of His Majestys Colonies or Plantations in America or on the High Seas or the crime of Piracy” and that there is a Clause which makes it lawful for His Majesty by Warrant under his sign Manual, to appoint one or more Place or Places of confinement within the Realm for the Custody of such Prisoners; And your Lordship having in your said Letter desired that we will name to you for His Majestys information such Place or Places of Confinement as we think most expedient to be appointed in the manner and for the purposes aforesaid instead of the common Goal: We are to acquaint your Lordship for His Majestys information, that there is at Plymouth a large Building call'd Mill Prison; And another at Portsmouth on the Gosport side, about a Mile from that Place, call'd the Forton Hospital, with large airing Grounds; which Buildings were used for the Custody of Prisoners during the last War; and, being the property of the Crown, they may in our opinion be proper places to be appointed for the purposes mentioned in your Lordships said Letter: And should it be thought expedient to order them to be so made use of, and any of the Prisoners confined therein be sick, so as to make it necessary to have them removed, they may be accomodated with seperate Appartments, in the Royal Hospitals for Sick Seamen at Plymouth and at Haslar, until their Numbers are too large to allow of its being done without inconvenience to His Majestys Service. We are My Lord [&c.]

J Buller C Spencer Lisburne

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 63-64.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO COMMODORE MARRIOT ARBUTHNOT<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Lieut Govr Arbuthnot

Sir

Whitehall, 6th March 1777.

I have received your Dispatches of the 31st December & 31 January, by His Majesty's Ships *Lizard* & *Liverpool*, and laid them before the King. His Majesty read with great satisfaction the account you give in the former of these Dispatches of the success with which the very proper & spirited Measures taken by yourself, General Massey & Sir George Collier, for the relief of Fort Cumberland was attended, & expressed his approbation of Major Batt's conduct of the party under his Command upon that Occasion.

I agree with you that it is highly probable the Rebels will renew their attempt upon that Fort in the Spring, if they see any likelihood of succeeding, and, therefore, Col: Gorham, or the commanding Officer, cannot be too watchful or attentive, to prevent any surprize, and to the laying in sufficient Supplies for the Garrison, to enable him to sustain a Siege untill succours can arrive.

The requisition you have made to Sir George Collier for a number of small Ships of War to be stationed at the several Inlets into the Province will, I doubt not, be complied with by Lord Howe as far as the other important Objects he has to attend to will admit, but I trust the early Operations of His Majesty's Forces will reduce the Rebel power to so low

a state that fewer than seven of the King's armed Ships will be found sufficient to protect the Province from any formidable attack, and the Force within it if properly employed cannot fail of giving security against any small Enterprize.

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 217/53, 31-32.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGOWNE TO CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL,  
H.M.S. *Apollo* <sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir

I wrote to you last week to inform you how happy I found myself in being able to accept your obliging invitation on board the *Apollo*. I directed my letter to Sherpham Devon: but not knowing your post town possibly it may have miscarried. I therefore trouble you with one line more to say that Government will soon grow impatient for my departure & to request from you intelligence of the real time you think you shall be ready. I now beleive I shall be dispatched upon expeditious reasons & that I shall save you from the trouble of a Convoy.

If my first letter did not reach you be so kind to inform me & I will repeat what I therein mentioned & beleive me with truest regard Dear Sir [&c.]

Hartford Street March 6 1777

J: Burgoyne

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO WILLIAM KNOX <sup>1</sup>

Sr

Admty Office 6 March 1777.

My Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty having directed the Navy Board to apply the Transports named on the otherside hereof, to the Services against their Names expressed; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith, for the Information of Lord Geo Germain, in answer to your Letter of the 26th past; And am [&c.]

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

*Springfield* To carry the Ordnance Stores, Presents for the Indians, & 25 Recruits for St Augustine

Tons. No Pdrs

*St Helena* 270 12: 6 - To carry the Ordnance Stores to St Vincents, and as many of the Recruits for Granada as she can take in.

Tons. No Pdrs

*Harrietta* 221: 6: 6 - To carry the remainder of the Recruits to Granada.

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 1, 161-62, 164.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1777

London [March 6].

A Letter from Nantz says, "To give you some Conjecture of the Traffic between the Merchants of this Place and America, the following were

imported in December last, 1500 Tons of Cotton, 2000 Tons of Tobacco, 2400 Tons of Rice, 700 Tons of Indigo, 400 Tons of Cocoa, and other Articles; in all 7000 Tons."

Yesterday arrived the Mail from New York, brought by the *Harriot* Packet, Captain Sampson Spargo, and the Post-master General immediately appointed him to the Command of her for his gallant Defence of the said Boat in an Engagement with a Rebel Privateer on her outward-bound Passage in September last, when the Captain and five more were killed, and nine wounded.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Volume 6.

ARTHUR LEE TO RICHARD HENRY LEE<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Burgos in Spain. March 6th 1777.

I am told here, from authority on which I can rely, that if you send to New Orleans & the Havannah you will find persons directed to lend you Arms & Ammunition, & it is conceivd here that taking possession of Pensacola woud facilitate that communication much. As South Carolina is certain of not being invaded this Summer, that might be her work. I shall endeavor to get a supply of Specie for the two Colonies of Virginia & S. Carolina thro the same channel.

1. Arthur Lee Papers, HU.

7 Mar.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM<sup>1</sup>

Most confidential.

St James's 7th March 1777.

I informed Your Excellency in my No 3, that Mr Arthur Lee, an Agent from the Congress, has lately set out for Madrid. Secret Information has been given that the Object of his journey is to obtain the consent of Spain that the Americans may take possession of one of the Islands of Zafarina<sup>2</sup> in Latitude 35°, betwixt Melilla and Mejerda, which place they propose as an Establishment convenient for an Admiralty Jurisdiction.

Your Excellency will endeavour to learn with proper caution whether such a Plan is in agitation and if you should find any grounds for this Information, you will immediately in the most express terms apply to the Ministers of His Catholic Majesty, and require from them a Declaration whether they deem these Islands as part of their Possessions in Africa.

1. PRO, State Papers, 94/203.

2. Chafarinas Islands.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD STORMONT

[Extract]

St James's 7th March 1777

The letter from Deane & Franklin to Your Excellency deserves no answer<sup>2</sup> . . .

P.S. I send inclosed to Your Excellency a Memorial of Arthur Edie, and others proprietors of the Ship *Port Henderson*; <sup>3</sup> and recommend their interest to your attention, if Your Excellency sees proper from further Knowledge of the business to interfere in it. <sup>4</sup>

W

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 336-37.

2. See American Commissioners in France to Lord Stormont, February 23, 1777, proposing an exchange of prisoners.

3. In PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 338-39, the memorial reads:

The Memorial of Arthur Edie & others, proprietors of the Ship *Port Henderson* late Capt. Atkins, now in the port of Nantes in France, sheweth. -

That the above mentioned ship departed from Jamaica in July 1775, loaded with Sugar Rum & ca bound for the port of London, & having met with bad weather in coming thro' the Gulf of Florida, was obliged to put into Charlestown South Carolina to repair the damage she had sustained; at which place she arrived in September same year, & the Ship & cargo were seized by the Rebels of that Colony. - And the Memorialists are informed they have loaded her with Rice and Indigo, and called her the *Hope*, commanded by a Captain Hatters [John Hatter] & that said ship is now arrived at the port of Nantes in France. -

The Memorialists have sent a power of Attorney to claim said ship as their property, & have desired their correspondents at Nantes to apply to the British Ambassador at Paris, but lest such application should meet with any obstruction, they beg your Lordship to give the necessary instructions to his Majesties Ambassador at the Court of France, for recovering their property from the hands of the Rebels.

4. See Volume 4 for seizure of *Port Henderson*.

#### PATIENCE WRIGHT TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Pall-mall March 7th 1777

Ld Dunmore Spent much time to Convince Me of this Week and Wicked American Rebellion this day - and the Impudence of Captn Weeks to take the *Swallow* Sloop War the Kings Packet and to Sell the Kings Ship at Public Sail in France is a thing he dont Like - he tells the King "America will Very Soon be tired of Doct Franklins Conduct," as also that they now wish for Peace most heartily . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 1, 86, APS.

#### CONFESSION OF JOHN THE PAINTER <sup>1</sup>

Copy.

City of Winchester . . . . . The voluntary Confession of James Atkyns, commonly called John the Painter, now a Prisoner in the County Gaol of Southampton, and under Sentence of Death for burning the Dock Yard at Portsmouth, taken this 7th March 1777.

Saith . . . That he was born at Edingburgh 28 Sept 1752 his Mother now living as he believes. - Curiosity led him to Virginia in America at the Age of 21 as an Adventurer to seek his Fortune. - Left America in March 1775.



In October 1775 by the name of Jas Boswell inlisted a private Soldier in 32 Regiment at Gravesend, marched to Chatham next day from whence he soon deserted, was not concerned in the Fire in Temple Street Bristol nor privy to it. – Broke into Mr Morgan's Warehouse at Bristol alone, no person concerned with him in that or any other accident that ensued in that City. He intended to set fire to two Houses in Portsmouth in order to employ the Engines, whilst the Fire might spread in the Rope Yard. – Broke into Mr Morgan's Warehouse at Bristol in order to burn it that the Engines might be there employed whilst the Shipping were burning & the Quay, for which purpose he left a lighted Candle burning in the said Warehouse, and because that Fire did not take effect he afterwards set fire to the Warehouses Quay Lane by getting over the top of the Door. – Mr Dean [Silas Deane] told him when the work was done (meaning the burning Dock Yards at Portsmouth & Woolwich & Bristol Harbour but not the Houses) he should make his escape and come if possible to him at Paris and he should be rewarded. – As a Reward his own expectations prompted him to hope that he should be preferred to a Commission in the American Army.

When after setting fire to the Rope Yard he left Portsmouth (to wit) the next night being Sunday, he reached London & went to Doctor Bencraft [Edward Bancroft] No 4 Downing Street Westminster, to whom he had a verbal recommendation from Mr Dean, who gave him at Paris the Doctor's name in writing & place of abode, but the Doctor would give him no countenance, and therefore did not relate the particulars of the Mischief he had done, to him but hinted to him, that he would soon see or hear by the Papers of an extraordinary accident that had happened, and he afterwards wrote such an Account in a Letter to him which he left himself at the Doctor's House with a person who came to the Door, which for the sake of truth he relates and without intention of casting any Slur on the character of an innocent Man.

That he saw the Doctor the day following in the Salopian Coffee House & told him that he would do all the prejudice he could to this Kingdom, to which the Doctor replied, he could not be of opinion with him in that respect for that he got his Bread in this Kingdom & therefore would not be concerned with him; And seeing that the Doctor did not approve of his conduct he hoped he would not inform against him, to which the Doctor said he did not like to inform against any man.

When at Paris he was assisted by Mr Dean with 12 six Livre pieces, he asked for no more neither did he receive from him any Bank Bill, Draft or Note whatever.

After leaving London (to wit) at High Wycombe, he broke into a House & took away a few Linnens, consisting of Caps, Handkerchiefs, but nothing of value, he then went to Oxford from thence to Abingdon where he attempted to break into two Houses, Silversmiths or Watchmakers but without effect. – From thence he went to Fairford where he broke into a House & took from thence a number of Stockings & Handkerchiefs & a metal Watch & near 50 Shillings in Silver & halfpence. – The Watch he pledged for 16 Shillings

in the name of James Hill at a Pawnbroker's in Castle Street Bristol. – After this without attempting any thing but having prepared some of his Ingredients he went from Bristol to Plymouth with intent to set fire to the Dock Yard there. – Twice he reached the top of the Wall, but the Watchmen being near he could hear them talk together, especially the last night, therefore he desisted, he never committed or attempted to commit any Robbery but when he was like to be drove short of Money.

After leaving Plymouth he returned once more to Bristol with a determined resolution then to set fire to the Shipping in the Harbour & in his way to Bristol at Taunton he attempted to break into the House of a Silver-smith or Watchmaker without effect.

He attempted the Shipping a second time but on account of the vigilance & strictness of the Watch there kept on the Quay & in the Ships his attempt proved abortive. – He likewise attempted on the Saturday morning but in vain to get into a Stable or Coach House on the Quay in order to set fire to it, but seeing a Man lying in a Cart near the place he desisted.

On the Sunday morning following he set fire to the Warehouses in Bristol in Quay Lane which he effected in the following manner (to wit) He bought some coarse Flax on the Quay and some Turpentine at another place, but where he cannot remember, & with those & Charcoal-Matches and Gunpowder & striking a spark of Light on Tinder to which he set a paper match he effected his purpose.

The Match was made of touch paper & as that consumed to the end the Powder being laid & wrapt up likewise in touch paper it of course took fire & so he presumes it instantly mounted into a Blaze. – Then he left the Town but seeing no fire behind he returned back part of the way til at last hearing the City was on fire he then went on to Sodbury, & so crossing the Country to Marshfield & to Chipenham and Calne, but the first night after the Fire he slept at Sodbury, the second night he broke open the door of an Outhouse near it where he slept & left behind him in the morning a dark Lanthorn – On the Wednesday night he went to Calne & being near short of Money broke open Mr Lowe's house, which Robbery as it is known he has no occasion to enlarge upon it. – He left a Parcel with a Pistol & other things in the Parcel in the Church Porch of Calne.

At Bristol he first broke into Mr Morgan's Warehouse & then prepared the Combustibles for setting fire to the Shipping.

He never was in the 45th Regiment neither did he go to America in any Regiment.

He never said that One Brooks or any other Prisoner in Newgate would be hanged as was sworn against him upon his Trial, neither does he know any Man by the name of Brooks.

His Father was a Blacksmith at Edinburgh & he was apprenticed to a Painter, then served his time out & then had his Indenture delivered up which he usually carried about in his Pocket & afterwards burnt them, which gave rise to the Story of his destroying Papers to the value of Three hundred

Pounds. — Those were the things of value which he meant to express by what he had burnt.

As to any Merchant in London or any other Person, except Doctor Bencroft, he had no Recommendation to, or conversation with, respecting the many unhappy Accidents before related.

That he stopt a Postchaise between Portsmouth & Petersfield with a Gentleman & Lady in it some considerable time before the Fire, & robbed them of Nine Shillings & sixpence, of which he returned two Shillings.

The latter end of Decemr 1775 he inlisted at Chard in Somerset into the 13th Regiment with a Recruiting Serjeant, & a few days after deserted.

At Titchfield as has been publickly mentioned he followed the Trade of a Painter, also at Birmingham with Mr Robinson, at Warrington & many other places.

That he had committed and attempted to commit several other Robberies & Burglaries, but of no material account to mention.

Declares that all the Acts herein mentioned of a public as well as of a private nature were of his own motion & that he was not advised or instigated thereto by any person whatever except what is before related, and that he had no Accomplice.

One other circumstance strikes his present recollection which he is desirous to mention & which happened in the City of Norwich at the house of Mr Mark where he stole 2 Silver Table Spoons & a pair of Silver Buckles in the Spring of 1776.

James Aitken

Signed by James Aitken and protested by him to contain the Truth only in the presence of us this 7th day of March 1777.

Geo Durnford	}	Two of His Majy Justices of the Peace,
N. L. Smith		in & for the City of Winchester
T Lawrence		— of the Bear Inn, Devizes.

1. Fortescue, ed., *Correspondence of George III*, III, 423–27.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GOSPORT, MARCH 7.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Isis* man of war, Capt. [William] Cornwallis, has received orders to sail as convoy to the transports lately arrived at Spithead with troops on board, bound for New York, and they will proceed to sea in a few days.

The *Warwick* and *Venus*, in the harbour, have received orders to be ready for commission.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 8 to March 11, 1777.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ALDERNEY, MARCH 7.”<sup>1</sup>

A Vessel arrived from Cherburgh has brought from thence three Sailors belonging to the *Royal George*, Young, from London and Falmouth to Venice. She sailed from Falmouth the 7th of January, and was taken the 24th of the same Month by a Privateer of 14 Guns and 98 Men, after an Engagement or rather a running Fight, for an Hour, in which Captain Young

and two of his Men were wounded, who are on board the Privateer. The Ship is sent for America. The above Sailors were put on board a Frenchman, which landed them at Cherburgh.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, March 12, 1777.

2. *Royal George*, Peter Young, master, was taken January 25, 1777, by the Massachusetts privateer sloop *Satisfaction*, Captain John Stevens, and libeled against at Boston, March 27, 1777, Mass. Arch., vol. 159, 74.

#### BEAUMARCHAIS TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris the 7 March 1777

. . . I have missed the 5 vessels laden at L'Orient. They were sold when my agent arrived there. I confess to you the sin I was going to commit, because I am vexed that others have committed it in my place. The 5 vessels and their cargoes were sold for 90 thousand livres, and were worth 600 thousand.<sup>2</sup>

The last vessel which I am loading, and which is ready to sail, is called *le Comte de Vergennes*. Although this name is very pleasing to me, and Seems made to bring luck to my cargo which is superb; yet, as it is not my doing that the vessel is thus named, if you fear in the least the connection which the English may make between the name of the vessel, and its employment, Say one word, and I will have it changed; although it will be somewhat hard for me to cancel it. When she has set sail, I shall have at sea, *l'Amphitrite*, *l'Amelie*, *le Mercure*, *le Marquis de Chalotais*, *la Seine*, *la Concorde*, two Bermudian vessels awaiting the rest, and *le Comte de Vergennes*, which is thus named only subject to your orders.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 14-16, LC Photocopy.

2. Wickes' prizes.

8 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN SIR JOHN HAMILTON, H.M.S. *Hector*<sup>1</sup>

Most secret

Sir

Admiralty Office 8th March 1777

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received well grounded Information that an English built Cutter Sloop of about 90 Tons bound to North America, being the property of some of the Inhabitants of the Rebellious Colonies there, is now at Havre de Grace, from whence it is expected she will sail about the 10th Instant, or as soon afterwards as wind & weather will permit; that she hath on board a quantity of powder & some small brass Guns, either mounted or in her hold; that she will be cleared out for some Foreign French Port with French Cocquets & Bills of Lading, hoist French Colours, & that her Master & Crew will be Frenchmen, And it being of the utmost consequence that the said Vessel should be intercepted & seized and the Dispatches & Papers she may have on board secured; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to proceed & cruize in the Ship you command, without a

moments Loss of time, between Cape Barfleur & Cape La Hague, and use your utmost vigilance, attention and diligence to intercept the said Vessel which you will easily know by her being Folkstone built; And, upon your so doing, most strictly to examine her & to endeavour to discover whether she answers the abovementioned description or not; letting one of your people (in order to favor the suspicion) declare that he hath seen her lately in England: And, if she doth answer that description; or, notwithstanding any alteration she may have undergone since she hath been in France, you have good reason to believe her to be the Vessel in question, it is their Lordships orders that you do seize her; letting her Master know that it is done upon good grounds of suspicion that she belongs to the Americans, but, should it prove otherwise, she will, no doubt, be immediately released.

If she should be the Vessel alluded to, you will most probably find one or more Englishmen on board her and amongst them, her real Master or Owner, whose name is Hynson, who is a lusty black looking man, and will, as it is expected, endeavour to pass for a Passenger; it is therefore, their Lordships further direction that you very carefully and strictly examine the several persons who may be on board her in order to your ascertaining that Point; And, upon your discovering the said Hynson, or any other Englishman, to search very closely & narrowly their Persons, Cabbins, Chests &c (but more particularly Hynson's) for dispatches and Papers, and to secure all such as you shall find in their custody or any where else on board the sd vessel; And, having so done, to remove the said Persons into the Ship you command and to confine them; without however treating them with any unnecessary strictness or severity.

When this shall be effected it is their Lordships further direction that you make the best of your way with the said Vessel, persons, dispatches & other Papers to Spithead, where you are to remain until you receive further order; sending to me (with the utmost dispatch and by one of your own Officers), for their Lordships information, an account of your arrival & proceedings, together with all the dispatches & papers you may have found on board the said Vessel; and taking care that they are not soiled or damaged, that such of them as are sealed do remain in that state, and that the whole be inclosed under one or more Covers sealed with your own seal.

I have it further in Command from their Lordships to signify their direction to you to continue upon the above station or service for fourteen days after your departure from St Helens (in case you do not sooner fall in with & intercept the abovementd Vessel) and then return to that place, and remain there until you receive further order, sending me, by express, for their Lordships information, an Account of your Arrival and proceedings. I am Sir [&c.]

Ph<sup>d</sup> Stephens.

PS. In case you meet with & seize the above Vessel it is their Lordships orders that you give strict directions to the Officers & Persons whom you

[Endorsed]	Like Lres,	to cruize on the stations against each exprest, to,
Capt [John] Faulkner	<i>Royal Oak</i>	Off Cape La Hague
[John] Harvey	<i>Speedwell</i> Sloop	Off Cape Barfleur
[Vernon] Yates	<i>Ranger</i> do	Between Cape La Hague & the Caskets.
[Samuel] Hood	<i>Courageux</i>	To the Northward of Ushant, keeping within sight of Land.

*Public Advertiser*, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1777

A Summary of the Trial of John the Painter, James Hill, otherwise Hinde, otherwise Axsan, commonly called John the Painter, was brought from Winchester Gaol to the Castle early on Thursday Morning, and arraigned before the Judges Ashurst and Hotham, on an indictment, charging him with having on the 7th of December last, wilfully and maliciously set fire to a certain building called the Rope House, in his Majesty's Dock-yard at Portsmouth, to which indictment the prisoner pleaded *Not Guilty*.

The first witness called was a deputy Clerk of the Rope House, who proved that a fire did happen in the Yard as alledged, and produced the tin cannister which had been found full of combustibles in the Rope House.

The second witness proved, that the prisoner was at Canterbury a few weeks before Christmas, and that the cannister produced was then made by him for the prisoner.

The next witness proved his lodging at her house the night preceding the fire, and preparing the combustibles

The Commissioner of Portsmouth-yard produced a bundle, which had been found in the lodgings of the prisoner, after he quitted Portsmouth, and which contained three books, a pair of buckles, &c.

The Commissioner's Clerk swore that he found the bundle at the lodgings aforesaid.

The woman at whose house the bundle was found, swore to its identity, and that of the prisoner who left it with her.

A blacksmith's lad deposed, that he lodged in the same house with the prisoner, and conversed with him at his lodgings the day before the fire.

A painter, named Baldwin, was next sworn; and in the course of his evidence, which was extremely long, it came out, that by the direction of Lord Temple he had repeatedly visited the prisoner, while in the New Prison, from the time of his first examination before Sir John Fielding in Bow-street, till the 15th of February, on which last day he unbosomed himself fully, and owned that he had set the rope-house on fire on the 7th of Decem-

ber, and told him every circumstance relative to the matter, beginning with his first proposing the measure to Mr. Silas Deane at Paris, and tracing transaction by transaction till the moment of his being apprehended. From this confession it was, that the witness learnt where the tin cannister was made, where the bundle was left, what it contained, and manner in which the prisoner prepared the combustibles, what infinite labour and pains he underwent to lay his plan so as to ensure the effectual demolition not only of the Rope-House, but of two houses in Portsmouth and the Common, at each of which he had taken lodgings, and which he meant to have set on fire at the same time that he fired the Rope House, in order to attract the engines, and prevent them from saving the Store-houses, &c. from consumption; his conduct after the plan was ripe for execution, the mode of his escape from Portsmouth, in the cart of a market woman, his having burnt a letter to a merchant in town with bills to the amount of 300 l. (which he had received from Silas Deane) in order to prevent a discovery in case of his being apprehended; his interview with the merchant on his arrival in town, his vexation and disappointment at the merchant's refusing to credit what he said, his informing him that he had fired the Dock-yard at Portsmouth, his accompanying him to a Coffee-House, and upon observing a person there regard him with an unwelcome scrutiny, his departure to Hammersmith, from whence he wrote the merchant word that he was going to Bristol, and that he should soon hear of his *handy works*, with several other particulars, all tending to prove that he alone perpetrated the fact alledged in the indictment.

In order to shew that Baldwin's testimony was not invention, a great variety of witnesses were sworn, who corroborated the whole of his testimony, each confirming a part of his information.

Several of these witnesses came from Canterbury, and swore positively that the prisoner was there a short time before the fire, that he had two more cannisters made for him (which he left behind, because they were not finished in time, and which were yesterday produced in Court) that he purchased some salt-petre there at an apothecary, &c. &c.

The woman who drove the cart in which he rode part of the way from Portsmouth; the woman that sold him the matches there; two of the dock men who saw him in, and near the rope-house a short time before the fire broke out; a painter at Bristol who lent him his colour-stone to grind his charcoal on; and the constable who apprehended him, were also sworn, and spoke most clearly to the several points they were called to maintain.

The books which were found in his bundle were, *An English Justin*, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, and *The Art of War and making Fireworks, as practised by the Army of the King of France*.

A French passport was also taken out of his bundle, and read; it appeared to be nothing more than a passport in the ordinary form, permitting *James Axsan*, at any time within one month from the 13th of November 1776, to leave the Kingdom of France.

As soon as the examination of the various witnesses was over, the Judge (Baron Hotham) called upon the prisoner to make his defence.

He confined himself chiefly to remarking that the passport had been lately obtained and made evidence against him, and appealed to the Judge, whether from the news-papers, and the various reports and conversation concerning him, it was not possible for such a man as Baldwin to feign the story he had told, and collect a parcel of witnesses to support it in the manner they had done that day; and if Baldwin had told the truth, he asked whether in that case he ought to be credited, as it was clear he had been guilty of a breach of confidence; and if he had the art to deceive him by lies, was it not also likely that he would play false with others, and impose on a Jury?

Baron Hotham was more than an hour in summing up the evidence, which he recited with great precision, and made his observations as they occurred, both for and against the prisoner: he told the Jury, they were to consider only the fact, and how far the evidence went to prove it; but that they ought to divest themselves entirely of prejudice, and not in the least to advert to the horrible consequences which might have issued from the conflagration.

The Jury talked to each other for a second, and then pronounced the prisoner Guilty.

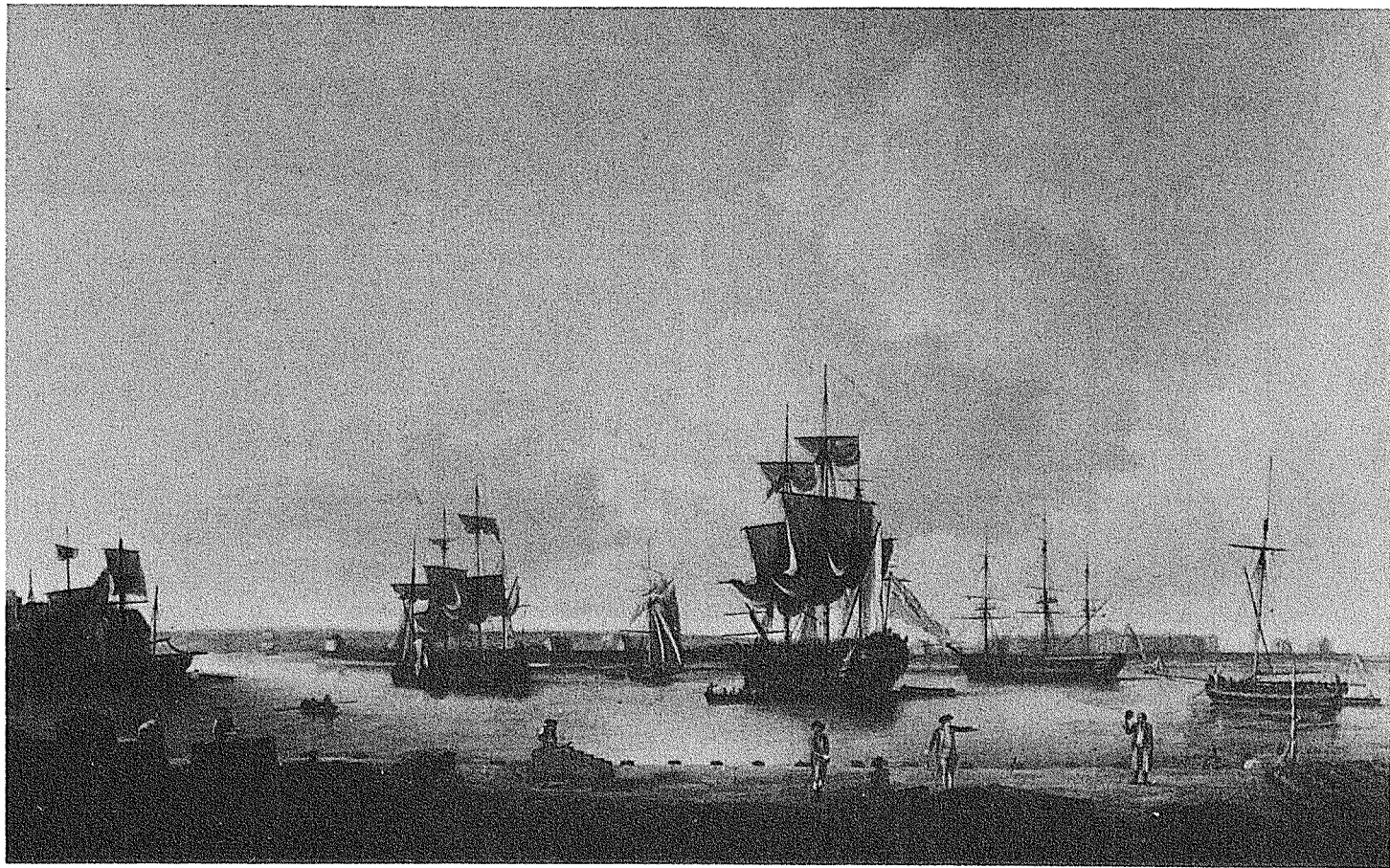
Baron Hotham immediately, in the most solemn manner, passed judgment upon him, sentencing him to be hanged by the neck till he should be dead, and warning him in a strain, equally humane and awful, to prepare himself for eternity, into which he would be launched in a few days, his crime being of that enormous nature, that he must not expect mercy.

The trial lasted near seven hours, and during the whole time the prisoner seemed little, if at all, affected with his situation: he had no Counsel, but frequently questioned the witnesses, and in such a manner, as spoke great shrewdness. He seemed particularly angry with Baldwin, and when that witness came to mention Silas Deane, he bid him beware and not perjure himself, for that there was a righteous God above, who dealt out righteous judgments, in whose presence he, the witness, and the whole Court then stood.

While one of the Counsel was examining an evidence, he stopped him short, and asked "if he was Counsel for his Britannick Majesty?" – He also once controverted Serjeant Davy, and appealed to the Court whether a question put by Mr. Mansfield ought to be put? – Upon the whole, his behaviour was not insolent, though confident, and apparently careless of danger; he shewed some signs of a clear head, but more of a fixed enthusiasm begot by ignorance and false zeal; and before sentence was passed, declared, "He was totally indifferent with regard to his fate, and was willing to live or die, as the Laws and Justice required."

In the course of the above Trial, it came out, that a German who is now abroad, and an American, who is a Painter, and came over in the same Ship with Dr. Franklin, were both made privy to the above diabolical





*View from Gun Wharf, Portsmouth Dockyard*

Transaction. Proper Officers are now set off, in order to bring the German to England.

It is reported that Mr. Silas Deane left France immediately on the News coming there of John the Painter being committed for Trial at Winchester Assizes. This causes various Opinions; some say, that as the Fire at Brest happened near the same Time as the Fire at Portsmouth, that Mr. Deane was in Terror of the Dungeon in the Bastile if he had staid, and therefore rather chose to decamp; whilst others assert, that notwithstanding all the Friendship which hath been shewn to the Americans and their Cause, Mr. Deane had very powerful Reasons not to trust them on the present Occasion. Firing of Dock-yards, &c. is a Crime so uncommonly atrocious, and so much of a public Calamity, and which every Power in Europe may be the Object of, if once the Success of it be tried, that it is no Wonder if the French, or any respectable Court in Europe, treated the Perpetrators of such a Crime as Offenders against the Law of Honour and the Laws of Nations, which are always regarded in the Negotiations of European States.

The above Convict is a Native of Boston, in New England.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear & hond Sir

Nantes March 8. 1777.

We are informed here that a Canadian with a commission from the Congress has fitted out a privateer at Dunkirk, & after cruising some time in the Channel has taken a very large prize & carried her into Ostend;<sup>2</sup> this News seems to occasion great eagerness in some people here to fitt out privateers in the same way, if proper commissions can be obtain'd, and the french Government will connive at having french Sailors on board. If you have cruising Commissions or can give them, I apprehend I could soon have several of them at Sea, and if you think the présence of an american necessary in any Enterprize of that nature which you may think proper to undertake, you know you may command me; – I am at least half of a Sailor, & would endeavour to do my duty. What I mean by this to say is that I am at your Disposal, so that no good plan may fail of Execution for want of any Assistance in my power to give. –

The Ship *Pennet* is just arrived from Boston and brings papers down to the 23 Jan. some of which Mr Rumsey sends by this Conveyance – You will see that the Capture of Gen. Lee is but too true & that our Successes in Jersey amount to 919 Prisoners at Trentown, 500 at princetown 35 at morris town, 30 Tories at Peeks Kill & 500 at Hackinsack. I understand that this Ship is dispatched by Mr Penets partner <sup>3</sup> & that she is to be followed by 2 or 3 more to his address, so we may soon expect more news –

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 67, APS.

2. Williams again wrote to Franklin on March 11 noting: "I am afraid that the news I gave you from Ostend wants Confirmation," Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 68, APS.

3. Emanuel Michael Pliarne.

SKINNER & FENWICK TO EDIE & LAIRD <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Bordeaux 8th March 1777

In a Letter sometime ago to our R Fenwick, we desired him to communicate to you that the *Hope* arrived at Nantes, was the once *Port Henderson* <sup>2</sup> that you enquired after. We immediately wrote our Correspondent there (a French house) requesting their Offices in getting the Vessel Stopt till such time as they advised you, Or that those the Vessel were consigned to, engaged to See your demand if Lawfull made good – they have answered us, that they do not chuse to meddle in that Affair, & that as it might bring the Court of France to declare whither she was Legally Stopt at Carolina or not, or a refusal to meddle in it, which in every thing betwixt English & American property they have hitherto declined, they did not think proper to have their Name in such an Affair, & even would not advise any one residing in France to Act on it, but Advised that the Gentlemen who have that Demand for their insurance should send over a Person on purpose to transact that business at Nantes, after wch his after residing in England will screen him from all Consequences let things turn out as they Will We must confess that seeing the Countenance shown to the A \_\_\_\_\_ ns, it is hard to say what turn this Court may take, & cannot blame any one residing in this Country for every precaution or prudence, Altho if that Vessel had come to this Port we should certainly have followed your directions in endeavouring to get justice done you & the others concerned, & are yet ready to serve you in any Manner you may point out. in the present Case we would advise your sending over a person (recommended to a house there at Nantes) who would act in his own Name for the concerned, & this for the reasons abovementioned – We remain very Sincerely Gentn [&c.]

Skinner &amp; Fenwick

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 398–99. This letter was forwarded by Weymouth to Stormont in his letter (No. 20), March 21, 1777.

2. See Weymouth to Dartmouth, March 7, 1777.

10 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN MONTAGU <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 10th March 1777

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received a Letter from Messrs Isa and Ben Lesters Merchants at Poole, transmitting an Affidavit made by the Master of their Ship *Margaret* taken by an American Privateer and praying for the reasons set forth in the Letter and Affidavit, that protection may be granted to their Trade, particularly in the Harbour at Trinity, at Newfoundland I am commanded by their Lordships to send you herewith Copies of the said Letter and Affidavit for your information and taking such measures as you think necessary for securing the Trade and property of the Merchants at the Port thereinmentioned. I am &c

P:S:

Vice Admiral Montagu, in Town

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 169–70.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, MARCH 10." <sup>1</sup>

This morning John the Painter was brought here from Winchester, attended by the Under Sheriff, and hanged near the dock gates, upon a gibbet sixty-five feet high, amidst an amazing concourse of people, who had assembled to see the execution. He was conducted from the jail in this town in a cart, through the quay gate to the common, after which he proceeded through the ropeshouse where the fire happened, that he might himself be a witness to the devastation it had occasioned. He seemed very penitent, but had no clergyman with him, which gave reason to many to think him a Roman Catholick. He made a long harangue to the people, the particulars of which I have not been able to collect. His body, after hanging the usual time, was taken down, and affixed into another gibbet on the beach, at the entrance of the harbour, near Blockhouse fort.

1. *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, June 3, 1777.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM FRANCE, DATED MARCH 10, 1777." <sup>1</sup>

As the curiosity of the public is no doubt a good deal excited, to know all that has passed, in regard to the five prizes lately brought in by the *Reprisal*, I have endeavoured to procure the most exact information, and the following is an authentic account:

Prizes taken by the *Reprisal*.

*Polly and Nancy*, Kentuluar, from Pool, for Cadiz, with about 2000 quintals of dry fish – 150 tons.

*Hibernia*, Jefferson, from Dublin to Lisbon, with wheat and flour – 150 tons.

*Generous Friends*, Duncan, from Orkney to Cadiz with barley – 70 tons.

*Swallow Packet*, with private adventures of the officers, worth 5 or 600 l. (all restored to them) – 150 tons.

*Betty*, Campbell, from Bourdeaux to Londonderry, with 70 tons of wine and brandy – 150 tons.

Each Captain's private adventure, and all the bedding, cabin furniture, &c. he chose to claim, was restored to him, as were all the seamen's cloaths, except what had been pillaged and stole by the rabble that composed the crew of the *Reprisal*, unknown to Captain Wickes. This must not be attributed to Wickes's own generosity, the Captain of the privateer, as I understand his orders from his employers were to that effect.

On the 13th of February, the *Reprisal* anchored off Port Louis – the 14th, a French pilot was sent ashore for anchors, who returned to warp her in, and it was he that proclaimed the news to all he met. – This evening four of the prizes came in sight, and anchored also; the fifth, the *Polly and Nancy* arrived some days before.

Feb. 15th, in the morning, the wind being still contrary, some of the principal prisoners were permitted to go on shore in a small boat, on parole, not to give any intelligence, nor write any thing against Wickes. Same afternoon the wind became fair, and all the Muskito fleet anchored in the

road off L'Orient. Those gentlemen that got first on shore, found that Wickes's bad policy, in sending the pilot on shore yesterday, had rendered his precaution, in enjoining secrecy, fruitless.

Feb. 16. Wickes came on shore, and paid the gentlemen a visit; when he released them from their parole, as to writing, &c. in consequence of which Captain [Charles] Newman of the packet, wrote to the Post-office, and some others to their friends. – One of the number who acted as spokesman for all the rest, then got Wickes's leave for the Captains to enter their protests the next day; Wickes still insisted that nothing should be done in regard to the prisoners, till he had his answers from Paris, as he flattered himself that a certain old gentlewoman there, might have address enough to prevail on a gentleman in a green ribband, to give his promise that an equal number of gaol-birds in England should be given up.

Feb. 17. The Captains attempted to go to Port Louis, to enter protests at the Admiralty, but the wind was so strong they could not get the boat to go. – Wickes was on shore all day, dined and supped with these gentlemen; in the course of conversation, one of them took occasion to advertise him, that it was the duty of Captain Newman, as a King's Officer, and of all the others, for the sake of their underwriters, to make a formal demand of their ships, and also of the prisoners, of the commanding Officer of the port; that they did not think it would be complied with, but they might be blamed for neglecting it. – Wickes did not then prohibit them, (though he afterwards pretended he had) but only said slightly that it would be to no purpose their doing it, as it was the business of the Ambassador at Paris.

Feb. 18. Expected Wickes's long-boats to carry them to Port Louis, as he had promised it the day before, but after a little time, saw so many unnecessary delays, and so many attempts to prevail on them to desist for a day or two, by inviting them to dinner on board, &c. that one of the number hired a French boat, collected his posse, and landed them all in Port Louis. – When they called on the sworn interpreter, he appointed to attend them to the Admiralty at two o'clock, but when they waited on him for that purpose, he (having no doubt his cue) attempted to put them off, by saying the Greffier at the Admiralty had refused to see their protests till to-morrow: being threatened with a complaint to his superiors, he thought proper to attend them. On coming before the Greffier, the interpreter made another attempt to give him a hint also, and insisted that he alone had a right to speak to the gentlemen; after some high words, finding he had no novices to deal with, the minutes were all regularly made, and the Greffier promised to use all possible dispatch, in extending the protest, after Wickes should have entered his report, but this (he pretended) must be done first, as he had promised said Wickes, last Sunday, when he came before him to do it, that he should have the preference, but could not at that time receive his minute, as his case was singular, and he chose first to have instructions from the head court of Admiralty at Vannes; said instructions were then arrived, and he expected Wickes to make his report next morning, (the 19th) after which all the protests should be drawn out; the legality of this partiality

was some time disputed, but he still persisted that he had a right to do so; some necessary hints however were given to his friend the broker, of a complaint intended to be made, which had their proper effects; before they parted with the broker this evening, he had altered his tone very much, and was all complaisance and humility. His son had arrived post from Vannes, and brought intelligence, that a positive order was issued from the Admiralty there, and then on the road, for Wickes and his prizes to quit the port in 24 hours; this news alarmed the Captains a good deal; not only as it seemed to preclude every chance they had for recovering their vessels, but also on account of the private prisoners, still on board of the *Reprisal*, upwards of 70 in number, all professedly loyal British subjects, who thus ran a risk of being carried to America against their will; and might there have been at last prevailed on to take arms against their country; the case was critical, but it was necessary to come to a speedy determination; after a serious consultation, they unanimously resolved on what was put in execution the morning following.

Feb. 19. Capt. Newman dressed himself in his uniform, and being attended by the four other Captains, and one or two friends, waited on the King's Commissary, at L'Orient, when Capt. N —, as an officer of his Britannic Majesty, made a formal demand of his own crew, and the crews of the other four vessels still detained prisoners on board of Wickes. — The Commissary desired some time to consider of it. This afternoon notice was received from the Admiralty at Port Louis, that the protests were all ready, in consequence of which, all the Captains went down to sign them, and each retired in the evening with an extract.

Feb. 20. A message from the Commissary, that if yesterday's demand was repeated in writing he would comply with it. — Letters were accordingly sent him in due form, and in the afternoon when Capt. Newman, and one of his friends waited on him, he shewed them the process verbal, ready drawn out for the prisoners delivery to-morrow.

Feb. 21. Early in the morning a letter was sent to Capt. Newman, signed by Wickes, (but supposed to be written by a Mr. [Thomas] Morris, lately arrived from Nantes) insisting, that his yesterday's demand was a breach of his parole, (though in fact it was not, see 17th cur.) and begging him to desist from the receipt of the prisoners, till next Wednesday, when he expected an answer from somebody he called the Hon. B. Franklin, Esq; at Paris. Captain Newman wrote an answer, vindicating himself from any breach of parole, but promising to comply with the said request on Wickes's giving his word before the Commissary, that the men should not be carried off in the interim, About ten o'clock all parties went before the Commissary to declare this agreement; but it appeared, that Wickes had then altered his mind, and the delivery of the prisoners was fixed for next morning (Sat. 22d) when it was put in execution. — Of about 77 in number of prisoners, only five consented to enter with the rebels, so that this manoeuvre saved 72 subjects to the crown of Great-Britain.

It is said here, (at Paris) that our Ambassador, on application at Court, was informed that Wickes had been ordered out of port, with his prizes, which (by the bye) he reported as his vessels forced in by stress of weather; and it is also said, and believed here, that Wickes had found means to elude the orders, and was not sailed from L'Orient the 28th ult.

It was also believed, that he had found means to make a private sale of all the vessels, and that two of them had actually sailed from L'Orient, but their destination was not known. In case the under-writers should make any objections, on account of the protests not being made out within the limited time, the accounts I have given will shew that no time was lost for that purpose. The protests were to be sworn to, at the head Admiralty Office at Vannes; and the claim to the vessel was to be made then by the Captains, after presenting their protests. They all set out for that place the 28th ult. and I have since learned, that they arrived the 2d or 3d inst. and part of them are sailed for Jersey, or Guernsey, in their way to England. Captain N— goes to London, and will inform you of any further particulars.

The protests made by the Captains of the ships, taken and carried into L'Orient by the *Reprisal*, mention that vessel, as a ship carrying an unknown flag, with thirteen stripes in it, and the Union at one corner; that when they came on board, they were informed the said vessel was called the *Reprisal*, commanded by Lambert Wicks, who said he had a commission as Captain of a man of war, from some persons who appear to be a society of people at Philadelphia, calling themselves the Congress; the protests being in French, the words are *une certaine société à Philadelphie, soi disant le Congrès*.

The packet sailed from Falmouth the 3d of February; she was taken on the 5th, after an engagement of forty minutes; she would by no means have struck so soon, had she not unfortunately taken fire, and been for some time in imminent danger of blowing up. The captain and men behaved in the bravest manner; but her force was very unequal, for she carried only eight four-pounders, four two-pounders, and some swivels; the privateer carried sixteen six-pounders, and ten or twelve swivels, with about three times as many men as the packet. The *Reprisal* had one man killed and two wounded, whereof one was the first Lieutenant, who lost an arm; the packet had none killed nor wounded, excepting two sailors scorched with gun-powder, their cartridges having blown up by accident. They were nine days at sea, before they could make L'Orient, after taking the packet. The passengers and Captain of the packet lived in the same manner as Wickes did, and dined at his table; the other Captains and inferior officers were also properly treated while on board the privateer.

It appears by another letter, that the prizes have been sold at 120,000 l French money, the packet excepted, and they are sailed from L'Orient. The privateer is careening there, but is ordered to depart as soon as possible.

11 Mar.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGoyNE TO  
CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir

Hartford Street March 11 1777

Since my second letter to you (which was directed to Plymouth) I have the honour of yours, for the contents of which I beg you to accept my most sincere acknowledgements.

It is now decided that the *Apollo* waits for no Convoy, the King being very desirous I should arrive in Canada as early as possible. He presses Lord Sandwich every day to expedite her fitting out, & between friends I conceive it possible his Lordship may be enough of the Courtier to report that event before it takes place in fact—I therefore request of your friendship to let me know precisely the time that you are sure you can sail weather permitting, as I should be sorry to delay you a single day on one side, or on the other to quit London, where I have much private busyness, an hour before it may be necessary.

I find there are more people desirous of soliciting a passage on board you than would man your whole ship. I beg you to beleive me incapable of authorising any person to use my name in such solicitation—I feel myself infinitely obliged by your kind invitation & should be unpardonable to extend the claim your goodness gives me beyond my own aids de Camp, except it be for a gentleman whom Lord George may possibly send with me for great purpose of publick service, & in that case it will be matter of favour to Government & as such only I shall ask it. I thought it right to premise this, as I understand the Competitors for the *Apollo* are so numerous.

I shall trouble you with as little baggage as possible, but as it is possible I may be in motion immediately after my arrival in Canada, & before my gross baggage arrives, I hope it will not be an inconvenience if I bring three or perhaps four servants.

Your zeal for the service, your amiable disposition, & above all your partiality towards me can alone countenance me in taking all these liberties.

Let me hear from you by return of post & beleive me with inviolable attachment Dear Sir [&c.]

J: Burgoyne

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1777

[London, March 11]

Substance of the "Act for enabling the Lords of the Admiralty to grant Commissions to private Ships, &c. employed in Trade, or retained in his Majesty's Service, to make Prize of such Ships, &c. as are therein mentioned, for a limited Time."

This Act, after in Part writing that of 16 Geo. III, Ch. 5. enacts, that the Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain, or the Commissioners for executing



that Office, or any three of them, or any Person by him or them appointed, may, from Feb. 20, 1777, at the Request of the Owner of any Ship, &c. employed in Trade, or retained in his Majesty's Service, giving such Security as after-mentioned, issue forth Commissions to the Commanders of such Ships, &c. for taking Ships, &c. belonging to the rebellious Colonies; and also all British and Irish Ships, trading to or from the said Colonies, contrary to the said Act, 16 of Geo. III, Ch. 5. and that such Ships (being first legally condemned) shall belong wholly and intirely to the Owners and Crews of such commissioned Ships, without any Deduction whatever (Customs and Duties only excepted) to be divided in such Manner as the said Owners and Crews shall agree among themselves, except when such commissioned Ships are under Convoy:

That the Lord High Admiral, &c. by Orders in Writing under their Hands and Seals, may revoke any such Commissions; provided, that the Secretary of the Admiralty shall cause Notice in Writing to be sent to the Owner, Agent or Security, of the Ship, &c. and, if such Ship, &c. shall be in the Channel, such Order of Revocation shall effectually supersede the said Commission in 20 Days after such Notice given, or sooner, if Notice shall be actually given to the Commander thereof; and, if such Ship, &c. shall be to the Southward of Cape Finisterre, in six Weeks; and, if in North America or the West-Indies, in three Months; and Commanders, &c. may complain of such Revocation to his Majesty in Council, within 30 Days after such Notice is given as aforesaid; and his Majesty's Determination in Council shall be final; provided also, that, when any Order of Revocation shall be superseded, the Commission shall be deemed to have continued in Force, and all Prizes taken by Virtue thereof shall belong to such Owners, &c. as if such Orders had not been made; and no Person shall be liable to be punished for doing, before receiving Notice of such Revocation, any thing which he might lawfully have done, under such Commission.

That the said Security, &c. as for Private Ships of War, shall be taken before granting any Commission:

That all Persons applying for Commissions, shall set forth in Writing an exact Description of the Vessel, its Cargo, Burthen, Number and Nature of the Guns, from and to where bound, Names of the principal Owners, and Number of Men, which are all to be inserted in the Commission; and which Commission the Commander shall produce to the Collector, &c. of the Customs, at the Port from which such Ship, &c. shall be fitted out; who are to examine such Ship, &c. without Fee or Reward; and, if found agreeable to the Description, to grant a Certificate thereof, gratis; and, if any Commander shall leave Port, without such Certificate, or with a Force inferior to that specified in the Commission, his Commission shall be void, and the Commander, on Conviction, imprisoned, without Bail or Mainprise, any Time, not exceeding one Year, for one Offence:

That, if any Collector, &c. shall grant on false Certificate, he shall forfeit his Office, and be for ever incapable of holding any Office in the Customs, and shall also forfeit 100 l. one Moiety to the Informer, and the other to the

Corporation for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Seamen in the Merchants Service; or, if such Penalty be incurred in any Out-port, where a like Corporation is established, then the last Moiety is to be paid to such Corporation:

That, if the Commander of any commissioned Ship shall agree with any Person belonging to any Prize taken, for the Ransom thereof, and set such Prize at Liberty, he shall be deemed a Pirate, and suffer Death accordingly:

That all Agents for Prizes condemned, shall register their Letters of Attorney in the Court of Admiralty, where such Prizes shall be condemned, within six Months after Condemnation; or, on Default, shall forfeit 500 l. to be recovered by any Person who shall sue for the same; but Agents appointed after Condemnation, are to register their Letters of Attorney within six Months after the Date thereof.

That all Condemnations, or other Determinations concerning Prizes, Appraisements and Sales, Payments of Prize-Money, Forfeitures, &c. &c. shall be regulated by the Act, 16 Geo. III. Ch. 5.

That the Treasurer of the Navy shall pay to the Officers, Seamen, &c. on board any of his Majesty's Ships, or any commissioned Ships, who shall take any Ships of War, &c. from the Rebels, 5 l. for every Man found on board such Ship, &c.

That all Prizes, which shall have been taken from his Majesty's Subjects, not in Rebellion, are to be restored to the Owners, on Payment of one-eighth of the Value thereof as Salvage:

That all Offences on board commissioned Ships, shall be punishable in the same Manner as on board Ships of War:

That this Act shall continue in Force until the Expiration, or other sooner Determination, of the aforesaid Act, 16 Geo. III. Ch. 5.

*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1777

London [March 11].

A *Correspondent* informs us, that several private Letters from France mention, that, to the great Surprize of the Parisians, Orders had been suddenly issued out "*for all American Ships to quit the Ports of France, In Forty-eight Hours.*" The Cause of this Order is said to be as follows; Mr. Silas Dean, the American Chargé d'Affaires, had the Impudence to write a Letter to Lord Stormont, to exchange the equal of English Prisoners in France, for the like Number of American Prisoners in England: Lord Stormont immediately on receiving the above Letter from Mr. Dean, immediately drove to Versailles, demanded an Audience of the King, and shewed him the Letter; – both his Majesty and Monsieur de Maurepas testified their Surprize at the Insolence of these *new Republicans* in pretending to keep Prisoners, in a neutral Kingdom, the Subjects of a State, with whom that Kingdom was upon Terms of Friendship and Amity: In consequence of which the Order was immediately issued for all American Vessels to quit the Sea-Ports of France in Forty-eight Hours:

The following is the Postscript of a Letter received from New York by the last Mail, dated Jan. 16:

"We have eight Sail of Men of War out, some of them cruizing off the Capes of Delawar, and others at anchor there; they have taken about twenty Vessels coming from France, and the French and Dutch West India Islands since the 16th of December, and sent them into this Place; they were chiefly laden with Arms, Gunpowder, Saltpetre, Cables, Sails, &c. for their new Frigates at Philadelphia, which are now blocked up, and I flatter myself will soon be in the Possession of the King's Troops."

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes, March 11, 1777—

... The Ship which I am now fitting out on the public accot will I hope be soon ready to sail, having been obliged to give her new Masts and to recaulk her entirely she is not so forward as I at first expected, but you may depend that no time shall be lost <sup>2</sup> Her Cargo will consist of Linnens Woolens Hosiery Cordage Anchors and sail Cloth, these latter Articles assorted for two Frigates of 36 Guns.

By the last accot from England we learn that the act for imprisoning and trying as pirates all Americans that may be taken in arms on the high Seas, has passed both Houses; and that the City of London had ineffectually petitioned against it. I have the honor to be &c &c

Jonathan Williams Junr.

The Hon Robt Morris &c &c &c

Copy (Original P young)

1. Papers CC (Letters from William Bingham and Others, 1777-82), 90, 545-46, NA.

2. *Comte de Vergennes*.

JACQUES GRUEL & CO. TO SAMUEL PHILLIPS SAVAGE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

Nantes 11th March 1777

We recd yr Lettr of the 18th Janry last by the Ship *Penet* Capt Bartlet safely arrived in this Port the 7th of this Month.

We embrace this Opportunity Via Phila of the Ship *Mary Elizabeth* Capt Peter Young, of advising you of the Arrival of the Ship *Penet*, She is the first to our Address loaded with Tobaco on Account of the honbl Congress— she sails tomorrow & being busy in dispatching her we cannot enlarge upon the different matters therein contained, but we shall do it by the Ship *Penet*—We do not Expect that she will make any long stay here having many of the Articles you demand in Store — (Viz) fusees, Gun powder, Lead, Steel files &c. We shall make an Assortment of these Articles to the Amount of about seventy or Eighty thousand Livres, which we will insure if possible; & advise you thereof by our first Opportunity

We are to Observe to you Sir that the Cargo of the *Penet* will fall very

short in Loading her back again (which however shall not hinder her speedy Dispatch) neither will the Cargo of the *Versailles* Capt Chapman loaded with Mohageny &c produce a large Sum. never the less we shall dispatch her with the same Expedition as the former & shall endeavour when this second Cargo is in our power to make the most of the Wood Either by selling it here or sending it safely to some other port in France, or Holland, or finally in any other part where it will yield the most, & you may in the Mean time relye upon our Zeal for your Interest: as we shall spare neither Care or pains to give you intire Satisfaction.

Your southern Colonies produce Commodities more suitable to the french Markets, which find here aready & Advantageous Sale – last year we recd two Cargoes of Rice & Indigo which we sold very high. The Ship *Hope* Capt [John] Hatter from South Carolina loaded with 50 thousand wt of Indigo & 300 thousand wt of Rice is just arrived to our address. these Articles will run off Easily & at avery high price We expect to dispose of the Rice at 30# p C & the copper coloured Indigo at above 7# p lb the inferiour quality in proportion, Tobacco we are offered 13 sols & may go off at 12 a 13s pr lb free of all Charges. yellow wax sells currently at 40s/ p lb the best pelteries will also meet with aready Sale, ordinary do are also saleable – these Sir are the best Articles from which you may promise yourself in this port very Advantageous Sales therefore we recommend you to speculate in them for the Vessels you may consign us in future.

As to the Trade in Masts which you propose to us it is Attended at present with many difficulties not easily got over these times. Ships proper for transporting Masts & Timber should be Dutch Flutes very long & of great Burthen, such Vessels are very heavy Sailors, & at this time we want ships that will sail well it is possible that the persons you speak of may employ such which would be a double Advantage to France & to the Continent, but at present we can say nothing possitive upon the Subject We will see whether there is any Means of undertaking this branch of Commerce with the Continent & by the first Opportunity we shall communicate the Discoveries we may have made

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777, 101–03.

12 Mar.

LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

St James's March 12th 1777.

The Attorney & Sollicitor General having pursuant to His Majesty's Commands transmitted to me Draughts of Two Warrants, the one for confining certain Prisoners at Plymouth, the other at Portsmouth, I transmit Copies thereof to Your Lordships, & am to remark to You, that the Description of the Places specified in the Draughts being taken from Your Letter to me of the 6th Instt, the Accuracy & Sufficiency of that Description should be well considered before the Instruments are laid before His Majesty.

The Attorney & Sollicitor General have in their Letter to me expressed

their Doubts as to the Safety or Propriety of allowing the large Airing Grounds mentioned in Your Lordships Letter to make Part of a Prison for High Treason & Felony, & have also declined inserting any Clause for the Removal of the Prisoners to Hospitals.

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 67.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas Captain Stair Douglas Commander of His Majesty's Ship *Squirrel*; received Orders from Vice Admiral [Clark] Gayton Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Jamaica, bearing date the 29th October last, to take under his Convoy the homeward bound Trade from that Island to England to proceed with them into the English Channel, and having seen them so far in safety, to make the best of his way to Spithead and wait our directions for his further proceedings; And Whereas, the said Captain Douglas by his Letter of the 25th of December last to our Secretary (after acquainting Us with his Arrival at Spithead from Jamaica) did represent that he had sailed from Port Royal Harbour on the 6th of the preceeding Month with a Convoy of Twenty Eight Sail; that, on the 15th following in a Gale of Wind off Cape Tiberon, he parted with Nineteen Sail which he supposed bore away; that he brought the rest through the windward Passage, and that never was a Convoy behaved so ill, having paid no attention to signals when made; And Whereas, in consequence of our directions signified to him by our Secretary's Letters of the 26th December and 2d of January last, the said Captain Douglas did, in his Letters of the 28th of the former and 4th of the latter of those months, transmit to Us a List of the Ships which sailed with him from Jamaica, a Journal of his voyage, and a Copy of the abovementioned Order from Vice Admiral Gayton, and at the same time gave Us a more particular Account of the behaviour of the Masters of the said Ships and of the causes of his seperation from them, And Whereas Beeston Long Esqr Chairman of a Committee of West Indian Merchants (who at their own request attended Us some time ago upon the subject) hath by his Letter of the 10th instant acquainted Us that, His Majesty's Ship the *Squirrel* having arrived in England some Weeks before any of the Merchant Ships that sailed from Jamaica under her Convoy, the Merchants had collected the fullest and most candid informations relative to the seperation, taken at London, Bristol, Leverpoole & Glasgow, by the Examinations of the Masters of Ships; which informations, in their Original State, accompanied his Letter.

And Whereas, upon consideration of the whole matter, we think fit that an Enquiry shall be made by a Court Martial into the cause of the said Captn Stair Douglas's having seperated from the Ships which sailed under his Convoy from Jamaica before he had seen them in Safety into the English Channel as directed by Vice Admiral Gayton, and that the said Captn Stair Douglas shall be tried, by the said Court, for his Conduct upon that Occasion; We send you herewith the several Letters and Papers received from him as aforesaid, together with Copies of our Secretarie's abovementioned Letters to

him, and also the abovementioned Letters from Mr Beeston Long with the several Original Informations which accompanied the same; And so soon as the several Persons whom the West India Merchants, and the said Captain Stair Douglas may have to produce in support or Defence of the Charge, shall be in readiness (of which you will have timely notice from our Secretary) do hereby require and direct you forthwith to assemble a Court Martial to enquire into the cause of the said Captain Stair Douglas's having seperated from the Ships which sailed under his convoy from Jamaica before he had seen them in safety into the English Channel as directed by Vice Admiral Gayton, and to try him the said Captain Stair Douglas for his conduct upon that occasion accordingly. Given &c the 12th March 1777.

To Sir James Douglas  
Vice Admiral of the Red  
and Commander in Chief of His  
Majesty's Ships & Vessels  
at Portsmouth &c.

Lisburne  
H. Penton  
H. Palliser

By &c PS.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 337-40.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MARCH 13 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1777

Admiralty Office, March 12

By Letters received this Day from Vice-admiral Young, Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels at the Leeward Islands, dated the 9th of December last, it appears, that besides the *Putnam* American privateer, carrying 12 Guns and 80 Men, the ships of his squadron had taken and sent into port twelve vessels belonging to his Majesty's rebellious colonies since the 30th of September last.

It also appears by letters received at the same time from Vice-admiral Gayton, Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships at Jamaica, dated the 8th of January last, that the ships of his squadron had sent in fifteen sail of prizes since his last account.

SILAS DEANE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen—

Paris, March [12] 1777 <sup>2</sup>

I have received no letter since those by Dr Franklin, dated in October last; but, hourly hoping that some intelligence would arrive, have put off sending express for sometime, until despairing almost of letters, we have agreed to despatch Capt Hynson in a cutter as a packet.

It is now twelve months since I left Philadelphia, in all which time I have received but three letters. I refer you to our joint letter for an account of the perplexing and embarrassing situation this want of seasonable intelligence has thrown us into, as well as other political matters, and confine myself to commercial.

On my arrival at Bourdeaux in June last, I found there were no other vessels there except a brigantine from Portsmouth, and two small sloops, one

from New York and the other from Rhode Island. The Merchants at Bourdeaux had begun to turn their attention to news from America and to think of its commerce; but none had adventured their own property in it. The prevailing opinion at that time throughout Europe was that the Colonies would inevitably be brought to submission to any terms Great Britain should prescribe. The news arriving of the evacuation of Canada, which by English emissaries and partisans was exaggerated and stiled a decisive victory; the prodigious armaments by sea and land destined for America, with the hostile resolutions of Parliament, and the credit of the British administration in point of raising supplies, confirmed this opinion. A Scotch Junto at Bourdeaux, at that time spirited up by Jenkinson and Stanley, who visited all the principal trading towns in France at that season for the same purpose, represented American affairs in such a light that during the whole three weeks I spent there I found not a single person desirous of adventuring in that trade, though generally well wishers to the cause. Mr Delap, indeed, constantly offered me every service in his power, and to advance me either money or credit; but then I had to consider the smallness of the sum I brought over with me, a capital part of which I was finally disappointed of by the protesting of the Bills; that though it was then near five months since preparations had been made for remitting, yet that nothing had arrived; that when I left Philadelphia I had every reason to conclude that the full sum of forty thousand pounds sterling would be lodged in Europe by nearly the time of my arrival. These considerations distressed me considerably. To delay purchasing the Indian goods I was unwilling, and to urge Mr Delap, from his general assurances of friendship, to pledge himself for so large a sum as must ruin his credit if he did not punctually pay it, and if he did, must stop his business; at a time, too, when the prospects were against us, I could not have the confidence of attempting. If I had, I should doubtless have been refused. If I had not, he must have been ruined in his business. Under this situation, I hesitated some days, and finally determined to suspend any attempt to purchase for a short time, in which I might probably have remittances and become acquainted with the best places for purchasing. I accordingly left Bourdeaux for Paris the last of June. My arrival here and the affairs I became engaged in on the public account has been particularly related to you in my long letters by Mr McCrery [McCreery], which brought my affairs down to the beginning of September, when intelligence from America, passing through England, represented our affairs as desperate. In the mean time, I had nothing to oppose to this torrent, which for several months bore every thing down, but my simple assertions, unsupported by any letters or intelligence direct. During this time I had many apparently generous offers made to me of credit for a larger sum than the contract; but when I came to explain, I found that M. Delap was known to be my Banker at Bourdeaux and Messrs Germany, Girardot & Co in Paris, and that I was expected to get them to endorse my Bills, or, in other words, to become my security for the money. This reduced me to my first difficulties, which were no way lessened by months successively elapsing without either intelligence or remittances.

This induced me finally to despatch Capt Morgan, and that he might not go empty, I purchased a quantity of Saltpetre, which, however, contrary winds prevented his receiving in time, and he returned in ballast.<sup>3</sup> Mr Delap afterwards shipped it, together with a quantity of powder, &c &c in Capt Sarly and Captain Hutchinson, of which he informed you. The last bills he received, to the amount of £5,000 Sterling, were all protested, except one of £250. This, with many other discouraging circumstances, has made that gentleman decline advancing in the American commerce. Meantime, finding no person in France ready to advance, as I may say, unconditionally except Monsr Beaumarchais, and that he was confined to the supplies for the Army, I gave him in my list for those supplies as large a proportion of woollen cloths and blankets as might enable you to supply the Indians with some of the more pressing necessities. Mr Delap has not yet sent me his account, but I presume he may in the whole have received seven or eight thousand pounds sterling. The fitting out the vessels from Bourdeaux on account of Congress, the payment of saltpetre, and other articles shipped by him on the account of Congress with the money advanced to me, may leave a balance in his hands of 2,000£ Sterlg But this account, when received, shall be forwarded to you, by which you will be able to see at once what has, and what has not, been in my power.

I continued to give encouragement that vessels would certainly arrive soon, until I feared for my own reputation. In the month of October, meeting with 2,000 barrels of powder, I purchased it on credit & shipped it to Martinico. This I was induced to do from the price (13 sols) and the certain knowledge I had that it would rise. It has since risen to 22 sols. It was shipped in November for Mr Bingham at Martinico, & insured at 2 per Cent. The time of payment arrived & I was unable to pay, without having recourse to a fund advanced by our friends here, which, though I wished to have reserved for other purposes, Dr Franklin advised me to discharge this demand with. In Mr [Robert] Morris's letters, by Dr Franklin, he informed me that commercial matters were put into the hands of Mr Ts Morris. [Letter incomplete]

1. "The Deane Papers," *Collections of the New-York Historical Society* (1887), II, 18-21.

2. Date based on Deane's reference to "our joint letter" to the Committee which was dated March 12.

3. Captain J. Morgan, schooner *Mary*.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF  
SECRET CORRESPONDENCE<sup>1</sup>

3rd Copy

Gentlemen/

Paris March 12th 1777.

It is now more than 4 Months since Mr Franklin's Departure from Philadelphia, and not a Line from thence written since that time has hitherto reached either of your Commissioners in Europe. We have had no Information of what passes in America but thro' England, & the Advises are for the most part such only as the Ministry chuse to publish. Our total Ignorance of



the Truth or Falsehood of Facts, when Questions are asked of us concerning them, makes us appear small in the Eyes of People here and is prejudicial to our Negotiations.

In ours of Feby 6 of which a Copy is enclosed, we acquainted you that we were about purchasing some Cutters to be employ'd as Packet Boats. We have succeed'd in getting one from Dover, in which we purpose to send our present Dispatches. Mr [William] Hodge, who went to Dunkirk & Flushing, where he thought another might be easily found, has not yet acquainted us with his success.—We promised that when we had a Conveyance which by its Swiftness is more likely to carry Safely our Letters, we would be more explicit in Accounts of our Proceedings here, which promise we shall now fulfill, as follows.

In our first Conversation with the Minister, after the Arrival of Mr Franklin, it was evident that this Court, while it treated us privately with all Civility, was cautious of giving Umbrage to England, and was therefore desirous of avoiding an open Reception and Acknowledgment of us, or entering into any formal Negotiation with us, as Ministers from the Congress. To make us easy however we were told, that the Ports of France were open to our Ships, as Friends; that our People might freely purchase & transport as Merchandize whatever our States had occasion for; vending at the same time our own Commodities; that in doing this, we should experience all the Facilities that a Government disposed to favour us, could, consistent with Treaties, afford to the Enemies of a Friend. But tho' it was at that time no Secret, that 200 Field Pieces of Brass & 30,000 Fusils with other Munitions of War in great abundance, had been taken out of the Kings Magazines for the purpose of Exportation to America, the Minister in our Presence affected to know nothing of that Operation, and claimed no Merit to this Court on that Account. But he intimated to us that it would be well taken if we communicated with no other person about the Court concerning our Affairs but himself, who would be ready at all convenient times to confer with us.

We soon after presented several Memorials representing the State of the Colonies, the Necessity of some Naval Aid, and the Utility to France that must result from our Success in establishing the Independance of America, with the Freedom of its Commerce. In Answer we received a positive Refusal of the Ships of the Line (which we had been instructed to ask) on this Principle, that if a War with England should take place, the whole Fleet of France would be necessary at home for her Defence; that if such a War did not take place, yet while England apprehended a War, it was equally serviceable to our States that the Fleet of France should remain entire in her Ports, since that must retain an equal Force of English at home, who might otherwise go to America, and who certainly would follow thither any french Squadron.

During these Conferences, every step was taken to gratify England publicly, by attending to the Remonstrances of her Ambassador, forbidding the Departure of Ships which had Military Stores on Board <sup>2</sup> recalling officers who had leave of Absence and were going to join us, and giving strict Orders

that our Prizes should not be sold in French Ports; yet that we might not be discouraged, it was intimated to us by persons about the Court, that those Measures were necessary at present, France not being yet quite ready for a War; And that we might be assured of her good Will to us & to our Cause, Means were proposed of our obtaining a large Sum of Money for present Use by an Advance from the Farmers General to be repaid in Tobacco of which they wanted 20,000 Hhds. We entered accordingly into a Treaty with that Company, which meeting with Difficulty in settling the Terms, we were informed that a grant was made us of two Millions of Livres from the Crown of which 500,000 was ready to be paid us down, and an equal Sum should be paid the beginnings of April, July, and October; that such was the Kings Generosity, he exacted no Conditions or Promise of Repayment he only required that we should not speak to any one of our having received this Aid: we have accordingly observed strictly this injunction, deviating only in this Information to you, which we think necessary for your Satisfaction, but earnestly requesting that you would not suffer it to be made publick. This is the Money which in our former Letter we mentioned as rais'd for us by Subscription.

One of the ablest Sea Officers of France,<sup>3</sup> skill'd in all the Arts relating to the Marine having offered his Service to our States with the Permission of the Minister, we (enabled by the above Grant) engag'd him to superintend the building two Ships of War of a particular Construction, which tho' not of half the Cost, shall be superior in force & utility to the Ships of 64 Guns. He has built one here for the King which we are told exceeds every thing in Swift sailing. He has furnished us with Drafts which we send you, that if the Congress thinks fit, others of the same Construction may be set up in America; in which Case we have given him Expectations of being their Commodore. We have seen his large & curious Collection of Memoirs containing every the minutest Particular relating to the Construction & Management of a Fleet, with a variety of proposed Improvements; and we are persuaded that he will be found a valuable Acquisition to our Country.

[Letter continued April 9, 1777]

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 33-44, NA. This triplicate copy was one of the dispatches passed to the British by Joseph Hynson.
2. A note in the margin of the letter reads: "Those were afterwards privately permitted to go, or went without Permission."
3. Captain Jacques Boux.

13 Mar.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord,

Admiralty Office, 13 March 1777.

Your Lordship having in your letter of Yesterday acquainted Us, that the King conceiving it of the utmost importance to the Success of His Majesty's Arms in crushing the Rebellion in the Colonies, that the ensuing Campaign should open as early as the Season will admit, is extremely anxious

for the timely arrival of the Camp Equipage and Stores, shipped onboard the *Camell* and *Bute*, armed Ships, and was that day pleased to signify to you His Majesty's Pleasure that you should lay before him before [*sic an*] exact State of those Ships, particularly of the *Bute* (which His Majesty is informed had not yet received the party of the Guards onboard) the occasion of her retardment, & when it may be expected she will Sail for Spithead; and your Lordship having in your said letter desired us to furnish you with such particulars respecting the said Ships as may enable you to comply with His Majesty's Commands as speedily as possible. In return we are to acquaint your Lordship, for His Majesty's Information, that the *Camel* arrived at Spithead on the 7th Instant, and is ready to proceed, having onboard the Guards intended to take passage, as also all the Stores meant to be carried out in her: And that the *Bute* has been at Longreach since the 22d of last Month, where she has lain wind bound, but that having on the 2d Instant received onboard the Camp Equipage, as your Lordship will observe by the Copy of the letter from her Commander which we send you inclosed, & the Wind being changed this Morning we hope she may now be on her way to the Nore, where orders are lodged for Compleating her complement of Men, and the party of Guards she is to carry will be then immediately embarked. We are &c

Lisburne. H Penton H. Palliser.

P. S. Since writing the foregoing we have received an account of the arrival of the *Bute* at Gravesend, on her way to the Nore.—

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 144-45.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LIEUTENANT WALTER YOUNG, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas the Commissioners appointed by Act of Parliament for the discovery of Longitude at Sea &c have thought it expedient to send out for trial, during your present intended Voyage, the Original Watch Machine, made under their Encouragement by the late Mr Harrison, and, in order, as well to prevent any improper Management or ill treatment of the said Watch Machine, as any suspicions thereof, have caused 3 Locks of different Wards, to be affixed to the Box in which the same is lodged, and have desired, that the Keys thereof may be kept by yourself, and such other Officers of the Vessel you command as we shall direct; You are therefore hereby required and directed immediately after the said Keys (which will be sent to you by the Astronomer Royal, and which, in order to guard against Accidents, you will receive in Duplicate) come to your hands, to dispose of them in the following manner Vizt To keep those of one of the Locks of the said Box, yourself, and to deliver those of another of the said Locks to the Master, and those of the third Lock to the Master's Mate, of the Vessel you command; and you are to be present yourself, and to take care that the said Master and Master's Mate, be present also, every day at the winding up of the said Machine Watch, and to see that the respective times shewn thereby be properly inserted and attested under your, and their hands respectively, in the

general Observation Book; the keeping of which will be recommended to you by the said Commissioners; But if it shall happen that you yourself, or the said Master, or Master's Mate, cannot, at any time thro' indisposition, or absence upon other necessary Services, conveniently attend as above directed, you are, in such case, to take care, that the Keys in the Custody of the Person who cannot attend, be delivered to some other Officer of the Vessel you command, whom you can best trust therewith, in order that he may supply the place of such invalid or Absentee. Given &c the 13th March 1777.

Lieut Young – *Lyon* At – Galleons Reach.

By &c

PS.

J Buller.

Lisburne.

H Penton.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 343–45.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

L'Orient March 13th 1777

I Take this Opertunity to Inform you Of the proceedings of the Commissary of this port Which Seam very odd to me as I have Recd. no Instrucktions from you he Sent for me to Day and told me I must Get my Ship Cleaned & put Every thing on bord As fast as possible & then Departe the port Immediately He further Informd me he Should Send persons to See That We Did not Delay anytime these are very Extraordinary orders & Such as I Should Suppose you Are Allready Acquainted With If So Am much Surprized I am not Informd, by you in What maner or How to proceed So As not to Giv Umbrage to the King or Ministers I Can Get the Ship Ready in 8 or 10 Days At furthest But Shall Be very Glad to heare from You As Soon As possible or At Least before I Sail If I Should be Drove out of this port by the Commissary Without your orders I Cannot tell Where to Go to Wait your Instrucktions or Wethere to proceed Directly for America or not, As I Am orderd not to Enter any french port again; I have Recd. none your favrs, Since those by Mr Defrancy & which I Cannot Act. for but hope youl Soon Write me fully & Advise in What maner to proceed from Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

P S pleas answer this As Soon As possible & Exskuse it as I have Scarcely time to Write before the post Departs

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 110, APS.

THOMAS MORRIS TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes March 13th 1777 –

I have already wrote you by this Conveyance relative to your concerns in this part of the World – which letter I hope you'l receive in due time, and these few lines may serve to acquaint you with the safe arrival of the Schooner *Jenifer* from Baltimore on the 11th Instant in the Afternoon – Captain Larkin Hammond having made application to me to advise and assist him in the transaction of the business committed to his care, I shall

very readily comply with his request by rendering him every service in my power – I put proper directions on the Sundry important dispatches he brought for The Honourable Commissioners at Paris – and sent him immediately thither with them – I furnished him with some money to defray his expences – and in order to avoid his being any time detained on the road, I sent a Person with him that understands both English & French – during Captain Hammond's absence his Vessell shall be supplied with every thing necessary – so that he may proceed immediately back to you after having received his orders from the Gentlemen at Paris – I will do myself the honour of addressing you again by the return of the *Jenifer* or sooner if an opportunity offers being with much respect Gentlemen [&c.]

Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris

1. Papers CC (Letters Addressed to Congress), 78, XV, 167–70, NA.

14 Mar.

JOHN ROBINSON TO GEORGE III <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Parliament Street 14th March 1777 7. A:M:

... In respect to the Ships to be sent to Lord Howe, as the requisitions made by General Howe cou'd not be complied with, His Lordship [Lord North] thought it became more necessary to do what was in the Power of this Country, and to give Lord Howe, the Ships he asked; and Lord North thought the Cabinet had advised it in fact, but by having given Lord Howe One Ship of 74 Guns & 600d Men, four Ships of 64 and 500d Men each (as he apprehended) and the *Isis* of 50 with 380 Men, of which Ship he had no use last year by her being at Quebec although she was of his Squadron, Lord North thought these Ships equal to Lord Howes requisition of 6 additional Ships of the Line of not less force than 60 Guns each; and that these Ships together with the two of the Line with Lord Howe would compleat the number 8 which he desired – This Mr Robinson communicated to Lord Sandwich; Lord North had also mentioned his Ideas herein to Lord Suffolk and to Lord Dartmouth, and Lord North is to see Lord Sandwich hereon at 12<sup>o</sup> to Day; but upon Mr Robinsons seeing Lord Sandwich yesterday again on the Subject, He tells Mr Robinson that there is only the *Albion* of 74 & 600d Men and the *Nonsuch*, *Augusta*, and *Somerset* of 64 Guns and 500d Men each, together with the *Isis* of 50 Guns & 380 Men gone, or ordered to go to join Lord Howe, which makes one 64 less than Lord North apprehended the Cabinet advised; and Lord Sandwich also observed that the *Asia* is come home; so that Lord Howe has only one Line of Battle Ship with him, and consequently without further Addition, he will have two less than he desires. This Mr Robinson stated yesterday to Lord North, after he had seen Lord Sandwich, to which Lord North said; That in his Opinion the *Asia* should be replaced to Lord Howe, and that another Ship of 64 Guns should be sent, and then, reckoning the *Albion* of 74 and the *Isis* of 50 equal to two 64s which he tho't might be fairly done, Lord Howe will have the

full Complement he desires: And Lord North again repeated that he thought the replacing these Ships, by immediately equipping more, must depend on the French Armaments, and the Advices received, for if they go on, Lord North thinks there should certainly not be any time lost in proceeding here . . .

1. Fortescue, ed., *Correspondence of George III*, III, 429-31.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM WILLIAMS, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we have received a Memorial from the Merchants of the Island of Jersey trading to the Isles Madam & Bay of Chaleurs and from two other Merchants of London concerned in the same, praying that a Ship of War may be appointed to call at Jersey by the 25th instant, in order to convoy the Trade to the Isles Madam and Bay Chaleurs; And also such as may be bound from that Island to Newfoundland; And Whereas we think fit that the Ship you command shall perform that Service; You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea, the very first Opportunity of Wind and Weather, and proceed, without a moment's loss of time, to Jersey, and taking the abovementioned Trade under your Convoy, make the best of your way with them towards the places of their destination; and, having seen such as may be bound to Newfoundland, as near to that Island as may be necessary for their Security, go on with the remainder to the Isles Madam and Bay of Chaleurs; and, having seen them also in safety to those places respectively, make the best of your way to St John's in the Island of Newfoundland, where you are to deliver the inclosed packet to Vice Admiral Montague Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at and about that Island; and putting yourself under his Command, follow his Order for your farther proceedings Given &c the 14th March 1777.

Sandwich Lisburne H. Palliser.

To Captn Williams – *Active* – Plymouth Sound.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 349-50.

*Public Advertiser*, FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1777

London [March 14].

Letters by the West India Mail bring Advice, that the American Privateers are cruising in every Part of the West Indies; that they look into the Harbour, and where there are no Men of War nor Batteries to protect the Shipping, they enter and cut them out; that they sail Four or Five together; and are stout Ships.

CAPTAIN GEORGE MURRAY, R.N., TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM HAY, H.M.S. *Alarm*<sup>1</sup>

Sir

*Levant*, Gibraltar Bay 14th, March 1777 –

In pursuance of your Orders of the 21st February, I proceeded to Madeira, where we arrived the 6th, of this Instant.

On the 8th, at Noon we saw a Vessel in the Offing to which we gave Chase, and came up with her at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5 P M. she had English Colours hoisted, but on our firing a Gun and hailing her to bring too, she made all the Sail she could and hoisted what they call a Provincial Jack. We followed her within Musquet Shot 'till 1 A M at which Time the Breese freshening up, we got close alongside her, and then she Struck. During the Chase we exchanged several Shot, she firing her Stern Chase, and we our bow ones, but with little damage on either side, She proves to be the *General Montgomery* brigte, mounting eighteen Guns 6 & 4 Pdrs four Cohorns, and three Swivels, belonging to John Pringle and Josh. Deane of Philadelphia, commanded by Benjamin Hill, who had a Commission Signed by John Hancock President to the Delagates of the United Colonies of new Hampshire &ca She sailed from Philadelphia the 6th, of February and had only Arrived off the Island the day before we took her.

When she Sailed from Philadelphia her Complement was a hundred Men, but by Accidents & Sickness it was reduced to 87. – As there was so many Prisoners and many of them Sickly, I thought it more Prudent to return to Gibraltar than to proceed to Lisbon as your Orders directed me. I have agreeable to Act of Parliamt. compleated my complement (which was 9 short) and some Boys out of her Crew, the rest I have put on a Supernumerary List, and must request your Orders to send the Sick to the Hospital, and how I am to dispose of the Captain, Officers, and the remainder. I likewise beg you will procure their Lordships determinations, whether Gun and head Money is allowed.

I am informed there are near four hundred Commissions given out by the Congress for Privateers; a Number of which it is said will Cruize on the banks of Newfoundland, Coasts of Guinea, Portugal & Spain. I am Sir [&c.]

George Murray

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/1903.

15 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 15 Mar. 1777

Having communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letter of the 2nd inst desiring to know, for your future guidance whether, if any American Merchants Vessels shou'd be brought into Plymouth, as Prizes, you are to cause their Crews to be entered as part of the Complements of the Ships under your Command & their Masters to be put on shore agreeable to the Act of Parliament passed in the last session, or whether you are to cause the said Masters & Crews to be kept in safe custody as Prisoners; I am in return commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to acquaint me, when any arrive for their Lordships information & directions before you dispose of them I am &c

P S

Vice Adml Amherst at Plymouth

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 204-07.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO JOHN ROBINSON <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 15 Mar 1777

Having communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letter of the ——Inst representing that the Lords of the Treasury have received intelligence that a privater of very large force is cruizing near the Gulph of St Lawrence in Order to intercept the Victuallers going to Canada & the success of the whole Campaign depending upon the early and safe arrival of the Victuallers there, you are directed by their Lordships to request that my Lords will be pleased immediately to order some Ship of War, equal in force, to the Privater, which is said to be of 36 Guns to Cruize off Newfoundland, and in the Entrance of the Gulph of St Lawrence for the Protection & security of those Ships; I am in return, commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords of the Treasury that His Majts Ship *Raisnable* of 64 Guns Captn Fitzherbert is order'd to proceed immediately to the Coast of Newfoundland, to cruize in the Track from thence to the Entrance of the Gulph of St Lawrence, in order to take or destroy the Privater alluded to, or any other he may find in those parts I am &c

P S

John Robinson Esqr

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 211-12.

*Public Advertiser*, SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1777

London [March 15].

The *Carolina Packet*, M'Donald, that was taken the 6th of August last, and carried into New England, was bought by the Captain, and arrived at Youghall the 22d inst. in a Passage of 28 Days, with about eighty Passengers, but brings no News of Consequence.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Volume 6.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MARCH 13 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1777

[London] Saturday, March 15.

Applications are daily making to the Lords of the Admiralty for Letters of Marque and Reprisal against the American privateers.

The price of insurance up the Streights, on account of some late captures, has risen considerably.

BARON DE SCHULENBURG TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

I have received the letter which you did me the honour to address to me the 14th ulto, and I have not failed to acquaint the King with the eagerness which the English Colonies of North America evince to establish free and reciprocal commerce with us.

His Majesty appeared to receive with pleasure the assurances of the



favourable disposition of the Colonies in that respect and I have no doubt but that, ever intent upon extending the commerce and increasing the happiness of his people, he would be very glad if such an intercourse could be established. But, Gentlemen, as you are fully informed of the state of affairs, you will perceive, better than I, all the obstacles which would hamper this commerce in the present circumstances. The King, owing to the disposition of his States, having no fleet at sea to make his flag respected, those of our vessels which would attempt to reach your country would be exposed to certain loss; and even if we were willing to avail ourselves of a foreign flag there would be always a danger from the British cruisers.

I know of no port in America where our vessels could discharge; and even St Eustatius, offers no sure refuge, since there are not less than 90 English vessels in those waters which would never allow our merchandise to pass, nor yet that which we would take in return.

It would be, then, in my opinion, much more natural that the Colonies, who have the greatest interest in finding an outlet for their surplus products, and in exchanging them for the manufactures which they lack, knowing, besides, by experience all these dangers and the means of obviating them, should, having first succeeded in bringing their vessels into French ports, attempt to trace out for themselves a route to us; to bring us the products that we need and to take in exchange such of our manufactures as may be suitable to them; or else to find some other European port where this reciprocal trade could be freely conducted.

At present this appears to me the only way to set on foot a commercial intercourse between the two nations; but if you, Gentlemen, can furnish me with further explanations and with the means of overcoming the above difficulties, I shall receive them with pleasure and make such use of them as shall be most agreeable to your employers and to the interests of the King my master.

I have the honour to be with the highest respect [&c.]

Baron de Schulenburg

Berlin 15th March 1777.

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 656. The above copy is in the hand of Edward Bancroft, and was turned over to Paul Wentworth on May 27, 1777.

SILAS DEANE TO CONRAD ALEXANDRE GÉRARD<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Paris] March 15th 1777

Inclosed is a Letter which I ask the favor of you, to deliver his Excellency,<sup>2</sup> and explain to him, in French – I received Letters last Night from London, that Six Ships of the Line, are ordered to join Lord Howe, one hundred Frigates were ordered to America before, & by the ordering these Ships of the Line it is supposed that whilst the Frigates extend themselves along the Coast, these Shippes of the Line with a part of the Frigates will be Constantly in Readiness for any West India Expedition – I had closed my Lettr to Mons: LeComte, before I Recollected of this; which is all the

material Intelligence I have recd from London & which please to Communicate to him. I have the honor to remain Sir [&c.]

S Deane

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 124, LC Photocopy.
2. Vergennes.

#### RANSON & DELAMAIN TO LORD STORMONT<sup>1</sup>

Extract of a Letter from Messrs Ranson and Delamain Dated Cognac 15th March

A Circumstance, which may not have come to Your Lordship's Knowledge, is, their (the Americans) now endeavouring to provide against the Ceremony of Condemnation, which they have not yet been able to obtain in France by hireing Dutch or any other neutral Vessels, putting into them, the Cargoes of the Ships they take, and then sending them with false Papers, for Sale of their Loading into different Ports of this Kingdom.

[Endorsed] In Lord Stormont's N 50 secret

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 380-81.

16 Mar. (Sunday)

#### ARTHUR LEE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND SILAS DEANE<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear Sirs/

Victoria March 16th 1777

I have receivd an answer from the Court, thro the Duke de Grimaldi to this effect. That the reasons for wishing me not to come to Madrid are insuperable, that the States may depend on the sincere desire of Spain to see their Liberties establishd & to assist them as far as her own situation will permit. For this purpose I had only to direct the House of Gardoqui to supply us by every opportunity with whatever Spain afforded for our use. That 3000 Barrels of powder & some cloathing were deposited at N. Orleans for us – that we should be receivd at the Havannah as the most favord Nation – & that the Count d'Aranda woud have directions to supply me with credit upon Holland.

Mr Gardoqui informs me that he has orders to load the three vessels at Bilboa entirely with Salt, I shall however recommend to all the Captains the receiving such Supplies for the general Congress, as he shall send. . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 113, APS.

#### LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

Remarks Saturday [Sunday] March, 16, 1777

At. 8. Made A Sail bearg E B S, Dist 5 Leags to Which we Gave Chance, At Me[ri]d[ian] Came up With the Chace, it proves to be a french Ship *Londu* Capt curronat, from Bourdeaux [&] out 8 days, bound to Cap Franceway. They inform us they Saw two Ships two

days Ago Standing NNE. Likewise their is no War proclaimd in France.

Nothing More Remarkable this day –

No Lattd by Obsn

First part of these 24 hours begins with Moderate Wheather, being in Company With a french Ship,

At. 3. P.M. parted Company bore away, fird a Gun, & Gave three Cheers, [At 11] Up NBE of NEBN. hove too under The T. Sails, Cloudy

1. "A Log Book kept on board the Brigantine *Rising States* James Thompson Commander, begun Feby 18, 1777," PRO, HCA 30/716. Hereafter cited as Log of the *Rising States*.

17 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 17 Mar 1777

My Lords Commrs of the Admty having order'd a Court Martial to be assembled at Portsmouth on the 31st inst to enquire into the Conduct of Captn Stair Douglas of His Majts Ship the *Squirrel*, in separating from the Ships under his Convoy in his & their late passage from Jamaica, & to try him for the same; And Captn Douglas having requested that the several Persons named on the other side hereof, belonging to the *Squirrel* may be ordered to attend as Witnesses at the Court Martial; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to give the said several Persons Orders accordingly I am &c

P S

Lieut James Cornwallis	} of the <i>Squirrel</i>
John Wilson, Master	
James Young Lieut of Marines	
Philip Seegar. Purser	
Geoe Maxwell Mr Mate	
Alexr Douglas Do Do	

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 218–19.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, MARCH 15 TO TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1777

[London] Monday, March 17.

Letters from Rhode-island say, that two of our frigates belonging to the squadron there, being on a cruise, looked into the harbour of Martha's Vineyard Isle, where they saw a large ship which they took to be a prize carried in, and also another vessel, a sloop; on this they stood in as close as they could, and in the evening cut them both out, and brought them safe off without the loss of a single man.

A letter from Halifax mentions, that his majesty's ship *Milford*, since she has been on that station, and off Boston, has since April last, taken, re-taken, sunk, burnt and destroyed 37 sail of ships belonging to or in the possession of the Provincials.

At the same time [Wednesday last] the cargo of the *Aurora*, a ship laden

with tobacco, of very great value, bound from America to Nantz, was condemned as a droit of Admiralty: She was brought into Liverpool by English sailors on board, who confined the Captain and Master, and entered into a written agreement to stand by King George; and having made a French flag into an English one, hoisted it over the American striped rebel flag, and brought her in as above.

RAIMONDO NICCOLI TO HIS GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

... England's situation (should she lose these Colonies) is such that in a short time it would be reduced to being the most ridiculous power in Europe. The King, the Nation, the Minister, all have an equal interest in making the most determined effort possible to subjugate the Americans, or at least to make new attempts, and try to earn time. And in fact I notice that this is their present policy, as any means of reconciliation is desperate after what has happened.

I know that the British Minister has chartered or tried to charter from the King of Denmark eight or ten warships. The cancellation of the order for Württemberg troops, I believe, will be followed by another cancellation for Brunswick troops, and from Hesse, but such countermanding does not mean, it seems to me, that they have given up the enterprize; rather that they have changed their operational plan. That is, I believe that they will have that corps of troops which they now have in America, without increasing it, but not ordering its return, and that they will carry on a sea war with maximum force against the Rebels, by keeping many warships on cruises in order to prevent their privateers from acquiring reserves of weapons there, and from preying upon English vessels, as they do.

England knows, or should know, that the Rebels have 124 privateers which up to this time have seized 250 ships formerly serving in the West Indies trade, and have become formidable by so doing.

By placing on station a number of ships of the line and frigates they [the English] can hope to maintain communication with their southern settlements, and with that number of troops ashore to be left in the provinces of Philadelphia or the Jerseys, they will compel the enemy to keep an army active, and will deprive him in part, if not entirely, of those munitions and products he might obtain for himself by trade or privateering. . . .

Paris 17 March 1777

1. Secretary of Foreign Affairs Papers, ASF.

18 Mar.

LORD SANDWICH TO GEORGE III <sup>1</sup>

Lord Sandwich apprehends that your Majesty wishes that General Burgoyne should go to Canada with as little delay as possible, if he goes in the *Apollo*, as she must take a convoy with her, some time must be lost in her

passage; and as she is still at Plymouth & not quite ready for sea, it does not seem probable that she will be able to sail from Spithead before the end of the month.

The *Ariadne* a copper bottomed ship of twenty guns tho' under sailing orders to join L. Howe, cannot go to sea with this wind; and an express is just now gone for her to remain where she is, till farther order; in case your Majesty should think it more adviseable that she should take the General on board than that he should wait for the *Apollo*, she will have nothing to detain her a moment from sailing, except contrary winds; & being a fast sailing ship & no convoy tacked to her, will certainly arrive at her destination long before the *Apollo*.

Admiralty March 18. 1777

I. Fortescue, ed., *Correspondence of George III*, III, 427.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

Whereas we have order'd the Commanding Officers of His Majesty's Ship, Sloop and Armed Vessel named in the Margin (the two first of which are at, and the latter on her way to Spithead) to put themselves under your command and follow your orders for their farther proceedings; You are hereby required and directed to take them under your command accordingly.

*Camel*  
*Swift Slo.*  
*Bute. A. V.*

And Whereas We think fit that you shall proceed forthwith to New York, taking under your Convoy the Transports and Storeships mentioned in the annexed List, and also any other Ships or Vessels, which may be in readiness to proceed thither or to Halifax in Nova Scotia, You are hereby further required and directed to make enquiry for the said Transports and Storeships, and also for such other Ships or Vessels as are abovementioned, and then putting to Sea with the very first opportunity of wind and Weather make the best of your way, consistent with their Security, to New York where you are to deliver the inclosed packet to Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Howe Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in North America, and putting yourself under his Lordship's command follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

You are to be very attentive to the Ships and Vessels which proceed under your Convoy, and more particularly to the *Lord Townsend*, *Howe* and *Friendship*, keeping them together by every means in your power, And, on no account leaving them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep company with you, as we expect that, in the course

of your voyage you accomodate your progress to the worst sailing Ship amongst them.

You are at the same time to take all possible care, and to give the Commanders of the said Ships and Vessels, such orders and directions as you shall judge most likely, to prevent them from seperating from you; And, in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part company with you or disobey your orders, You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names, with the circumstances attending such seperation or disobedience, that such measures may be taken thereupon as shall be judged necessary. Given &c the 18th March 1777.

The honble Captn Cornwallis –

*Isis* – Spithead

By &c PS.

Lisburne.

H. Penton.

H. Palliser.

[Annexed List]

Ships Names	Masters Names	Lading &c.
<i>Union</i>	Andrew Bryson	} Recruits.
<i>Kattie</i>	Willm Robertson	
<i>Prince George</i>	John Bartholomew	
<i>Britannia</i>	John Watson	
<i>Christopher</i>	Chrisr Dousland	
<i>Archer</i>	Willm Coates	} Remount Horses.
<i>Hannah</i>	George Heslop	
<i>Atlantic</i>	Joseph Sippen	
<i>Rebecca</i>	John Walter	
<i>Swan</i>	John Dale	
<i>Lord Townshend</i>		} Ordnance and } Ordnance Stores.
<i>Howe</i>		} Clothing and } Camp Equipage.
<i>Friendship</i>		

N B. The Ten first are under the care of Lieut Harris as Agent, who is directed to follow Captn Cornwallis's Orders.

I. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 356–59. A copy is in Captain William Cornwallis' Order Book, NYHS.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, H.M.S. *Isis* <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Admiralty Office 18 Mar: [17]77

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send you herewith the private Signals for His Majesty's ships in North America

by which they may know each other, and their Lordships understanding from Sir Geo: Collier Commander of His Majesty's Ship *Rainbow* at Hallifax, that the *Alfred* a rebel Privateer, upon being chased by His Majesty's Ship *Milford* had made the said Signal, and that he had therefore settled others and sent a Copy of them to Lord Howe at New York. I send you also a Copy thereof for your Information; and it is their Lordships directions that you keep them secret, and on no Account communicate them to any person whatever except the Commandrs of any of His Majesty's Ships you may fall in with who may not already have received them –

It is also their directions that you give Copies of the above Signals to the Commanding Officers of the Ship Sloop, & Arm'd Vessel named in the Margin <sup>2</sup> with directions to them to Observe the like injunctions of Secrecy –  
I am [&c.]  
Ph<sup>d</sup> Stephens

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, 26–27, NYHS.

2. *Camel*, *Swift* and *Bute*.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

By &c

<i>Camel</i> <i>Swift</i> Slo <i>Bute</i> , A V.	The Honble Captain Cornwallis Commander of His Majesty's Ship <i>Isis</i> (by whom your Lordship will receive this) being directed to take His Majesty's Ship, Sloop and Armed Vessel named in the Margin under his command, and the Transports and Storeships named in the annexed List, <sup>2</sup> under his Convoy, and to proceed with them immediately to New York, where he is to put himself under your Lordship's command, and follow your Orders for his further proceedings, Your Lordship is hereby required and directed to take him together with the <i>Isis</i> and <i>Swift</i> Sloop under your command, and to employ them as you shall judge best for His Majesty's Service entrusted to your care.
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But Whereas the *Camel* and *Bute* Armed Vessel, are destined to proceed immediately to the West Indies, the former to the Leeward Islands, and the latter to Jamaica, to be employed as Convoys to the Ships homeward bound from those Islands, Your Lordship is hereby further required and directed to dispatch them away without a moment's loss of time to the places of such their destination accordingly; giving their Commanding Officers Orders, the former to deliver the packet you will receive herewith to Vice Admiral Young, and the latter the packet you will also receive herewith, to Vice Admiral Gayton, and to follow their Orders respectively

for their further proceedings. Given &c the 18th March 1777.

Lisburne. H. Penton. H. Palliser.

By &c PS.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 359-60.

2. See Lords Commissioners, Admiralty, to Captain William Cornwallis, R.N. this date.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK & HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas you have represented to Us, by your Letter of the 25th of last month, that you had received information from Vice Admiral Montagu that the Ships under his command which lately returned from Newfoundland were, during the last Season, very sickly, and that the Hospital at St John's was very inconvenient, being used also as a Brewhouse and Cooperage, which you thought very improper for an Hospital, And Whereas you have further represented to Us, that upon consulting with the said Vice Admiral, you concur in opinion with him that it will be most adviseable to appropriate the whole of the said Building to the sole purpose of an Hospital, after it shall be put in good repair and otherwise fitted for that purpose being at present in very bad condition, You are hereby required and directed to cause the same to be put into good repair & otherwise fitted for an Hospital accordingly, upon the best and cheapest terms you can for the Crown; we having acquainted the Commissrs for Victualling His Majesty's Navy therewith and directed them to make such other provision for a Brewhouse and Cooperage in its stead, as they shall judge necessary. Given &c the 18th March 1777

Commissrs for Sick & Hurt

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

Lisburne.

H. Penton.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 363-64.

WILLIAM KNOX TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Whitehall 18th March 1777.

About Sixty Tons of Hospital Stores being prepared for the Use of the Troops at Rhode Island; I am directed by Lord George Germain to desire you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to give Orders for their Conveyance, either onboard of an Armed Transport that sails with Convoy directly to Rhode Island, or, if there be no such direct Conveyance, onboard of one that sails with Convoy to New York. I am &c

Will<sup>m</sup> Knox

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 2, 295.



*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1777

London [March 18].

The *John*, Watkins, from Liverpoole for Halifax, taken by the Rebels, and re-taken by the *Milford* Man of War, is again fallen into the Hands of the Rebels.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Volume 7.

MEMORANDUM FROM LORD STORMONT TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Memorandum handed to His Excellency Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes by the English Ambassador on the 18th March 1777.

Representation as to the continuation of the stay at L'Orient of the American vessel *Reprisal* and the sale of five English vessels which it had captured

The Orders sent by this Court to L'Orient, Orders of which the English Ambassador was informed by His Excellency Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes himself, have produced no Effect. These Orders were to the effect that the American Vessel named the *Reprisal*, com-

manded by Mr Wykes [Wickes] should at once leave L'Orient, as well as the five English Vessels it had captured and brought into the said Port. They also carried absolute Prohibition of the Sale of any of the above-mentioned Vessels, or of any part of their Cargo: These were the Orders, This is the result. The American Pirate is still in the Port of L'Orient, where he is even having his Vessel careened, and finds all the Aid he Requires. The five English Vessels have all been sold, and what is more, sold to Frenchmen; they have left the Port of L'Orient, as belonging to France, and they are manned by French Sailors who even form the whole Crew.

In order to give colour to this fraudulent Sale, Mr Wykes has been allowed to Enter these five Vessels in the Registers of the Customs at L'Orient, as being Vessels belonging to him. Although it was Notorious that they were English Vessels which he had taken, although the Orders issued by the Court demonstrate, that It knew that they were captures, although the Captains of the said Vessels had made formal Depositions to establish their Ownership, and to protest against any Sale; To add still another proof, The Commissioner of His Most Christian Majesty has released the English Prisoners, who were on board these Vessels, and on that of Mr Wykes: Could he, then, be unaware that they were Captures? Can he even allege such ignorance? The merest Acquaintance with French Customs suffices to know that this Sale could not take place without the formal or tacit Permission of the Commissary, and that it was likewise impossible for French Sailors to take these Vessels out of the Port of L'Orient without the Permission of the said Commissary. It is, therefore, very just and he

should be obliged to give all Details of this fraudulent Sale, of which he made himself an Accomplice, and that in a manner which deserves most exemplary Punishment.

The English Ambassador does not yet know who has bought the Falmouth Packet, but The Commissary must know. Of the four merchant Vessels, of which The Ambassador has handed a List to M le Comte de Vergennes, two, namely, those which were commanded by Captains Jefferson and Duncan, have been bought by Inhabitants of the Island of Normoutier. The two others, namely, those of Messers Campbell and Kentisbeer, have been bought by Messers Berard Brothers, Merchants at L'Orient. The salt fish, which formed a part of the Cargo, has been sent to Nantes, on small French Vessels. The Brandy has been sent to Ostend.

These are all the Circumstances which, up to the present, have come to the Knowledge of the English Ambassador; he makes no reflexions, and limits himself to the mere statement of Facts. These all support the Demand which he has here the Honor to make, and the Justice of which will at once strike so enlightened a Ministry as that of France.

He claims, then, the accomplishment of the formal assurances, which have been given to him, that the American Vessel, commanded by Mr Wykes should at once leave the Port of L'Orient, and should not be allowed to cruise off the French Coast. He demands immediate and full restitution: 1st of the Falmouth Packet, a Vessel belonging to the King, his Master; 2nd of the four Merchant Vessels above-mentioned belonging to Subjects of the King, his Master, and bought by Subjects of His Most Christian Majesty. He asks that this Restitution with the Value of that Part of the Cargo which has been misappropriated, be made at once, and bona fide, to the Owners or Their Assigns.

The Ambassador knows too well the penetration of this Court, and the Justice which governs all its Steps, to set forth the numberless reasons on which this Demand is based; He will limit himself to saying that it is evident, as this fraudulent Sale has been allowed, as French Subjects have been permitted to appropriate Vessels belonging to Great Britain, and taken by one of her Rebellious Subjects, – The Friendship which so happily exists between the two Courts, and which That of England desires to cultivate more and more, the Treaties which are the Basis of this Friendship, the usages of all civilized Nations, and especially those of France, as appears from her Naval Ordinances, the positive Orders issued by the Ministry on this occasion, – all have been forgotten; and without the Restitution which the Ambassador of England demands, this Sale would put the Purchasers (who are French Subjects) in the Place of the American Corsair, and would make them Accomplices in the Capture.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Versailles 18th March 1777

We have lately received an Express from The Congress of the United States of North America containing some new instructions to Us, the purport of which it is proper your Excellency should be acquainted with. The Congress tho' firmly determined to maintain as long as possible their independance, whither assisted or not by any other power, yet for the sake of humanity wishing universal Peace would not for the Advantage of America only desire to kindle a War in Europe, the Extent & duration of which cannot be Foreseen. They therefore, on this Account, as well as for Reasons of Respect to the King whose Character they venerate do not presume to propose that France should enter into a War merely on their Account. But if France to obtain satisfaction from Brittain for the injuries received in the last War, commenced by that Nation, or for any other just causes, should think it right to improve the present Occasion, in declaring War against Great Brittain, we are directed to induce if it may be the more early Declaration to offer the following Advantages in Addition to those of Commerce already proposed.

1st: That the Object of the War be to obtain for France satisfaction for the Injuries aforesaid, & for the United States the Establishment of their Independance with a reduction of the British Powers for the Security both of France & America, to which Ends it is proposed, that the Conquest of Canada Nova-scotia, Newfoundland, St. Johns, the Florida's Bermuda, Bahama & all the West India Islands now in Possession of Brittain be attempted by the joint Force of France & the United States and in case of Success, half the Fishery of Newfoundland together with all the Sugar Islands shall thereafter Appertain to France, the rest to the United States & the Trade between the Kings Dominions & the United States shall thenceforth be carried on by the Ships of said Dominions, & of the United States only.

2d/ That in case it is agreed that the Conquest of the british Sugar Islands be Attempted, the United States shall on timely notice, furnish provisions for the Expedition to the Amount of Two Million of Dollars, with six Frigates mann'd of not less than 24 Guns each, with such other Assistance as may be in their power & becoming good Allies.

3d That as a close connection is understood to subsist between France & Spain, & that their Interests are the same, it is also proposed by the Congress, that in case Spain shall enter with France into the said War, the United States will if thereto required, declare War against Portugal (which has already insulted their Commerce) and will continue the said War for the total Conquest of that Kingdom, to be added to the Dominions of Spain

4 That a Peace shall not be made but by mutual consent. But if it be determined by his most Christian Majesty to remain in Peace with Great Brittain, the Congress do then pray that his Majesty would use his influence

with Europe for preventing the further Transportation of foreign Troops into America to serve against the United States, & to obtain a recall of those already there. And having unbounded Confidence in the Kings Goodness & Wisdom they pray his Advice in their present Circumstances, whither to apply to any of the other Powers of Europe for Auxillary Aids, or to make Offers of Peace to Brittain on Condition of their Independancy being Acknowledged – In neither of these Points would the Congress take a Step without consulting his Majestys Ministers, & We hope for a favorable Answer.

We have the honor to remain with the most profound Respect Your Excellencys [&c.]

Silas Deane in behalf of himself  
& B Franklin –  
Commissioners Plenipotentiary for  
the United States N America

P.S. The Congress & the People of the United States continue unanimous in their Opposition to the claims of Brittain, & are fully determined To assert their own independancy to the last; – There is no doubt but Brittain would on certain Commercial Terms, acknowledge their independance – if the United States can have no aid from France directly, & if no encouragement can be giv'n to receive support in a short space of Time; as the United States wish for nothing, so much as Peace & Liberty, whither they should, through the Freindly interposition of His Most Christian Majesty, or other-ways, make Offers of Peace, to Great Brittain on the Conditions of their independance or pursue the War, and risque the Event.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 128–30, LC Photocopy.

NATHAN RUMSEY TO HIS FATHER, WILLIAM RUMSEY,  
CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Copy

Honored Sir

Paris March 18th 1777.

You may possibly be surprised at my addressing you from Paris, Cap. Larkin Hammond in the *Jenifer* Packet with Dispatches from Congress at Baltimore to our Commissioners here arrived at Nantes the 11th Instant, left Baltimore the 14th January and the Capes of Virginia the 4th February bringing accts as late only as the 9th January, the Date of his last Letter in Congress, and Cap. Hammond not speaking a word of french, my friends at Nantes requested me to come with him to Paris for the Security and Dispatch of the Intelligence, which I, willing to throw in my mite in whatever part of the World I may happen to be – immediately and cheerfully agreed to. Here I wait only for the Dispatches for Congress, with which, as soon as ready, I shall proceed to Nantes, from whence Cap. Hammond will sail with the first favorable wind

Our affairs at this Court bear a very favorable aspect Cap. Wickes,

who brought Doctor Franklin to France, brought in at the same time 2 Prizes, to negotiate the sales of which I was appointed and can therefore speak with Certainty. The Intention of Cap. Wicke's cruizing on this Coast & bringing his prizes into French ports was to oblige the French either to assist us openly, or as openly tell us they would not. I therefore the more essentially to effect this purpose – sold them at the Risque of the Seller – obliging him to refund the Purchase money in Case the Government upon a Reclamation by the former owners, should order the prizes so sold to be restored. They have been reclaimed, and have been slighted without any answer.

Cap. Wickes went out again & in less than 5 weeks brought in 5 other prizes among which was the Lisbon Packet, which fought him 45 minutes: These are all sold and the packet being immediately the King's Property, is so gross an affront by this Kingdom that England surely cannot Pocket it. She is fitting out a large fleet altho they find it exceedingly difficult to man it, and tis beyond doubt believed that as soon as they can put to sea with a tollerable Fleet that War will be declared on France by England. The French are ready. When I am on this subject it will not be mal apropos to mention a part of a conference which happened four days since between My Lord Stormont the English Ambassador here and the Count de Vignes [Vergennes], Minister of foreign Affairs, in the course of which My Lord remonstrated against a great number of French officers daily going to America, many of which decamped with His Majesty's permission, and concluded by saying such proceedings would most undoubtedly produce War, to which the Count made the following fine Answer so consistent with the fine Politics of this Court. *Nous ne desirous pas La Guerre, avec L'Angleterre, et nous ne craignons pas.* We desire not War with England, nor do we fear it. This may give you a clear Idea of the Situation of our affairs here. It may be depended on as a fact, as I had it myself from Doct. Franklin when dining with him the other day about a League from Paris.

I hope Cap. Stockes in the Brigantine *Sally* whom I despatched the 2d January with a most valuable cargo may be safely arrived before this

1. Nathan Rumsey Papers, UNCL.

#### ARTHUR LEE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Vitoria in Spain, March the 18th, 1777

... I have settled with Mr Gardoqui, who is now with me, from whom I have received every possible assistance, to dispatch a vessel with all possible expedition, laden with Salt, Sail and Tent Cloth, Cordage, Blankets, such warlike Stores as he can immediately procure, and an assortment of such Drugs as I think will be necessary for the three prevailing camp diseases. Those who furnish these Supplies, are very desirous of an expedition being

ordered against Pensacola; in order that the possession of that place, may render the communication, between the southern Colonies & N. Orleans, from which they would wish to succour you, more sure and secret. The Capt. has my directions to make for Philadelphia, or any port to the southward, & wait your Orders. At Monsr Gardoqui's desire, I have given him a recommendation to all the american Captains, who may sail from Bilboa, whether in public or private service, to receive such stores as he shall send them for your use.

In my former letters from Bordeaux & Nantes, I took the liberty of remarking upon the deranged state of your commerce. I find here, that you have not sent any vessels to Bilboa, tho' as being the most convenient, it is most frequented by private vessels. It is a free port, has no custom house, & therefore business is dispatched with more secrecy & expedition. Rice, Indigo, tar, pitch, & turpentine, bear a good price there; and fish in Lent. By the provincial Laws of Biscay, tobacco is prohibited; but it may be landed at the port of St Sabastian, some 14 leagues distant, & it sells well in Spain. But it must be strong virginia tobacco for this market. The House of Gardoqui has promised to collect from other places, such things as I have informed them will be proper for your service. As Monsr Montaudouine and Monsr Schweighauser at Nantes, & the Messrs Delaps at Bordeaux are the best & most respectable merchants; so the Gardoquis are at Bilboa. . . .

1. Papers CC (Letters from Arthur Lee, 1776-80), 83, I, 47-54, NA.

19 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

Admiralty Office 19 March 1777

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having appointed the Honble Capt'n [William Clement] Finch to be Captain of His Majestys Ship the *Camel* and Lieutt Benjn Hill to be Commander of the *Bute* Arm'd Ship their Lordships command me to send you their Commissions herewith and I am to desire you will please to deliver the same to them respectively And the established Fee for each Commission being £ 2.3.0 you will please to receive and be accountable to this Office for the Same. I am Sir [&c.]

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

Honble Capt'n Cornwallis	} not to be Opened
Isis. Spithead	
	} 'till clear of the Channel

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, 29, NYHS.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CHATHAM, MARCH 19."<sup>1</sup>

Our shipwrights and caulkers &c. were on Monday last ordered into the dock-yard to work at five o'clock in the morning, for the greater dispatch of the ships now fitting out here for sea, and are to continue working till

half past seven in the evening, except one hour, which is allowed them for dinner.

On Saturday sailed from this port for Sheerness, the *Orford* hospital ship of 70 guns, commanded by Lieut. Richard Vavasor, at which place she is to receive the sick and impress men from on board the *Conquistadore*, where a great sickness prevails.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 20 to March 22, 1777.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, DATED MARCH 19." <sup>1</sup>

Arrived at Spithead a large brigantine, sent in by Sir John Hamilton, of the *Hector*, which he took off Cape Le Hogue. She was under Danish colours, and laden with tobacco, rice, and indigo, American property, as is said.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 20 to March 22, 1777.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Most Secret

No 51

My Lord

Paris March 19th 1777

I am privately informed, that not many Days ago, two french Ships Sailed from Havre de Grace, having on board, a large number of field Pieces, which were sent from Dunkirk to Havre, and which are certainly designed for the use of the Rebels, tho' the Ships have cleared out for St Domingo. I cannot pretend to warrant this Intelligence, My Informer indeed, seems to have no doubt of the Truth of it, but I have sometimes found him deceived. I have very good Reason to believe, that a Company of Merchants, have lately built, an Armed Vessel at Brest, which is to be commanded by a Lieutenant in the french Navy, and is to be laden with Military Stores, for the use of the Rebels. She was Launched about 2 Months ago, but is still in the Harbour of Brest. I am more and more persuaded My Lord, that nothing but the Vigilance, and activity of our Cruizers, can Stop these Succours, with which the french will continue to furnish the Rebels, tho' in direct violation, of the friendship they profess. If many of the Ships they send fall into our Hands, which must be the Case, if we are sufficiently watchful, they will soon grow tired, of carrying on so losing a Trade, and Slacken in that Zeal, which is now so much quickened by the prospect of Gain.

Two American Vessels, have escaped our Cruizers, and are arrived in the Ports of France, one is come to Nantes from Boston, which she left on the 3d of february, the other arrived at Quiberon, the 11th of this Month, and it is said, came from Virginia in 27 Days, She brought over an express for Franklin, who since the Arrival of this Express, has propagated, the falsest, and most exaggerated Accounts, of the Disaster of the Hessians, and the distressed State of our Army. These Accounts, falling in with the general wish of this Country, are greedily received, and raise such Hopes, and

expectations, as would astonish any man, who does not know, the Levity, Ignorance, and Credulity of this Nation, and the facility with which they are deceived, whenever their Passions play. I have no doubt, that Genl Howe will soon open the Campaign, in such a manner, as to blast all their Hopes. The few well wishers we have in this Country, are very desirous that we may make, the greatest possible Efforts this summer, and push the War with unrelenting severity; they think that we have carried Lenity, and Moderation, to the utmost Extent, that wisdom can Justify, and are persuaded, that it is high time now, to make the Americans feel the full weight of that war, in which their Rebellion has involved us, and themselves.

These My Lord, are the unanimous Sentiments, of our few well wishers here, who lie chiefly among the Military Men de la vieille Cour; I relate their Sentiments without presuming to give any opinion of my own. I do not I hope go beyond my Province when I say, that the Situation of Europe, in general, and that of this Country in particular, make me very anxious, that our success in America may not only be as compleat, but as speedy as possible. He must be a bold Man indeed, who will ensure the continuance of the Public tranquillity, beyond the present Year. I am the greatest Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont

[Endorsed] Paris 19 March 1777 Lord Stormont (No 51) most secret  
R 23d by Express from Dover

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 382-83.

#### THOMAS MORRIS TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes March 19th 1777

. . . Yesterday the Ship *Versailles* Captain [Joseph] Chapman arrived here in 40 days from Boston <sup>2</sup> . . . Captain [Nicholas] Bartlett in the Brig *Penet* will sail for Boston in about 10 days from this date . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 117, APS.

2. See Volume 7, 1035.

20 Mar.

#### LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD SUFFOLK <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admiralty Office 20th March 1777

Your Lordship having in your Letter of the 12th Inst acquainted Us that the Attorney and Solicitor General have pursuant to His Majestys Commands transmitted to you Draughts of two Warrants the one for confining certain Prisoners at Plymouth, the other at Portsmouth Copies of which were received in your said Letter; And your Lordship having therein remarked to Us that the description of the Places specified in the Draughts being taken from our Letter to you of the 6th Instant the accuracy and sufficiency of that description should be well considered before the Instru-



ments are laid before his Majesty. We thereupon thought it necessary to revise our aforementioned description and do now recommend that the Place proposed to be used for the Confinement of Rebel Prisoners brought to Plymouth be described, Vizt "a certain Messuage or Building call'd the Old Mill Prison together with three Acres of Ground all situated about a Mile from the Town, and within the Borough of Plymouth in the County of Devon, "and that the Place proposed for those brought to Portsmouth be described Vizt "A certain Messuage or Building call'd Forton on the Gosport side of Portsmouth Harbour in the Parish of Alverstoke in the County of Southampton." The first mentioned Place is now preparing for the reception of Four Hundred Prisoners one half of which may be immediately admitted, and that preparation has been made at the last mentioned Place for the immediate reception of Two Hundred Prisoners.

Your Lordship having in your aforementioned Letter observed to Us that the Attorney and Solicitor General have in their Letter to you expressed their doubts as to the safety or propriety of allowing the large Airing Grounds mentioned in our Letter of the 6th to make part of the Prisons and that they have also declined inserting in the Draught any Clause for the removal of Prisoners to Hospitals, We are in return to acquaint your Lordship that it was not our intention to allow the Prisoners the constant use of the Airing Grounds but only to permit some of them now & then at certain Hours in the Day and under proper Guards to air themselves for the better preserving of their Health & to prevent contagious Distempers; and that the proposition for removing into the Royal Hospitals such of the Prisoners as may fall sick was calculated for the same end.

We are to add upon this subject that it is our intention to appoint to each of the Prisons,

An Agent  
A Clerk  
A Turnkey  
2 Deputies

A Steward  
A Cook  
A Labourer  
An Assistant Surgeon

for the security and care of the Prisoners; And that we think it necessary to represent to your Lordship that it will be proper for the more effectually preventing their escape and keeping them in good order that Military Guards from His Majestys Land Forces should be constantly mounted at each Place as in the late War. We are My Lord [&c.]

Sandwich Palmerston Lisburne

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 80-81.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGOWNE TO LORD SANDWICH <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Hartford Street March 20, 1777] <sup>2</sup>

I was told yesterday that the allotment of the *Apollo* for my passage to Canada was changed for that of the *Ariadne*: But as I had no intimation from your Lordship of the necessity for such alteration I was unwilling to believe so marked a slight was intended me.

It will probably be useless to state the difference which space and

accommodation make to a landman in a long voyage, in his comfort, & consequently in his health & spirits; that agreeable accommodation, together with every circumstance that can result from friendship to render the sea less irksome, attend me on board the *Apollo*; that part of my baggage is actually at Plymouth; & that I believe the disappointment will be felt as much by Captain Pownoll as myself – these being matters of mere private satisfaction & applicable only where friendly attentions are to be claimed, I am to expect they will be treated with indifference; but I cannot persuade myself my objection to the *Ariadne* will want due weight when I Represent to your Lordship officially, that a ship of near double her force, & commanded by an active & spirited officer is actually equipped by the enemy for the special purpose of cruising in the gulph of St Lawrence.<sup>3</sup> Tho' this intelligence should not be received at the Admiralty I undertake to say it is founded. I will not suppose this representation can be construed by any man to arise from an over anxious regard to my personal safety; but be it as it may, I have no hesitation in begging your Lordship to consider the important purposes with which I have the honour to be intrusted, & whether the Admiralty would stand quite excuseable if the King's Lieut General, so employed, should end his voyage at Boston instead of Quebec.

I have the honour to be [&c.]

[Copy]

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

2. Date is established by Burgoyne's statement to Captain Pownoll in his letter of March 20, 1777, enclosing "the letter I wrote this morning to Lord Sandwich."

3. Ship referred to by Burgoyne was the Continental Navy frigate *Boston*, 24 guns, Captain Hector McNeill. *Ariadne* also carried 24 guns and *Apollo* mounted 32.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGoyNE TO  
CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir

Hartford Street March 20 1777

Office manoeuvre, caprice, ill humour, stupidity, or some other motive of action, incident to Statesmen & unaccountable to others has operated to make yours the Ship of Convoy, & the *Ariadne* the Ship of dispatch to convey me. I think myself ill treated; & perhaps feel more than I ought, because the loss of your society is to me a serious disappointment. I cannot better explain my own sentiments than by inclosing to you, in confidence, the letter I wrote this morning to Lord Sandwich – I really feel myself offended & shall make my complaint to the King – The first Lord of the Admiralty may get the better by dint of power but I shall have my triumph in the opinion of the world.

All this to yourself entirely, my worthy friend; I only request by express (for the post will be too slow) as positive intelligence as you can give me of the time your Ship can be at Spithead, weather permitting.

You will perceive by this my confidence that your voyage as a single & leading ship, encumbered with me & my family, will be preferable to a dull convoy – I have vanity enough to beleive our company is no incumbrance.



*John Burgoyne*

In this conviction I am anxious for the original arrangement subsisting, & if you do not fail in point of time have no doubt of succeeding. I have the honour to be with perfect regard Dear Sir [&c.]

J: Burgoyne

P:S: The intelligence I give to Ld: Sandwich is undoubted – the Ship mounts 36 guns & is commanded by one MacNeale.

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN MONTAGU <sup>1</sup>

By &c

You are hereby required and directed to order the Captains and Commanders of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels under your command to endeavour to procure, at Newfoundland, all the Seamen they may be able, so soon as the Fishing Season shall be over, and to bear such Seamen as Supernumeraries for Wages and Victuals, 'til their arrival in England, where they are to dispose of them as the Admiral or Commanding Officer for the time being at the Port of their arrival, shall direct.

And to encourage such Seamen to enter more readily, you are to direct the several Commanders to acquaint them, that they will be paid the same Bounties respectively, as are given to Seamen who voluntarily enter in England, so soon as it is known, on board what Ships they may be appointed to serve, and they shall have received their 3d Muster from the Clerk of the Checque of any of His Majesty's Yards; And, to this end, you are further to direct the said Captains & Commanders to transmit to the Navy Board, correct Lists of the Names of the Seamen so entitled to Bounty, distinguishing the able from the Ordinary Seamen, that the said Board may give the necessary directions for Payment thereof accordingly. Given &c the 20th March 1777.

John Montagu Esqr  
Vice Admiral of the White &c &c  
at, & about Newfoundland.  
By &c PS.

Sandwich.  
J Buller.  
Palmerston.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 365–66.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1777

London [March 20].

The *Amazon*, Parkes, lately arrived in the River from Grenada, was taken three Times in her homeward-bound Passage by the Provincial Privateers, and as often re-taken by his Majesty's Cruizers.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, MARCH 18 TO THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1777

London [March 20].

The *Diamond* frigate, at Rhode-island, saluting on the Queen's birthday, fired two shot into the *Grand Duke of Russia* transport, killed five of the people, and wounded two others.

21 Mar.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CHESTER, MARCH 21." <sup>1</sup>

The *Hope*, Capt. Price, belonging to this port, laden with fish, oil, &c. bound from Newfoundland to the West Indies, was taken on Jan. 3, about 70 leagues to the eastward of Barbadoes, by an American privateer of 12 guns, and 80 men, and carried into Surinam; the crew of the *Hope* took their passage on the 5th from Surinam, in the brig *Betsey*, Sam Gerrich, Master, for Barbadoes, and, within sight of that island, saw a vessel which soon came up to them, and fired on them under American colours of an Union flag, on which they returned one gun, and then struck. The privateer was a schooner, called the *Rattle Snake*, David M'Cullough, Master; a party of armed men boarded the brig, took possession of her, and sent the master, mate and crew, with the papers on board the schooner. The next day a prizemaster and five of the schooner's crew were put in the brig, together with Mr. Wilbraham, of Chester, late supercargo of the *Hope*, and the Carpenter. When they had got within sight of St. Pierre, in Martinique, where they were bound, Hugh Chrisham, mate of the *Betsey*, Mr. Wilbraham, and the Carpenter, formed a scheme to take the prize, and succeeded, by seizing four of the schooner's people while they were asleep below, and afterwards securing the remaining two who were watching on deck; and soon after brought the prize into Roseau Bay, in Dominica.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 25 to March 27, 1777.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MARCH 20 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1777 <sup>1</sup>

[London] Friday, March 21.

The *Samuel*, Captain White, from Dominica, has taken and brought into Liverpool an American prize, in her return from Cadiz to Philadelphia, laden with cloaths for the rebel army, which were purchased with 400 barrels of flour.

The *Bacchus*, Forsythe, of Liverpool, from Africa, is taken by a privateer in the middle passage, and carried into St. Lucar.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO ARTHUR LEE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Passy, March 21, 1777.

We are ordered to borrow if we can 2,000,000*£* Sterling on Interest. Judge then what a Piece of Service you will do, if you can obtain a considerable Subsidy, or even a Loan without Interest.

We are also ordered to build 6 Ships of War. It is a Pleasure to find the things ordered, which we are doing without Orders.

It will be well to sound the Court of Spain on the Subject of permitting our arm'd Ships to bring Prizes into their Ports, and there dispose of them. If it cannot be done openly, in what manner we can be accomodated with the Use of their Ports, or under what Restrictions? This Government has

been of late a little nice on that head; & the Orders sent to L'Orient have occasioned Capt Wickes some Trouble.

We have good Advice from our friend of Amsterdam that in the Height of British Pride on their Summer Success, and just before they heard of any Checks, the Ambassador, Sir Joseph York, had been ordered to present a haughty Memorial to the States, importing that, notwithstanding their Promises to restrain their Subjects from supplying the Rebels, it was notorious that those Supplies were openly furnish'd by Hollanders at St. Eustatia; and that the Governor of that Island had return'd from his Fort the Salute of a Rebel Ship of War, with an equal Number of Guns; That the King justly & highly resented these Proceedings, and demanded that the States should by more severe Prohibitions restrain that Commerce; that they should declare their Disapprobation of that insolent Behaviour of their Governor, and punish him by an immediate Recall. Otherwise his Majesty, who knew what appertain'd to the Dignity of his Crown, would take proper measures to vindicate it: And he required an immediate Answer.

The States coolly return'd the Memorial with only this Observation, that when the Respect due to Sovereigns was not preserved in a Memorial, an Answer to it ought not to be expected. But The City of Amsterdam took fire at the Insolence of it, and have instructed their Deputies in the States to demand Satisfaction, by the British Court's Disavowal of the Memorial, & a Reprimand of the Ambassador. The States immediately ordered a Number of Men-of-War to be put in Commission, Perhaps since the bad News is come, England may be civil enough to make up this little Difference.

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, No. 342, LC.

22 Mar.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM <sup>1</sup>

By the Commissioners for executing  
the Office of Lord High Admiral of  
Great Britain & Ireland.

To the Rt Honble Molyneux Shuldham Esqr Vice Admiral of the Blue,  
hereby Appointed Commander in Chief of His Majestys Ships at  
Plymouth.

By Virtue of the power and Authority to Us given, We do hereby constitute and Appoint You Commander in Chief of His Majestys Ships and Vessels at Plymouth willing and requiring You forthwith to take upon You the Charge and Command of the said Ships and Vessels as Commander in Chief accordingly, hereby charging all Captains, Commanders and Officers, and Companies belonging to His Majesty's said Ships and Vessels, to be obedient to you their Commander in Chief, and You likewise to observe and follow such Orders and directions as You shall from time to time receive from Us or any other your Superior Officer for His Majesty's service.

And You are hereby empowered to hoist your Flag on board such One of His Majesty's Ships under your Command as you shall think proper,

For which this shall be your Warrant. Given under Our Hands the 22d March 1777, in the seventeenth year of His Majesty's Reign.

By Command of their Lordships

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

Sandwich

Lisburne

H. Palliser

1. Shelburne Papers, CL. Shuldham relieved Vice Admiral of the Red John Amherst.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MARCH 20 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1777

[London] Saturday, March 22.

The *Beas*, Parry, of Liverpool, has taken a privateer of 12 guns, and carried her into St. Vincent's.

The *Friends*, Capt. Holmes, from London to the West Indies, is taken by a rebel privateer; six of the crew, to whom the privateer gave the long-boat, are arrived at Barbadoes, and report, that two persons belonging to the *Friends* had entered on board the privateer, and taken with them a large sum of money, and about 2000 letters.

The *Elizabeth*, Thorpe, from London to the Leeward islands, was taken in sight of Barbadoes, by the *Rattle Snake* and *Gen. Missling* [*General Mifflin*] privateers, but was retaken, and sent into Jamaica.

The *Three Friends*, Chivers, is taken by the Rebels.

VERGENNES TO THE MARQUIS DE NOAILLES<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

[Versailles] 22 March [1777]

I see, Sir, by the letter you have addressed to M. le Comte de Maurepas, that you lean towards believing that we could admit into our ports the American privateers with their prizes. To determine your ideas on this subject I will observe to you, that, all things being equal, nothing would prevent us permitting the Americans not only to bring their prizes into our ports but also to sell them; but the treaty of commerce signed at Utrecht ties our hands on this point; the subject is treated in articles 15 and 36; in examining them you will see that we cannot permit the sale of prizes made by the Americans, nor even allow, beyond the agreed term, the privateers of that nation. We know perfectly well the exceptions we might propose to elude the execution of the treaty referred to; but the King and his Council judge it best not to raise this question in the present conjuncture, and His Majesty preferred rather to follow the conduct held up to the present, than to render his neutrality suspected by protesting against onerous and illegal engagements. For the rest, Sir, the Americans are informed of our principles in this matter, and I do not know that their discontent has been yet excited; it is for their dexterity and prudence to suggest the means of preventing the application.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 115-16, LC Photocopy.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes March 22. 1777.

. . . I am equally unfortunate in procuring Charts from Capt Weeks when the Courier returned he mentioned that he had sent them by him, but the man brought nothing. We have however found the Coast of New England but all to the southward we want. –

We have but one chance of getting the large Anchors, which is from a parcel that are expected from Spain every day. The weather has been intolerable these several days past, but the Cordage is gone to the Ship and the remainder of the Cargo (except the large Anchs) ready to be shipped. <sup>2</sup> – I had every piece of sail Cloth examined in my presence and saw the Cordage as it was making which I think I can reccommend for as good as ever was put on a Ship. The last 50 Bales which were to be sent from Orleans the 15th were not ready when the last post came away. . . .

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 72, APS.

2. Ship *Comte de Vergennes*.JOHN LLOYD TO RALPH IZARD <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear Sir –

Nantes, March 22, 1777.

The Vessels which I mentioned in my last, prove to be two ships from Philadelphia – the last of them left Reedy Island the 12th ult – they are loaded with Tobacco – another sailed with them – and seven more Vessels were loading with that commodity – bound to this Kingdom.

The Delaware has been blocked up by three British ships of War – for six Weeks – they quitted the station for Chesapeake Bay – which released between forty and fifty Vessels – most of them small – and except the three mentioned – all bound to the West Indies. They were convoyed for three days off the Coast by the *Randolph* Frigate, Captain [Nicholas] Biddle – one of the new ships built at Philadelphia – she mounts thirty six guns and carries two hundred and eighty men.

When she left the Fleet – she stood farther Northward – supposed for the Coast of New England – to pay her first compliment to the *Milford*; she is completely equipped and goes very fast – The other Frigates (the last of which is called the *Effingham*) are all ready for sea – but their crews are with the Army – under their Officers – as a Corps of Artillery . . .

Having seen a list of prizes published in the English papers – taken by the *Milford* – I have selected an account of Vessels taken by the *Alfred* Frigate, belonging to the States during one month.

November 2d, 1776. Sailed from Rhode Island with one hundred and forty Officers and Men.

12th. Took a Brig with a valuable Cargo from Liverpool to Halifax.

13th. The ship *Mellish*, a transport, bound to Quebec – with Clothing for the Army – she had twelve thousand complete suits.



16th. A Scow [snow] with Fish from Guepuy [Gaspé], to Barbadoes.

22d. Chased a transport ashore off Canso – loaded with provisions – as she could not be got off – sent the boats, and burnt her.

23d. Three transports under convoy of the *Flora* frigate.

26th. A ship from Liverpool to Halifax – mounted with ten carriage guns.

December 16th. – Arrived safe with the *Mellish* in Nantasket Road, with one hundred and forty prisoners on board, among whom are the Attorney General of Canada, his lady, and family – with several officers and soldiers.

1. Deas, ed., *Correspondence of Ralph Izard*, I, 264–67.

23 Mar. (Sunday)

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGoyNE TO  
CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir [Hartford Street] Sunday afternoon March 23 1777

There never were more pains to obtain the protection of the God Apollo than I have been forced to use to gain my point in respect to the Apollo under your command – I have however succeeded in the Contest & you will receive sailing orders for Quebec forthwith. I have fought through ill humour, manoeuvre & cabal of all sorts; at last a Scotch banker had the modesty to declare it impossible to convoy 50,000 to Plymouth in four days – I have even overturned his machinations which possibly led to give the freight to a Countryman & have secured it for you by getting an order from the Treasury to convey it in post Chaises with a hired guard – You may depend upon the money being at Plymouth on friday next. I take leave of the King thursday & shall be with you Saturday morning – The King is very impatient that we should sail as soon as possible.

I am very sorry to encumber you with so much baggage as will be delivered with this letter, but it was indispensable – & the bedding which is the most bulky part will be for my use on board without taking up more room than our Cottts. I must request you will order it to be taken care of till a Servant of mine arrives.

I will likewise request you to order preparation to be made for me at the best Inn at Plymouth & should rather wish to have a bed in a private house if such can be hired for my stay.

I am with truest regard Dear Sir [&c.]

J: Burgoyne.

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

24 Mar.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN THOMAS PRINGLE, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas the Merchants trading to Portugal, Spain and the Mediterranean, have requested that a Convoy may be appointed to proceed with

the Trade bound thither, from the Port of London, all of which it is expected, are now at Spithead, and that the said Convoy may be permitted to call at Falmouth, for the Out Port Ships which may be there in readiness to sail; And Whereas we think fit, that the Ship you command shall perform the above Service instead of the *Blonde*, which was intended to do it; You are therefore, hereby required and directed to make enquiry for the said Trade, and taking them under your Convoy, put to Sea with the very first opportunity of Wind and Weather, and proceeding down Channel, call off Falmouth for any Ships and Vessels which may be there in readiness to join you, and taking them under your Convoy, also make the best of your way (consistent with their safety) towards the places of their respective destinations; And having seen such of them as may be bound to Oporto and Lisbon, as near to those Ports as may be necessary for their security, and to the Streight's mouth, such as may be bound up the Mediterranean, You are to proceed without loss of time to Antigua, in search of Vice Admiral Young Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, and not finding him there, to make the best of your way to join him wherever he may be, And upon so doing, deliver to him the inclosed Pacquet, and follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

You are to be particularly attentive to the Ships and Vessels under your Convoy, keeping them together by every means in your power, And on no account leaving them, upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep Company with you, as we expect that, in the Course of your Voyage, you accommodate your progress to the worst sailing Ship which may be under your Convoy.

You are at the same time, to take all possible care, to give the Masters of the said Ships and Vessels, such Orders and directions as you shall judge most likely to prevent them from seperating from you, til you make the Signal for that purpose; And in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part Company with you, or disobey your Orders, You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their names, with the Circumstances attending such seperation or disobedience; that the Merchants may have full information of it, and take such measures thereupon, as they shall judge necessary. Given &c the 24th March 1777.

Capt Pringle – *Ariadne* – Spithead.

By &c  
PS.

J Buller.  
Palmerston.  
H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 373-75.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGoyNE TO  
CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir

This letter will be delivered to you by Mr Rowlby a very amiable friend of mine who accompanies a young midshipman, brother to Lord Moreton, in order to deliver him safe into your hands. The boy's looks speak in his favour; his character & talents will do so more strongly. I have congratulated

Lady Moreton upon her good fortune in having her son placed in the *Apollo* among a set of spirited & agreeable lads of little more than his age, & where the Captain while he trains them to be officers treats them like a parent.

Mr Rowlby will deliver to you a trifling Cup which I must request you will do me the honour to accept for the purpose of drinking Mrs Pownoll & your fair daughter's healths during our voyage, & exercising Sir Francis's talents for the Negus - <sup>2</sup> You must allow me in friendship to say I will take no denial for granting me this small favour.

I wrote to you at length yesterday by the person charged to deliver my baggage at Plymouth who I conclude will arrive before this. I have therefore only to add my assurances of the respect & affection with which I have the honor to be Dr Sir [&c.]

J: Burgoyne

P:S: I shall certainly be at Plymouth on Saturday  
Hartford Street March 24 1777

1. Sir Henry Clinton Papers, CL.

2. Sir Francis Negus, reputed inventor of the wine drink which bears his name.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, MARCH 24, 1777

London [March 24].

Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at New York, to his Friend at Glasgow, dated Feb. 2, 1777, brought by the *General Howe*.

"I arrived here this Day from St. Eustatia, where I saw many Rebel Vessels, and particularly a Brigantine called the *Andrew Doria*, (one of them that engaged the *Glasgow* Frigate last Summer) mounts 16 Guns and 104 Men, commanded by one Robertson [Isaiah Robinson], a Whitehaven Man, intirely on the States Employ, came to St. Eustatia with 70,000 l. in Specie, to purchase Clothes and Ammunition for the Rebel Troops, and got loaded in a few Days."

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CAPT. ROBERTSON,  
DATED OFF DUNGENESS, MARCH 24." <sup>1</sup>

On the 9th of February I fell in with an American privateer, in lat. 30. long. 76 west, being in company with Capt. Boze, of the ship *Elizabeth's Blessing* for London, and Capt. Baker, in a snow belonging to Bristol; he took Capt. Baker in the evening, and Capt. Boze the next morning; and chased me from eight in the morning until night, when I got clear of him.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 25 to March 27, 1777.

SILAS DEANE TO BEAUMARCHAIS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Paris] 24th March 1777

I find myself obliged to urge you to give most prompt and serious attention to the ideas I communicated to you some days ago on the subject of a loan for America. Without this aid, it is impossible for us to answer for events, the outcome of which is nevertheless of almost infinite importance.

Relying on your ability and on your zeal for the cause of the Americans and knowing how great and generous is the interest you take in it, I would like to think that you will neglect nothing at this critical moment, when, unless aided by some essential encouragement sent from Europe, our very successes will force my fellow citizens to accept the conditions which are about to be offered them. For my part nothing is further from my thoughts than to see my country again, if ever it is dependent in any way on England. I have always had the pleasure of knowing that your sentiments are in harmony with mine on the subject of America, and the real satisfaction of receiving from you most important aid on every occasion. You are also at this moment yourself interested in redoubling your efforts, for if a reconciliation takes place at any price, England will immediately turn her resentment and forces against France, which she does not dare to do now, and which she will never be able to undertake, if she finds herself forever separated from America. One of our proverbs says, "A friend in need, is a friend indeed." I will make no reflection on it, but be assured that without aid, and without substantial aid, it will be impossible to continue the war against Great Britain and her allies any longer. It cannot be expected. I am quite sure that the mere thought of our surrendering affects you sensibly; as for me, I will not think of it, preferring not to live for a moment after so great a misfortune. I shall see you tomorrow morning, when I shall further enlarge on this subject, which is of the utmost importance, and extremely urgent. I wish you good night and am Your &c.

Silas Deane

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 280, LC Photocopy.

DR. ALEXANDER BAYNES TO COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

[Copy]

Honble Gentn

I beg leave to acquaint You that I have received from the *Levant* 72 Prisoners, most of them very ill of Billious Fevers, their disorders being much aggravated from the total want of Bedding & the extreme filth of the Privateer, insomuch that they are swarming with Vermin; I have taken every precaution possible to prevent any infection from spreading among Our Men, by keeping them intirely seporate; I have lost two, but have had the pleasure of seeing 15 so well recovered as to be able to discharge them off the Sick List; it was my intention to have discharged them to the *Alarm*, but Capt [William] Hay did not chuse to receive them, I therefore applied to him, by Letter (a Copy of which I have enclosed) to know how they were to be disposed of, and received the enclosed Orders I accordingly appointed No 23 [ward] for those People; Capt Hay's Purser demanded of me Bedding for the Men discharged; I mentioned to Capt Hay the small Quantity I had in Store which might be very much wanted for the Sick, but he sent me the enclosed Order, which I accordingly complied with; I beg leave to submit it to Your consideration, whether a further supply of Bedding is not necessary, also to receive Your Instructions in every point relative to these People,

as it is most likely We shall have many more of them. I am Honble Gentn  
Gibraltar 24th March 1777 Alex<sup>r</sup> Baynes<sup>2</sup>

[Endorsed in Commissioners' Office] Originals sent to the Admiralty the  
18 April 1777 –

1. In Letters to Commissioners for taking care of Sick & Hurt Seamen, NMM.
2. On March 20 Captain Hay had ordered Dr. Baynes to keep the prisoners from the Pennsylvania privateer brig *General Montgomery* at the hospital " 'til such Time as I can dispose of them in the Squadron" and to set aside "a seperate Ward to be kept for that purpose." Hay wrote again on March 21 directing the doctor "to supply the Prisoners that are and may be discharged from Your Books at the Hospital with the same Beds that they have laid on during the Time they were Sick, till such Time as I can purchase Straw for them. . . ." In Letters to Commissioners for taking care of Sick & Hurt Seamen, NMM.

LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

Remarks Monday March 24d 1777

[1 A.M.] Carried Away F. Top Sail Sheet

[4 A.M.] Fresh Gails & a Large Sea

[11 A.M.] hove too With the Mn T. Sail to the Mast,

Nothing More Remarkable this Day

Lattd in by Obsn 46. .21. N

First part of these 24 hours begins With Fresh

Breezes & thick Cloudy Weather –

At. 2 P.M. The Brigg *Dolphin* Vear'd her papers on board

In a Kegg, Examined the Same & found him A friend to  
America,

At. 3, Sent the papers on board in the Kegg

Made Sail & Stood to the Eastward

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

25 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST, PLYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 25 Mar 1777

I have communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letter of the 21st inst inclosing the State & Condition of His Majts Ships & Vessels under your Command also a Letter to Mr Winn, a Merchant at Plymouth, giving an Account of the *Albion* being driven into Mounts Bay in distress, & informing their Lordships that the *Somerset* is Sail'd from Plymouth & that Lieut [James] Kinnaer is Arrived at that Port, with a Ship call'd the *Montgomery*, which sail'd from Sheeps-cut in the Province of Massachuset's Bay 3rd last Month with Lumber, Tobacco, Oil & Furs for Bourdeaux & was taken by the *Albion* the 15 Inst 50 Leagues to the Northward of Cape Ortagal, And of Capt [John Carter] Allen having taken all the Crew out of her, except the Cook One Seaman, and a Surgeon who was going Passenger in her to France all of whom you have detained 'til you know their Lordships pleasure concerning them; And in return, I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you that you are to cause the Crew of the said Vessel to be entered as part of the Complement of such of the Ships at Plymouth as want Men,

and to Set the Master ashore agreeable to the Prohibit[o]ry Act as the Vessel was employ'd only on Commerce and not as an Arm'd Vessel I am &c.

P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 263-64.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes March 25. 1777.

I am still without any of your Favours which I confess gives me great uneasiness as I am apprehensive that my Letters have miscarried. The last I received from Mr Deane which was 23 days in coming encreases this Suspicion: if you have not recvd one by every post this must be the Case as I have written by every one.

I have the pleasure to inform you that the anchors are arrived from Spain and those we wanted are procured. I have also recvd the Charts Capt Wickes mentioned to have sent, but those Mr Deane sent are not to be found.

I long since thought that the officers of Mr DuCoudrays party were either gone or had given up all thoughts of going, but there are now 7 of them with 2 Servants who apply for passage, and say they have recvd advice that they were to pass on board the *Count de Vergennes*. The Answer given them is that no person is to go in that Ship without particular orders. I therefore beg to be informed whether you will consent to this or not and if you do, whether their passages are to be gratis or not

Please to send a Copy of the orders properly signed. I have a Copy but it will not be of any effect without your signature, please to have the word Jack (for the Signal,) translated petit pavilion and not flamme which signifies pendant: I took this liberty with those given to the Capt of the *Mercury*.

I send this Letter under cover to Mr Montieu to be sure that you have it. I request to have a particular Direction for my future Letters.

I have the honour to be with great Respect Gentlemen [&c.]

Jon<sup>a</sup> Williams Jun<sup>r</sup>

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 74, APS.

LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States* <sup>1</sup>

Remarks Tuesday March 25, 1777

At. 1. A.M. Made a Sail & Gave Chace at. 2. Came up With the Chace, fir'd two Guns & She Struck,

At. 4. Sent the boat on board With Mr Bullfinch brought the Capt of the Ship & his hands on board all to one man & two boys, & three Gentr passengers & one Lady

At. 10. Man'd the prize & made Sail & Stood to the Eastd

Nothing More Remarkable this day -

Lattd in by Obsn 46. 30 N

First part of these 24 hours begins With Close Thick Weather.

At 8. in Company With our prize, & Went on board Took  
out of the Ship 7 Firkin Butter 1 Jibb 1 Studing sail, Handks  
17 pr Shoes 4 Quoils Riging & 3 bolts Canvas.

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

26 Mar.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAINS OF SHIPS UNDER HIS COMMAND <sup>1</sup>

By The Honble Captn Willm Cornwallis  
of his Majestys Ship *Isis*

You are hereby required & Directed to keep Company with his Majesty's Ship *Isis* under my Command & Follow & Obey all such Signals as may be made from time to time on board her –

It is to be Observed that the Convoy are to be in the Center the *Camel* on the Starboard Wing the *Bute* on the Larboard Wing & the *Swift* in the Rear – If I make the Signal for any of the Men of War to lead the Convoy, she is Immediately to make sail up & take my Place, after which no Attention is to be paid to my Motions, whither I make Sail, Tack, &c but the Convoy to continue the course, unless I make Signals which the leading Ship is to repeat; but when I lead the Fleet the *Camel* is to repeat all Signals –

If I would have any Particular Ship to come within hail, I will make the Signal for Speaking with the Captain and Hoist a Striped red and White Flag at the Mizzen Peak

If I would have any Particular Ship speak a strange sail, standing into the Fleet I will make the Signal for speaking with the Captain & hoist the Chaceing Flag for the Quarter at the Ensign Staff –

If I would have any Particular Ship make Sail & make the Land, I will make the Signal for speaking with the Captain, and Hoist the Chaceing Flag for the Quarter at the Ensign Staff & a Red Pendant over it

If I would have any Particular Ship to take any of the Convoy that may be disabled in tow, I will make the Signal for speaking with the Captain, & hoist a White Flag with a Red Cross at the Mizzen Peak –

If I would have any Particular Ship to lead the Convoy, I will make the Signal for speaking with the Captain & hoist a white Flag with a Red Cross at the Ensign Staff If I would have the Ship return to her Station again, I will hoist a Flag half red half White at the Ensign Staff.

If I would have any Particular Ship to go a head as far as to Observe Signals Plainly, I will make the Signal for speaking with the Captain, & hoist a Flag, Quartered red & White at the Ensign Staff

If to keep a Stern the Same distance a Flag Quartered blue & yellow at the same Place –

For all other Signals I Refer you to the General Printed Fighting, & Sailing Instructions

Given under my Hand on board His  
Majesty's Ship *Isis* at St Hellens the  
26th March 1777

W Cornwallis

To The Captains of his Majs  
Ship *Camel*, *Bute* & *Swift* Sloop

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Order Book, NYHS.

#### COUNT DE WELDEREN TO GEORGE III <sup>1</sup>

Copy of a memorial delivered under the orders of the States General, to the King of Great Britain, by the Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from their High Mightinesses.

Sire,

It is with the most profound respect, that the under-signed Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of their High Mightinesses, in consequence of the orders which he hath received, hath the honour to represent to your Majesty, that the memorial which your Ambassador hath presented to their High Mightinesses on the 21st of last month,<sup>2</sup> hath touched them very sensibly; and that they find themselves obliged to make complaint of the reproaches which are contained in it, as if their High Mightinesses were to be suspected of a will and intention of amusing your Majesty by amicable assurances, which they have falsified by their acts; also of the menacing tone which reigns in that memorial, and appears to their High Mightinesses too highly strained, beyond that which is the accorded and accustomed manner, and that ought to take place between two sovereign and independent powers, and especially between two neighbouring powers, which have been of so many years continuance, united by the ties of good harmony and mutual friendship.

Their High Mightinesses trust that on all occasions, and particularly in respect to the unfortunate troubles of your Majesty's colonies in America, they have held a conduct towards your Majesty, which has been expected from a good neighbour, and a friendly and affectionate power.

Their High Mightinesses, Sire, hold your Majesty's friendship in the highest estimation, and wish to do every thing in their power (as far as the honour and dignity of their state will permit them to go) to cultivate it still more and more; but they cannot at the same time so far restrain themselves, as to disguise the very poignant sensation, with which that memorial hath impressed them.

It is alone from the motive of demonstrating to your Majesty every possible regard, and to prove that their High Mightinesses will not neglect any thing, which may serve to investigate properly the truth of the facts, from whence the complaints made to them seem to have arisen, that they



have resolved to institute an enquiry in a manner the most summary, and cut off all trainings of delay.

To this end their High Mightinesses, passing by the ordinary and usual form in like cases, requiring a report in writing from their officers and others employed in their colonies, have already dispatched their orders to the Commandant of St. Eustatia, to render himself within the Republic without delay, and as soon as possible, to give the necessary information of all that has passed within the island of St. Eustatia, and that which hath come to his knowledge relative to the American Colonies and their vessels, during the period of his command, and to lay his conduct, touching that matter, before the eyes of their High Mightinesses.

The under-signed is charged by his orders to bring the information of this resolution to your Majesty, as also that their High Mightinesses make no difficulty of disavowing, in the most express manner, every act or mark of honour which may have been given by their officers, or by any of their servants, to the vessels of your Majesty's colonies of North-America, or that they may give hereafter, so far as those acts or marks of honour may be of such a nature, as that any can conclude from them that it is intended thereby, in the least degree, to recognize the independence of those colonies.<sup>3</sup>

The under-signed is also further charged to inform your Majesty, that their High Mightinesses have, in consequence, given their orders to their Governours and Councils in the West-Indies, and have enjoined them afresh, in the strongest terms, to observe exactly the placards and orders against the exportation of military stores to the American colonies of your Majesty, and to see them executed most rigorously.

(Signed)

Welderen.

Dated London, March 26, 1777.

1. Almon, ed., *Remembrancer*, V, 93-94.

2. *Ibid.*, 92-93:

Translation of a Memorial presented by Sir Joseph Yorke to the States General, on the twenty-first day of February, 1777.

Since the commencement of the unnatural rebellion, which has broke out in the English colonies against the legal constitution of the Mother Country, the undersigned Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the King of Great Britain, has had frequent occasions to address himself to your High Mightinesses, in the name of his Master, to engage them by all motives of national interest, of good neighbourhood, of friendship, and finally of treaties, to put a stop to the clandestine commerce which is carried on between their subjects and the rebels. If the measures which your High Mightinesses have thought proper to take had been as efficacious as your assurances have been amicable, the undersigned would not now have been under the disagreeable necessity of bringing to the cognizance of your High Mightinesses, facts of the most serious nature.

The King hath hitherto borne, with unexampled patience, the irregular conduct of your subjects in their interested commerce at St. Eustatia, as also in America. His Majesty has always flattered himself, that in giving time to your High Mightinesses to examine to the bottom this conduct, so irregular and so insufferable, they would have taken measures necessary to repress the abuse, to restrain their subjects within bounds, and to make them respect the rights and friendship of Great-Britain.

The complaints which I have orders to make to their High Mightinesses, are founded upon authentic documents annexed to this Memorial, where their High Mightinesses will see with astonishment, and I doubt not at the same time with displeasure, that their new Governor, M. Van Graaf [Johannes De Graaf], after having permitted an

illicit commerce at St. Eustatia, hath passed his forgetfulness of his duty to the point of conniving at the Americans in their hostile equipments, and the permitting the seizure of an English vessel, by an American pirate, within cannon shot of that island. And in aggravation to the affront given to the English nation, and to all the powers of Europe, to return from the fortress of his government the salute of a rebel flag. In return to the amicable representations made by the president of the neighbouring island of St. Christopher, on these facts of notoriety, M. Van Graaf has answered in a manner the most vague and unsatisfactory, refusing to enter at all into the subject, or into an explanation of the matter with a Member of his Majesty's Council of St. Christopher's, dispatched by the President for that purpose to St. Eustatia.

After exhibiting the documents annexed, nothing remains with me but to add, that the King who had read them, not with less surprize than indignation, hath ordered me to expressly demand of your High Mightinesses, a formal disavowal of the salute by Fort Orange, at St. Eustatia, to the rebel ship, the dismissal and immediate recall of Governor Van Graaf, and to declare further, on the part of his Majesty, that until that satisfaction is given, they are not to expect that his Majesty will suffer himself to be amused by mere assurances, or that he will delay one instant to take such measures as he shall think due to the interests and dignity of his Crown.

(Signed) Jos. Yorke.

Given at the Hague, Feb. 21, 1777.

3. See Volume 7 regarding salute to the Continental Navy brig *Andrew Doria*.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CHRISTOPHER D'OYLY, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Admiralty Office 26 Mar 1777.

The Navy Board, having appropriated the *Silver Eel* Transport, of 14 Guns, to receive and carry to Quebec such part of the Stores as cannot be taken onboard the *Proteus* and *Porpoise* Sloops; And the said Transport being capable of receiving about 40 Soldiers with one or two Officers, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you therewith, for the Information of Lord George Germain, and to desire if there is an occasion to send any Troops to Quebec, the numbers above-mentioned may be ordered onboard the said Transport, the better to enable her to defend herself against the Rebel Cruizers, in case she should by any unavoidable accident separate from the Convoy. I am &c

P. Stephens

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 149-50.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN PHILEMON POWNOLL, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c

You are hereby required and directed to receive on board the Ship you command, Major General Burgoyne with his Suite, Attendants, Servants and Baggage, and then putting to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather, after you shall have received on board, the Supernumeraries, and they shall be paid the Wages and Bounties herein after mentioned, make the best of your way with them to Quebec, victualling all the said persons during their continuance on board, as the Ship's Company.

Upon your Arrival at Quebec you are, if you happen to be the Senior Captain of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the River St Lawrence, to employ the Ship you command,

and also the said Ships and Vessels, in such manner (not interfering with any particular orders from the Rt Honble Lord Viscount Howe Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in North America) as, upon Consultation with the Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Land Forces in the province of Quebec, shall appear to be best for assisting and furthering the operations of the said Forces, and for the good of His Majesty's Service in general, And to continue to act in like manner until you receive further orders from his Lordship; But, if you do not happen to be the Senior Captain of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the said River, you are to put yourself under the Command of the Senior Captain of them for the time being and follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

*Blonde*  
*Proteus*  
*Porpoise Slo*

And Whereas we intend that 200 of the Seamen and Landmen who have been raised for His Majesty's Fleet, shall proceed to Quebec in the Ship you command and also in those named in the Margin, which will shortly follow you, to the intent that they may replace such Men as may have been, or shall be, lent from His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the River St Lawrence, for service on the Lakes, in order, the better to enable those Ships and Vessels to execute any Service on which it may be judged proper to employ them, And Whereas we have directed Vice Admiral [John] Amherst to cause 30 of the said Men, and also as many more as she can conveniently carry to be put on board the Ship you command, in order to their being carried in her to Quebec for the above purpose, You are hereby further required and directed to receive the said Men on board, and to carry them to Quebec accordingly, so soon as they shall have been paid 2 months wages advance, and also the bounties, to which they may be respectively entitled, for which we have this day sent Orders to the Navy Board; bearing the said men, from the time of their coming into the Service respectively, on a supernumerary List for wages, until they shall be otherwise disposed of, and for victuals, during their continuance on board; and disposing of them, or of such of them as may be necessary, on your Arrival at Quebec, in the manner abovementioned, unless there should be any Sea Officer there Senior to yourself, in which case, you are to leave them to his disposal, and he is hereby required and directed to dispose of them as abovementioned accordingly. Given &c the 26th March 1777.

Captn Pownoll – *Apollo* – Plymouth.

By &c

PS.

Sandwich.

J Buller.

H. Palliser.

LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

St James's March 26. 1777.

I have laid before The King Your Lordships Letter & Inclosures relative to the Seizure of a Dutch Dogger called the *Eendragt* with a Cargo of 1500 Barrels of Gunpowder. The Quantity being so large and some Suspicion being suggested by the Master of the *Wells* Cutter that the whole was destined for His Majesty's Rebellious Colonies, it may be adviseable to direct the Vessel to be detained for a few Days to give Time for farther Enquiry, & when I learn the Result of that Enquiry from Your Lordships I will receive His Maty's farther Pleasure thereon. I am &c

Suffolk.

1. PRO, Foreign Office, 95/355, 329.

WILLIAM KNOX TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Mr Stephens.

Whitehall 26th March 1777.

Sir,

Several more Recruits for the Battalion of the 60th Regiment at St Augustine being arrived from Germany, it is intended that a further number than was at first proposed should embark on board the *Springfield*, if she can receive them after the Ordnance Stores and Indian Presents are on board; I am therefore directed by Lord George Germain to desire you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to give the necessary Orders to provide Accomodations for, and receive on board the said Transport, 6 Commissioned Officers 53 Non Commissioned Officers and private Men, together with Two Officers Wives, four Soldiers Wives and about 15 Tons of Cloathing and Baggage, if the said Transport has room for the whole, or so many of the private Men as can be received after the Officers and the Officers Wives are accommodated. — I am &ca

W<sup>m</sup> Knox.

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 2, 345-46.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Most Secret No 55

My Lord

Paris March 26th 1777

The Vessel I alluded to, in my Conversation with M de Vergennes, is certainly sailed from Havre; She is a Brig laden with Ammunition and Cannon, as she is a bad Sailer, she will not attempt to make the American Coast, but goes to St Domingo. It is however not to be doubted; that the Cannon and Ammunition are designed for the Rebels. . . .

I hope I do not go out of my Province when I inform You, that there are two Ships building in Holland, upon quite a new Construction, and mounting from thirty, to forty Guns, they are built by french agents for the use of the Rebels. I do not know in what Port, but from the Peculiarity of their Construction, that will be easily known.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/301, 426-28.

27 Mar.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM BRISTOL, MARCH 27." <sup>1</sup>

The *Cornwall*, Bruce, from Jamaica for this place, is put into Antigua, after being taken and plundered by a privateer of 28 guns and 70 marines, who took out her elephants teeth, cables, and anchors, and every thing that could be of use.

1. *London Chronicle*, March 27 to March 29, 1777.

INSTRUCTIONS TO COMMANDERS OF BRITISH LETTERS OF MARQUE <sup>1</sup>

GEORGE R.

(L. S.)

Instructions for the Commanders of private Ships and Vessels employed in Trade, or retained in our Service, which shall or may have Commissions pursuant to an Act passed in Parliament in the Seventeenth Year of our Reign, enabling our Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain, to grant Commissions for the seizing and taking all Ships and Vessels, Goods, Wares, and Merchandizes, Chattels and Effects whatsoever, belonging to the Inhabitants of the Colonies now in Rebellion; and all Ships and Vessels, with their Cargoes, Apparel and Furniture, belonging to our Subjects in Great Britain or Ireland, which shall be found trading to or from the said Colonies, contrary to the Provisions of an Act passed in Parliament in the Sixteenth year of our Reign, prohibiting all Trade and commerce with the Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pensilvania, The three lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, during the continuance of the present Rebellion within the said Colonies respectively. Given at our Court at St James's, the 27th day of March 1777, in the Seventeenth Year of Our Reign.

Article  
1st

That the Commanders of private Ships and Vessels employed in Trade, or retained in our Service, being duly commissioned thereto, shall and may lawfully set upon by force of Arms, and subdue and take the Ships and Vessels, Goods, Wares, and Merchandizes, of the Inhabitants of the said Rebellious Colonies; and all Ships and Vessels, with their Cargoes, Apparel and Furniture belonging to our Subjects in Great Britain or Ireland, which shall be found trading to or from the said Colonies, contrary to the Provisions of the said Act. But so as that no Hostility be committed, nor prize attacked, seized or taken within the Harbours of Princes and States in Amity with us, or in their Rivers or Roads within Shot of their Cannon unless by Permission of such Princes or States, or of their Commanders or Governors in Chief in such places.

Art. 2d That the Commanders of Ships and Vessels so Commissioned as aforesaid, shall bring all Ships, Vessels, and Goods which they shall seize and take into such Port of this our Realm of England or some other Port of our Dominions not in Rebellion as shall be most convenient for them, in order to have the same legally adjudged in our High Court of Admiralty of England, or before the Judges of any other Admiralty Court lawfully authorised within our Dominions.

Art. 3d That after such Ships, Vessels and Goods, shall be taken and brought into any Port, the Taker, or one of His Chief Officers, or some other person present at the Capture, shall be obliged to bring or send, as soon as possibly may be, three or four of the principal of the Company (whereof the Master, Mate or Boatswain, to be always two) of every Ship or Vessel so brought into Port, before the Judge of our High Court of Admiralty of England, or his Surrogate, or before the Judge of such other Admiralty Court, within our Dominions, lawfully authorised as aforesaid, or such as shall be lawfully commissioned in that Behalf, to be sworn and examined upon such interrogatories as shall tend to the discovery of the truth concerning the Interest or Property of such Ship or Ships, Vessel or Vessels, and of the Goods, Merchandizes, or other Effects found therein; and the Taker shall be farther obliged, at the time he produceth the Company to be examined, and before any Monition shall be issued, to bring and deliver into the Hands of the Judge of the High Court of Admiralty of England, his Surrogate, or the Judge of such other Admiralty Court, within our Dominions lawfully authorised, or others commissioned as aforesaid, all such Papers, Passes, Sea briefs, Charter parties, Bills of Lading, Cockets, Letters, and other Documents and Writings, as shall be delivered up, or found on Board any Ship. The Taker, or one of his Chief Officers, or some other person who was present at the Capture, and saw the said papers and writings delivered up, or otherwise found on Board at the time of the Capture, making Oath that the said papers and writings are brought and delivered in, as they were received, and taken without any Fraud, Addition, Subduction or Embezzlement, or otherwise to Account for the same upon Oath, to the Satisfaction of the Court.

Art. 4th That the Ships, Vessels, Goods, Wares, Merchandizes, and Effects taken by virtue of our Commissions as aforesaid, shall be kept and preserved, and no part of them shall be sold, spoiled, wasted or diminished, and that the Bulk thereof shall not be broken before Judgment be given in the High Court of Admiralty of England, or some other Court of Admiralty lawfully authorised in that Behalf, that the Ships, Goods, and Merchandizes are Lawful Prize.

Art. 5th That if any Ship or Vessel belonging to us, or our Subjects, shall be found in Distress, by being in Fight, set upon, or taken by the Enemy, or by Reason of any other Accident, the Commanders, Officers, and Company of such Merchant Ships, or Vessels as shall be so commissioned as aforesaid,

shall use their best endeavours, and give Aid and Succour to all such Ship and Ships, and shall, to the utmost of their power, labour to free the same from the Enemy, or any other Distress.°

Art. 6th That that the Commanders of such Ships and Vessels before the taking out Commissions, shall make application in Writing, subscribed with their Hands to our High Admiral of Great Britain, or our Commissioners for executing that Office for the time being, or the Lieutenant or Judge of the said High Court of Admiralty, or his Surrogate, and shall therein set forth a particular, true and exact Description of the Ship or Vessel employed in Trade, or retained in our Service, for which such Commission is requested, specifying the Cargo thereof, the Burthen of such Ship or Vessel, and the Number and Nature of the Guns, & what other warlike Furniture and Ammunition are on board the same, to what Place the Ship belongs, and on what Voyage bound, and the Name or Names of the principal Owner or Owners of such Ship and Vessel, and the Number of Men intended to be put on board the same, and for what Time they are victualled, also the Names of the Commander and Officers.

Art. 7th That the Commanders of Ships and Vessels having Commissions as aforesaid, shall hold and keep, and are hereby enjoined to hold and keep, a Correspondence by all conveniences and upon all occasions, with our High Admiral of Great Britain, or our Commissioners for executing that Office for the time being, or their Secretary; so as from time to time to render and give him or them not only an Account or Intelligence of their Captures and Proceedings by virtue of such Commissions, but also of whatsoever else shall occur unto them, or be discovered and declared to them, or found out by them by Examination of, or Conference with any Mariners or Passengers of or in the Ships or Vessels taken, or by any other ways and means whatsoever, touching or concerning the Designs of the Enemy, or any of their Fleets, Ships, Vessels or Parties; and of the Stations, Seas, Ports and Places, and of their Intents therein; and of what Ships or Vessels of the Enemy bound out or Home, or where cruising, as they shall hear of; and of what else material in these Cases may arrive at their Knowledge; to the end such Course may be thereupon taken, and such Orders given as may be requisite.

Art. 8th That no Commander of any Ship or Vessel having a Commission as aforesaid, shall presume, as they will answer it at their peril, to wear any Jack, Pendant, or other Ensign, or Colours usually born by our Ships; but that besides the Colours usually born by Merchant Ships, they do wear a Red Jack with the Union Jack described in the Canton at the upper Corner thereof near the Staff.

Art. 9th That no Commander of any Ship or Vessel so Commissioned as aforesaid, shall ransom or agree to ransom or quit or set at liberty any

Ship or Vessel, or their Cargoes, which shall be seized and taken, upon Pain of being deemed and adjudged to be guilty of Piracy, Felony and Robbery upon the Seas, and to be punished accordingly.

Art. 10th That no Prisoners shall be ransomed by the Takers.

Art. 11th That the Commanders of Merchant Ships Commissioned as aforesaid, shall send an Account of all the Prisoners whom they shall take, with their Numbers, Names and Qualities to our Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral for the time being, or their Secretary: And with Respect to the Masters and other Persons, and all such others of the Mariners and Crews of the said Prize Ships as shall be seized and taken, not having any pretended Commission for the committing Hostilities upon the High Seas against us and our Subjects, the Takers shall cause them to be put on Board any of our Ships or Vessels of War, and that such of the said Prisoners shall be entered upon the Book or Books of our said Ships or Vessels as they, the Commanders of our Ships, shall respectively think fit: And with Respect to all Prisoners who shall not be put on Board and entered upon the Books of our Ships or Vessels of War, the Takers shall detain or cause them to be detained and kept in or on Board any Ship or Ships, Vessel or Vessels, until the arrival of such last mentioned Ships & Vessels in some Port in Great Britain or Ireland, or in any part of America not in Rebellion: And with Respect to Prisoners taken on Board Armed Ships or Vessels fitted out with Commission by the pretended authority of the Assembly calling themselves The Congress of the United States of America, or which may or shall be fitted out by any other pretended authority whatsoever contrary to Law, for the committing Hostilities upon the High Seas against us and our Subjects, the Takers shall deliver and cause such Prisoners on their arrival in any Port or Place of Great Britain or Ireland, or elsewhere in His Majesty's Dominions not in Rebellion, to be delivered to the Care and Custody of some Civil Magistrate of such Port or Place, or to such of our Officers and Commanders or others there, who are hereby authorised and required to receive the said Prisoners.

Art. 12th That in case the Commander of any Ship, Commissioned as aforesaid, shall act contrary to these Instructions, or any such farther Instructions of which he shall have due Notice, he shall forfeit his Commission to all intents and Purposes, and shall, together with his Bail, be proceeded against according to Law, and be condemned in Costs and Damages.

Art. 13th That all Commanders of Ships and Vessels so Commissioned, shall by every opportunity send exact Copies of their Journals to the Secretary of the Admiralty, and proceed to the Condemnation of their Prizes as soon as may be, and without Delay.

Art. 14th That Commanders of Ships and Vessels so Commissioned, shall, upon due notice being given to them, observe all such other Instructions and



Orders as we shall think fit to direct from time to time for the better carrying on this Service.

Art. 15th That all Persons who shall violate these, or any other of our Instructions, shall be severely punished, and also required to make full Reparation to Persons injured contrary to our Instructions, for all Damages they shall sustain by any Capture, Embezzlement, Demurrage, or otherwise.

Art. 16th That before any Commissions for the Purposes aforesaid shall issue under Seal, Bail shall be given with Sureties, before the Lieutenant and Judge of our High Court of Admiralty of England, or his Surrogate, in the Sum of Three Thousand Pounds Sterling, if the Ship carries above One Hundred and Fifty Men, and if a less Number, in the Sum of Fifteen Hundred Pounds Sterling, which Bail shall be to the Effect and in the Form following:

Which Day, Time and Place personally appeared  
and

who submitting themselves to the Jurisdiction of the High Court of Admiralty of England, obliged themselves, their Heirs, Executors, and Administrators, in the Sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Pounds of Lawful Money of Great Britain, to this Effect, that is to say, That Whereas is duly authorised by Commission, with the Ship called the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Burthen of about \_\_\_\_\_ Tons,

whereof he the said

goeth Master, by Force of Arms to attack, surprize, seize, and take all Ships and Vessels, Goods, Wares and Merchandize, Chattels and Effects, belonging to the Inhabitants of the Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, now in Rebellion, and all Ships and Vessels with their Cargoes, Apparel and Furniture, belonging to His Majesty's Subjects in Great Britain or Ireland, which shall be found trading to or from the said Colonies, contrary to the Provisions of an Act passed in the last Session of Parliament, intituled, An Act to prohibit all Trade and Intercourse with the said Colonies.

And whereas he the said

hath a Copy of Certain Instructions approved of and passed by His Majesty in Council, as by the Tenor of the said Commission and Instructions thereto relating more at large appeareth. If therefore nothing be done by the said

or any of His Officers, Mariners or Company, contrary to the true Meaning of the said Instructions, and of all other Instructions which may be issued in like Manner hereafter, and whereof due Notice shall be given him, but that the Commission aforesaid, and the

said Instructions, shall in all particulars be well and duly observed and performed, as far as they shall the said Ship, Master and Company any way concern; and if they shall give full Satisfaction for any damage or injury which shall be done by them, or any of them, to any of His Majesty's Subjects, or of foreign States, in Amity with His Majesty, and also shall duly and truly pay, or cause to be paid, to His Majesty, or the Customers or Officers appointed to receive the same for His Majesty, the usual Customs due to His Majesty, of and for all Ships and Goods so as aforesaid taken and adjudged for Prize; And moreover if the said

shall not take any Ship or Vessel, or any Goods, or Merchandizes, belonging to the Enemy, or otherwise liable to Confiscation, through Consent, or Clandestinely, or by Collusion, by Virtue, Colour, or Pretence of his said Commission, that then this Bail shall be void, and of none effect; and unless they shall so do, they do all hereby severally consent that Execution shall issue forth against them, their Heirs, Executors, and Administrators, Goods and Chattels, wheresoever the same shall be found, to the value of the Sum of

Pounds before mentioned, and in Testimony of the Truth thereof they have hereunto subscribed their Names.

By His Majesty's Command  
(Signed) Geo: Germain.

1. Society Miscellaneous Collection, Box 13a, HSP.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas, at a Court Martial assembled and held on board His Majesty's Ship the *Bristol* on Tuesday the 17th day of December 1776, the Right Honble Lord Shuldhham, Vice Admiral of the Blue Squadron of His Majesty's Fleet President, a Sentence was passed to the Effect following, Vitz

The Court in pursuance of an Order from the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Howe, Vice Admiral of the White and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed and to be employed &c in North America dated the 14th Instant, proceeded to try James Woolspring Seaman belonging to His Majesty's Ship *Phoenix* for Desertion from a Prize Brig on the Night of the 5th of April last, with John Rollo Seaman, and taking with them the Boat belonging to the said Brig, having first broken open and robbed a Chest belonging to a Mulatto Man belonging to the said Brig, And having heard the Evidence and the prisoner's Defence, and very maturely considered the same [illegible] of Opinion that part of the Charge against the prisoner James Woolspring has been fully proved, and that he falls under the first part of the Fifteenth Article of an Act made in the Twenty Second Year of the Reign of King George the Second, Entitled 'an Act for amending, explaining and reducing into One Act of Parliament, the Laws relating to the Government of His Majesty's Ships Vessels and forces by Sea; and

do therefore adjudge the said James Woolspring to suffer Death, by being hang'd by the neck till he is dead, at such time, and on board such of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels as the Commander in Chief shall please to direct; And he is hereby Adjudged to suffer Death accordingly.

And Whereas, in consideration of what your Lordship hath represented in your Letter of the 6th of February last, of the said James Woolspring's extraordinary Sufferings by long confinement which, amongst other circumstances attending his case, had induced your Lordship to respite the execution of the above sentence, the King hath been graciously pleased to extend His Mercy to him, and to signify to Us by the Earl of Sandwich His Royal pleasure that he should be pardoned; Your Lordship is therefore hereby required and directed, in pursuance of His Majesty's said pleasure, to cause the said James Woolspring to be made acquainted with the Royal pardon, and to be forthwith released from his Confinement. For which this Shall be your Lordship's Warrant. Given under our hands, and the Seal of the Office of Admiralty the 27th of March 1777.

By the *Isis*.

Sandwich. J Buller. H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 380-82.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, MARCH 25 TO THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1777

[London] Thursday, March 27.

A letter from Antigua, by way of Holland, dated Jan. 28, says, "There are no less than nine American prizes in the harbour of St. John's, richly laden, six of which were carried in by the privateers fitted out by the merchants there, the other three by the men of war."

28 Mar.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN JONATHAN FAULKNER, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 28<sup>th</sup> March 1777

My Lords Commrs of the Admiralty having received well grounded Information that a schooner of about 70 Tons<sup>2</sup> armed against Boats, & commanded by one [Larkin] Hammond, a little man who wears a green uniform with red Lappels & anchor Buttons lately arrived at Nantz from Baltimore in Maryland with Dispatches from the Congress, is to return with other dispatches when cleaned and new fitted, so that her paint &c can't be described. And it being of very great consequence that the said Vessel should be intercepted and seized, & the Dispatches and Papers she may have on board, secured, I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, notwithstanding former Orders to proceed and cruize in the ship you command, without a moments loss of time, between Ushant and Cape Finisterre, for the space of 3 Weeks, after the Time of your passing the first of those Places & use your utmost vigilance, attention & diligence to intercept the said Vessel, & upon your doing so, to make the best of your way with her to Spithead securing the People, & also the Dispatches and Papers

you may find on board her & sending the latter by one of your own Officers to me, in the manner directed by my letter to you of the 8<sup>th</sup> Instant in respect to such as might have been found on board the other Vessels therein mentioned.

In case you do not fall in with the abovementioned Schooner in the time before limited, or see any great probability of doing so soon, it is their Lordships further directions to you to make the best of your way, in the Ship you command to Spithead & remain there until you receive further Orders, sending to me, by Express for their Lords Information, an account of your arrival and Proceedings I am &c PS.

Captn [John] Faulknor *Royal Oak*

" [Samuel] Hood *Courageaux*

Hble [George] Falconer *Mars*

[Endorsed] Enclosed to V A. Sir Jas Douglas by Express at ¼ past 7 P M

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/1333, LC Photocopy.

2. *Jenifer*.

*Public Advertiser*, FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 1777

London [March 28].

Extract of a Letter from Gallway, brought by Wednesday's Mail from Ireland.

"Two American Privateers, mounting 14 Guns each, and as many Swivels, put in here to procure some fresh Provisions and Water. On being supplied with such Necessaries as they wanted, for which they paid in Dollars, they weighed Anchor and sailed, after being in the Bay only 24 Hours.

"During the short Time the Captains were on Shore, they behaved with the greatest Politeness; said they were sorry that such a Breach was made between them and their Mother Country, which might have been made up three Years ago, had Lord Chatham's Scheme been put in Execution, for which they honoured that Nobleman; but now the Americans had thrown off their Dependency, they were determined to be a free People; they said the Names of their Ships were the *Rover* and the *Montgomery*. The Crews, that came on Shore with them, were dressed in blue Uniforms, with Cockades, and made a genteel Appearance, but were all armed with Pistols, &c. They had been out from Philadelphia ten Weeks, and had taken only four Prizes, which they had sent to America."

29 Mar.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

Dear & hond Sir.

Nantes March 29. 1777. –

I have not anything worth troubling the Deputies with by this post, the intention of this is only to inform you that Capt [Seth] Paddock has applied to me to know if he could get a passage in a french Ship to america & to be her pilot on the Coast. I have said nothing of the *Count de Ver-*

*gennes*, but if the Deputies think proper it may be of Service to engage him as her pilot.

I hear today that you have had the Gout very bad which I suppose is the Reason that I have not heard from you, I hope it is now over and that I shall soon have the pleasure of a Line.

I am with the greatest Respect Your dutifull & affectionate Kinsman  
J Williams Jr.

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 77, APS.

30 Mar. (Sunday)

#### DEPOSITION OF ELIPHALET DOWNER<sup>1</sup>

The Deposition of Eliphalet Downer, surgeon, taken in the *Yankee* privateer, is as follows:

That after he was made prisoner by captains [George] Ross and [James] Hodge, who took advantage of the generous conduct of capt. [Henry] Johnson of the *Yankee* to them his prisoners, and of the confidence he placed in them, in consequence of that conduct and their assurances, he and his countrymen were closely confined, yet assured that on their arrival in port they should be set at liberty, and these assurances were repeated in the most solemn manner; instead of which, on their approach to land, they were, in the hot weather of August, shut up in a small cabin, the windows of which were spiked down and no air admitted, insomuch that they were all in danger of suffocation from the excessive heat. Three or four days after their arrival in the river Thames, they were relieved from this situation in the middle of the night, hurried on board a tender and sent down to Sheerness, where the deponent was put into the *Ardent*; and there falling sick of a violent fever, in consequence of such treatment, and languishing in that situation for sometime, he was removed, still sick, to the *Mars*; and, notwithstanding repeated petitions to be suffered to be sent to prison on shore, he was detained until having the appearance of a mortification on his legs, he was sent to Haslar hospital, from whence, after recovering his health, he had the good fortune to make his escape. While on board those ships and in the hospitals, he was informed and believes that many of his countrymen, after experiencing even worse treatment than he, were sent to the East Indies, and many of those taken at Quebec were sent to the coast of Africa, as soldiers.

Paris, March 30, 1777.

1. *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, August 5, 1777, "Published by order of Congress."

#### DEPOSITION OF SETH CLARK<sup>1</sup>

The Deposition of capt. Seth Clark,<sup>2</sup> of Newbury Port in the state of Massachusetts Bay, in America, is as follows:

That on his return from Cape Nichola Mole to Newbury Port, he was taken on the seventeenth of September last by an armed schooner in

his Britannic majesty's service: — Coats [James Cotes], esq; commander, and carried down to Jamaica; on his arrival at which place, he was sent on board the *Squirrel*, another armed vessel, — [Stair] Douglas, esq; commander, where, although master and half owner of the vessel in which he was taken, he was turned as a common sailor before the mast, and in that situation sailed for England in the month of November; on the 25th of which month they took a schooner from Port a Pe to Charlestown, South Carolina, to which place she belonged; when the owner, Mr. Burt, and the master, Mr. Bean, were brought on board, on the latter's denying he had any ship papers, capt. Douglas ordered him to be stripped, tied up, and then whipped with a wire cat of nine tails that drew blood every stroke, and then, on his saying that he had thrown his papers overboard, he was untied, and ordered to do his duty as a common sailor, with no place for himself or people to lay on but the decks.<sup>3</sup> On their arrival at Spithead, the deponent was removed to the *Monarch*, and *there ordered to do duty as a foremast man*, and on his refusing, on account of inability, to do it, he was threatened by the lieutenant, a Mr. Stoney, that if he spoke one word to the contrary, he *should be brought to the gangway*, and *there severely flogged*.

After this he was again removed, and put on board the *Barfleur*, where he remained till the 10th of February. On board this ship the deponent saw several American prisoners, who were *closely confined* and *ironed*, with only *four mens allowance to six*. These prisoners and others informed this deponent that a number of American prisoners had been taken out of this ship and sent to the East-Indies and the coast of Africa, which, he was told, would have been his fate, had he arrived sooner. This deponent farther saith, that in Hasler hospital, to which place on account of sickness he was removed from the *Barfleur*, he saw a captain Chase, of Providence, New-England, who told him that he had been taken in a sloop of which he was half owner and master, on his passage from Providence to South-Carolina, by an English transport, and turned over to a ship of war, where he was confined in irons thirteen weeks, insulted, beat and abused by the petty officers and common sailors, and, on being released from irons, was ordered to do duty as a foremast man until his arrival in England, when being dangerously ill, he was sent to said hospital.

Paris, March 30, 1777.

1. *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, August 5, 1777, "Published by order of Congress."

2. Clark was master of the schooner *Unity* taken by H.M. Schooner *Porcupine*; see Volume 6.

3. Arthur Lee's notes regarding this deposition add the following:

Mr Willm Burt is of Charles Town S. Carolina. He left that place in the *Betsey & Sally* schooner 30 Sept 1776, Mr John Bayne being his Captn. He sold his cargo of Rice and Indigo at Port au Paix in Hispaniola, & took in Rum, Wine, Broad-cloth, with some Flannels & bale goods; and sailed on 21st of November for S. Carolina. On the 25th of Novr he was taken by the *Squirrel* Capt Stair Douglas, who flogg'd Captn Bayne severely for not immediately telling him where the ships papers were. — Capt Douglas took out such part of the cargo as he liked and gave or sold the remainder to Capt Henley of the Ship *Ellis* of Liverpool; who taking it out burned the schooner the next day. The schooner & cargo belonged in equal shares to Mr Burt & two of his frends. — Capt Douglas took all Mr Burts papers, (among which were notes to the amount of £65 Sterling) with his chest, and all his cloathes, except

foul linnen When Mr Burt came to Spithead he had no cash save one half dollar. He arrived at Spithead Decr 24, 1776. He was put first on board the *Monarch*, and in about a week removed to the *Barfleur*, where he remained till 15. Feby when he was sent to Haslar hospital, which place he left 1st March.

Arthur Lee Papers, vol. 5, 83, HU.

31 Mar.

"STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF LIEUT. COL. EDWARD SMITH  
WITH REGARD TO CAPTAIN HYNSON AND A SKETCH  
OF THE INFORMATION OBTAINED." <sup>1</sup>

[London, March 31, 1777] <sup>2</sup>

1777. Feby 9th – Lord North being informed of Hynson's Situation in the Rebel Service, & of His Disposition to be mad[e] of use to His Majesty's Government, directed Lt. Coll Smith to be employ'd in turning this Matter to the best Advantage.

The Chief Object originally in View was to secure the intercepting of Hynson's Vessel & Her Dispatches to the Rebel Congress with which he was ordered to sail from Havre about the 10th of March. – And probably the ready & extensive Assistance given by His Majesty's Board of Admiralty would have secured this Point, if a Schooner <sup>3</sup> had not arrived in the mean Time at Nantz from Baltimore with News of the Hessian Misfortune, which determined Messrs Dean & Franklin to wait for more Events 'till the Month of April, to send their Dispatches then, & not before, by the Baltimore Schooner, & to employ Hynson, on whose Courage & Seamanship they place great Confidence, in some other Service.

In consequence of this Arrangement Col. Smith, after having cross'd the Sea Four Times within Six Weeks (once in very dangerous Weather,) after having been twice at Havre with some Hazard to his Personal Liberty, & as often at Paris, where he had Occasion to pass more than one whole Night in the Streets, miss'd his immediate Aim. The Disappointment however was, in some Degree, compensated by full Success in the other Objects of his Journey, which were to obtain Intelligence, & to arrange Plans for future Information.

Hynson had been at least as eager to betray his Sloop & Dispatches as we were to take them; For he hoped, by that Service, to entitle Himself to a Competence, & to sit down in England, where he has Connections which he is anxious to resume. – When therefore this Object failed, He endeavoured to make amends for it by obtaining for Col. Smith, whom he met as often as they found it practicable, full Answers to every Enquiry that Smith could suggest to him. In doing this He found the Characters & Situation of the several People with whom he has to do very favorable to his Purpose.

Franklin lives at a little Distance from Paris, but seldom passes a Day without seeing Dean: The latter appears to be the more active & efficient Man, but less circumspect & Secret, his Discretion not being always Proof against the natural Warmth of his Temper, & being weakened also by his own Ideas of the Importance of his present Employment. – His Residence

is at the Hotel d'Hambourg where he keeps a regular Table for such of his Countrymen as are engaged in the Service of the Congress; (Carmichael, Weeks [Wickes], Hynson, Nicholson, Moyland [Moylan], Franklin's Grandson, & others:) Several of them lodge in the House with Him, & are furnish'd by Him with Money, in Proportion to their Wants. Hynson, who is Brother in Law to Weeks, lives in particular Intimacy & Confidence with Carmichael; And Carmichael, who is intended for an Agency in some Foreign Court, is trusted without Reserve by Dean, who has principally employed him of late in decoying, from London, where he is well known, People who are either fit to be employed in the Privateering Service, or to be establish'd as Mercantile Agents for N. America, in the French Ports & French Islands. – Weeks is represented as having excellent Talents for Privateering; Nicholson is of a very inferior Capacity, but is thought a good Seaman, & has the good Wishes of Carmichael, because their Mistresses (E. Carter & H. Atkyns) lived much together when in London, & now lodge together at Paris. – Hynson who is a free easy Fellow, & in the good Graces of the whole Party, has a real Regard for Carmichael, & labours hard to draw him into the same System with himself. – He has gone so far in this as to venture to entrust to him his Connection with Col. Smith, which Carmichael advises him to cultivate, as what may become usefull to them both hereafter, & has even intimated, that if it should be found necessary, Hynson shall have Opportunities of embezzling such Papers & Informations as he may wish to transmit. – How far Hynson is going upon safe Ground in this Attempt to secure Carmichael, remains to be seen; It is certainly material, if He succeeds: For tho' both Dean & Franklin may be, & are, according to Carmichael's Account, too ambitious & determin'd (or, in other Words, too malevolent against Great Britain) ever to adopt any Line of Conduct short of American Independence, yet Dean & Franklin can, in themselves, individually do little, & if they are betrayed by those whom they must employ, their Agency will soon come to Disgrace & Despair. – In such Cases, the Good arising to His Majesty's Government from multiplying & extending Channels of Intelligence does not consist merely in the Information obtained (which however is by no Means unimportant) but such Information is both a Proof that the Persons who give it have an hopeless Idea of the Cause in which they are retained, & a Pledge that their Exertions in that Cause will be spiritless & insincere.

It was pretty sufficiently experienced previous to any Intelligence from Hynson that the decided System of the French Ministers is, at a moderate Expence, on the Part of France, to augment & prolong the large Expences of Great Britain; to carry on an indirect War against our Trade, without hazarding their own; & in short, to do every thing hostile to us without subjecting themselves to a Return of Hostilities. – But their underhand Means, their barefaced Duplicity in regard both to the British Ministry & the Rebel Agents, their disingenuous & dishonorable Protestations, their alternate Hopes & Fears, which this Line of Conduct has occasioned; The Armaments with which their dangerous Measures have obliged them to be prepared; The Assistance actually given to the Rebels, & the farther Expecta-



tion & Views held out to them, have never been so minutely detailed, & are certainly worth repeating, tho' many of the Particulars are already well known.

The *Amphitrite* Ship was fitted out by Msr D'Eyries; She carried 39. Officers, 56. Private Artillery Men, 70. Brass, & 12. Iron Pieces of Ordnance, Ball, Cloth &c – Lord Stormont complained of this Equipment, & was told the Vessel had already sailed for Dominica [St. Domingo]; Some Time afterwards She was obliged to put into Port L'Orient, & Lord Stormont complained again; He was assured that She was ordered to be detained. Notwithstanding which She proceeded on her Voyage, & we are told, by way of Apology, that Mr de Coudré, not having acted with sufficient Caution & Secrecy shall be infallibly confined for one & twenty Years.

The *Seine* Ship equipp'd also by D'Eyries, carried 9. large Pieces of Brass Ordnance, with Ball, Powder, Lead & Cloth, & sailed in December.

About the same Time another Vessel commanded by a Capt. Bell, & fitted out by Lemoisine, sailed for Philadelphia, & arrived safe in that Port. She carried 7000 Packs of Canvas, 10,000 Firelocks, Lead, Powder, & Cloth.

A Snow saild from Havre for Dominica [St. Domingo] on the 8th of this Month, laden with Ball, Lead, Powder, & Canvas, (& probably was the Vessel chased by the *Royal Oak*.)

Another Vessel with a similar Cargo is to sail about this Time for Dominica [*sic*]. – Both these Vessels are fitted out by D'Eyries, who has the sole Arrangement of these Matters in the Port of Havre, where he is one of the French King's Commissioners; And his Services are so acceptable, that, about ten Days ago, he was sent for to Paris to receive the Croix de St Louis. He is empowered to grant every Assistance that Messrs Franklin & Deane may require from His Most Christian Majesty's Dock Yards, & actually furnishes from the Royal Magazine to the Rebel Privateers, all Sorts of Ammunition, without requiring any Payment. – The same Plan is pursued in the other Ports of France; The American Agents have only to make their Proposition; If it is thought practicable it is undertaken, & executed largely & expeditiously.

It has been sometime in Contemplation to fit out an American Privateer with 60 guns, & a Vessel of that Size has been prepared, after being examined by Nicholson & Moiland. But Franklin thinks it policy to keep to smaller Ships & swifter Sailers, as being better calculated to distress the British Trade, & at the same Time to make such Captures as may encourage Seamen of every Nation who will be ready enough to enter into a Service where Pyrcy is the Game, not Action, & where there is a Prospect of great Gain & little Hazard. – Upon the same Principle of declining Enterprizes which are not profitable, Dr Franklin has put his Negative on another Project lately in Agitation, started at the Hotel d'Hambourg, for sending three or four Sloops to the back of the Goodwin Sands, in order to take & burn the Fleets of Colliers.

All the Naval Matters are transacted of Course, & immediately thro' the

Department of Monsr de Sartines, whose good Will in the American Cause, is not denied even by his Colleagues in Office; And Mr Dean has frequent & personal Communications with him. If however Carmichael may be credited, he has the same Degree of Access to Msr de Vergennes, & has, during the last three Weeks, very frequently attended him by Order at Versailles. – Franklin manages all his Business with the French Ministers, thro' Monsr Ray de Chaumont, who is Monsr de Vergennes Person of Confidence in Office under Him, and holds all Meetings with Franklin at Passy.

France has sent out to North America 240. Pieces of Artillery together with other Military Stores in Proportion; And tho' these Supplies are in Part furnish'd by private Adventurers, the chief Proportion is obtained upon the Credit of the French Government. – All this, as well as the Privateering Business is carried on in an indirect Manner, & thro' Persons deputed for the Purpose; Not indeed to save Appearances, which, in a Matter of so much Notoriety & Extent, cannot be saved, but to leave it in the Power of the Ministers to disavow any specific Complaint which may be made. – And it is in the same Spirit of Duplicity that French Officers are refused Leave to serve in the Rebel Army, but are always permitted, & even encouraged, to go. – Among others, Msr de la Fayette, an Officer of Rank & Fortune, who has talked only with Carmichael, & not to Dean or Franklin, is now upon the Eve of his Departure, freighting himself out, & requiring no Pay, but only Command. – Notwithstanding all this, Hynson assured Col. Smith that both Carmichael & his Associates at the Hotel de Hambourg express'd in private a most inv[et]erate Dislike to the French, & say that if America should be successfull, She will never grant those exclusive Rights of Trade to France, which the latter expects & aspires to.

Mr Lee's Agency in Spain arose from a Conversation between Msr D'Aranda & Mr Dean; in which the former hinted that the Congress Agents had neglected the Court of Madrid, which perhaps might be found as able & willing to give them every Assistance as France. Dean took the Hint, & was at the same Time advised not to quote their Conversation, as Msr D'Aranda added frankly that he felt himself a disgraced Man with his Court, & any Idea known to be suggested by him would suffer from that very Circumstance. Dean is said to have since heard from Lee that he expects to obtain Assistance from Spain to the Amount of £ 100,000. – The chief Instruction however given to Lee, as well as the great Object of Messrs Franklin & Deane, is to obtain some open Declaration in Favor of America; And Monsr de Sartines holds out the strongest Hopes to them, that this must soon happen; Instantly indeed if Mr Washington should gain any decisive Battle against Sir Wm Howe: But, at all Events, after England shall have weakened Herself by sending to the American Coast her principal Ships; And after the Arrival of the French East India Fleet, of Nineteen Ships which are expected to bring Home about 20. Millions of Livres & a Body of good Seamen. Be that as it may, the Plan of France is certainly to appear prepared for actual War, both for her own Security against the

probable Consequences of her Conduct, & in order to force the British Government to new Expences, at the same Time that indirect Assistance is given to the Americans, & the Hope of a Blow being struck in their Favor, whenever it can be done with Advantage. — Msr de Vergennes's Commis[sioner] assures Franklin that there are 27. Sail of the Line ready at Brest & 12 at Toulon; All in a Condition to be sent to Sea at Ten Days Notice. He adds that a Camp is to be formed this Summer at Brest, in order to repair & perfect the Fortifications. It is thought however, by Dean, notwithstanding this high Language, & the Appearances with which they are accompanied, that France is by no Means in a Condition for War; that Monsr Necker, at the Head of the Finances will produce a System of Supplies totally inadequate to the Demands, & that Msr de Sartines at the Head of the Marine Department, tho' of a mischievous Disposition, & attach'd to a mischievous Party has no Steadiness of Mind, & is also without Personal Weight or Power. Many Intrigues are carrying on to remove Sartines from his Office, & one in particular by a Mr Forth, with regard to whom Col. Smith accidentally had Occasion to receive much Information. He was told that Forth was known to have obtained the full Confidence of Lord Stormont, & was shunn'd, on that Account by the Americans with whom he had tried to make himself acquainted; That he was very generally known & observed; And from the Traces which he gave of himself appeared to possess a Degree of Vivacity & Eagerness in his Temper which would be likely to render his Views abortive; That he made no Secret of his Object to bring back the French Administration to all pacific Measures with England, & had told some of his Friends that he is in the Intimacy & Confidence of the British Ministers, & has no Doubt of being encouraged by them to proceed in his Undertaking. Coll Smith observes, justly enough, upon this, that a Man is not very fit for such a Secret who can put it in the Power of a mere Stranger to attain it.

When Deane was informed of the Answer given to Lord Stormont, relative to Weeks's Prizes, He insisted immediately on a Conference with Monsr de Sartines, in which he gave full Scope to all the Violence of his Temper. Sartines pleaded that the French Ministers could not shut their Eyes against every thing; that the Packet in particular was a King's Ship, & could not be protected as a Prize without declaring War, which France was not yet ready for; Deane replied that the Conduct now proposed would check the whole Plan of privateering; But Sartines stopt him, saying "You mistake us, Weeks is not to go; Nothing Lord Stormont can say shall force him to go, or embarrass him in the slightest Degree; At the worst we can keep him as an Act of National Humanity, & on the Pretence of repairing his shattered Vessel."

The Success of this Weeks who sold his last Five Prizes for 100,000 Livres, & purposely for much less than they were worth, added to his well

judged Extravagance in the French Ports, has induced many French & Irish Sailors to engage in the Rebel Privateers. – Several Vessels are fitting out. Nicholson is to have a Six and Thirty Gun Frigate; But He, as well as many others, is much terrified at the Idea of being taken, & sent as a Common Sailor to the East Indies. –

The Baltimore Schooner is a New England Built Vessel with a long Bow sprit & quite new; She is to sail with Dispatches as soon as satisfactory Accounts are received from Madrid, & is to go straight across the Atlantic for Baltimore. – It continues on this & other various Accounts material to keep Cruizers off Barfleur & Cape la Hogue. – The Sloop at Havre which was intended for Hynson is ready for Sea, & waits in the Royal Dock to be applied to some Rebel Purpose. – If Hynson goes in Her He means to be taken, but he is int[ended] at present for a better Vessel; As to this however & other Particulars, we shall soon receive Accounts from him.

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 248.

2. *Ibid.*, No. 670, date is given only as the end of March. Much of the information herein is from a report made March 27 by Lieutenant Colonel Smith.

3. *Jenifer*, Larkin Hammond.

#### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT<sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Burford*, in Hamoze]

[1777. March] 26. It is four months since we sailed from Portsmouth, having been in that time twenty-eight days on board the *Dolton*, twenty-seven days on board the *Reasonable*, nineteen on board the *Bellisle*, six on board the *Tarbay*, and forty-one on board the *Burford*, which is our present place of abode.

27. We are told that we are to go on shore tomorrow to prison. Our company, one after another, are daily dropping sick, and about forty of us have the itch; but our sick have as good care taken of them on board this ship as we could expect, and we are visited morning and evening by the doctor.

28. I have been poorly some days past, and having no appetite for my food I bought a quarter of a pound of sugar to sweeten some water gruel, which is the best that I can get here.

29. To-day two more were sent on shore to the Hospital, sick.

30. Sunday. But the time is badly spent for persons in our situation, who do not know how soon the gallows may be our doom.

31. I had sent to me, by the surgeon of the ship, about a pound of sugar and two ounces of tea, for some work which I did for him some time ago, and this morning I made some tea for my breakfast, which I drank with a good relish.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 29–30.

1 Apr.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLOUSTON TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

On Board the Brigantine *Freedom*  
In Latd 41d . . 58m Longt 15 . . 00 West

Gentelmen

April the 1st 1777 –

It gives me Infetent pleasure that I have to Inform your Honnours that This day I came up with and Took the Brigg from Liverpool Bound to Africa<sup>2</sup> she Sails very well I Surpose you have Receivd a Letter of the 27 of March which gave an count of My Tacking the Snow *Mary* and Burning the Brig *John* a Ship Jest heavs in Sight am bout to give hur Chase have nothing more pertickel

Remain with Due Res[p]ect [&c.]  
Capt John Clouston

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 134, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. Brigantine *Penelope*, William Bootle, master. It was erroneusly stated at her trial and condemnation that the brigantine had been taken May 5, 1777, Mass. Arch., vol. 159, 114, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States* <sup>1</sup>

Remarks Tuesday April 1d 1777

At ½ past 7, saw a sail she being a small Sloop Standg to the Westd

At 11 Saw a Sail bearg NW. Squally with Rain

Nothing More Remarkable this Day

Lattd in by Obsn 47 . . 18 N –

At ½ past 5. made a Sail Stang to the Westd to which we gave chace at ½ past 6. came up with the Chace & hailed her, Answer'd from London boun to Quebec, She being a Ship of Sixteen Guns. then we Order'd her to Strike to the United States of America, haveing no Answer we being all in readiness, Orders was gave to Give her one gun, the Second Lieut clapt a match to bow gun, but being a heavy sea wet the powder so that she would not go off[f]. They gave us three Cheers, we returnd the same & gave her a gun then run up a long side within pistol shot to give her a broad Side, but our Guns being wet with a heavy sea made a Continual breach over us that we could not get but three guns off[f]. She gave us a broad side of Six guns & then sheard off[f], we Laid her a long side a gain, but the sea making a Continual breach, we could not get but only one Gun off[f], that being the gun in the cabbins, the water facing into the ports in the Cabbins it was impossible to keep them open, then she shear'd off[f]. Immediately put out All her Lights, comeing on a heavy squall of hail & Rain lost sight of her.

at 10. P.M. brought her Close hall upon the wind to the Southd finding her inclined the last sight Standg to the Southd, we then hoped to meet her the next Morning.

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes April 1. 1777. –

I shall observe your directions about the Cutter when she arrives<sup>2</sup> – I have not the honour of any thing from you by this post but Mr Peltier has recvd advice that the Destination of the Ship<sup>3</sup> is changed & that instead of going to Boston she is to go to St Domingo and there to be unloaded Mr Montieu likewise mentions that the 7 officers & 2 Servants are to have their passages in her, to all this I can say nothing as I have not your orders and it is by them only that I shall be governed when I receive them you may depend that they shall be literally observed and while I have the honour of your commands I will do my utmost to give you satisfaction I flatter myself you will allow that whenever the operations I have directed have turned out wrong there has been no intentional fault for had I known that the Ship would have been sent to the west Indies I should never have put any salt onboard but should have ballasted her with Bricks which in that Country are valuable while the other is not in the States you know it is exactly the reverse and I supposed she would go directly thither. –

An american Ship is arrivd at Quiberon but it is not yet known what news she brings. –

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

2. Cutter bought at Dover by Joseph Hynson.

3. *Thérèse*, formerly the *Comte de Vergennes*. See Beaumarchais to Vergennes, April 15.

2 Apr.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GOVERNOR GEORGE JAMES BRUERE, BERMUDA <sup>1</sup>

(No. 3.)

Governor Bruere, Sir,

Whitehall 2d April 1777.

Soon after I had dispatched my letter to you of the 1st January I received yours, No 7, of the 30th Novr which gave me the satisfaction to know, that the assistance the Admiral afforded you had prevented any attack of the Rebels, and protected you in the administration of your Government.

The Rebel Naval Force being now so greatly reduced, and His Majesty's Ships being, in a good degree, relieved from their attendance upon the Army, there can be no doubt the Admiral will continue to give you the protection of His Majesty's Ships; and as that has been found sufficient for your safety hitherto, I have no apprehensions that it will not secure you against any attack that you may now be exposed to – I have however directed the Packet which carries this letter, together with a Duplicate of my former, to call at Bermuda in her way from St Augustine, to give you an opportunity of transmitting to me an account of any occurrences which may have happened since the date of your last, that if any unforeseen danger should arise, the speediest Measures may be taken to guard against it. I am &ca

Geo: Germain

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 37/36.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 2 April 1777

I have communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Letters of yesterdays date informing them that you had assembled a Court Martial for the Trial of Captn Stair Douglas upon the Charges exhibited against him & of his having been acquitted by Sentence of the Court. . . .<sup>2</sup>

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 318.

2. In the *London Chronicle*, April 1 to April 3, 1777, an extract of a letter from Portsmouth reads:

The Captain of his Majesty's ship the *Squirrel*, was tried yesterday by a Court Martial (which had been called at the instance of the West India Merchants,) held on board the *Princess Amelia* in our harbour. The charge against him was for not accompanying the last Jamaica fleet to England, of which he had the convoy, by which means several of the vessels were taken by American privateers. The trial began at nine o'clock in the morning, and lasted till four in the afternoon, when he was acquitted, and the Court Martial declared it to be their opinion that the separation of the fleet was owing to stormy weather, and the Captains of the vessels neglecting to obey the signals of the *Squirrel*.

Upon acquittal, Captain Douglas requested permission from the Admiralty to leave his ship immediately and repair to Bath "for the Recovery of his health." The request was granted on April 2, 1777, PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 320.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GOVERNOR PATRICK TONYN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir,

Whitehall 2d April 1777

I have received your Dispatches from No 20 to 32, one marked Private No 3 & one dated 24th Decr without any Number, & have laid them before The King.

The Abandonment of the Enterprize formed by the Rebels against St Augustine renders it unnecessary for me now to make any particular Observations upon the very proper Measures you took to repel their intended Attack, & of which your Dispatches give so full a detail; but I must not withhold from you the Satisfaction of knowing that your Conduct in that difficult & embarrassing Situation is approved by His Majesty, & I am also commanded to desire you will signify to the Inhabitants, that their loyal & spirited Resolution to join the King's Troops & assist in the defence of the Province, has met with the Royal Approbation.

It was unfortunate that the Rebel Vessels which entered St Mary's River were not opposed by the whole Force Stationed for the Protection of that Inlet. From the Accounts given by you of that Affair & those contained in the Papers you transmitted, it should seem that Great Faults have been committed by the Officer commanding the armed Vessels as well as by Capt Graham who commanded the Detachment; but as I must suppose if there was any just ground to suspect both or either have been guilty of actual Misbehaviour proper Inquiry will have been made into their Conduct; I suspend forming any Judgement of that Transaction untill I know the result of that Inquiry.

If the Rebels in Georgia not only endeavoured to prevent your drawing

Provisions from thence but attempted to deprive you of the Supplies provided within the Province, I do not see how you could avoid making Reprisals upon their Stores, & obliging them to experience something of the Distress which they meant to bring upon the Garrison and Inhabitants of East Florida, but as such a predatory War can only serve to destroy the Settlements in both Provinces & is not likely to be attended with any consequences favourable to the Re-establishment of His Majesty's Government I shall be glad to hear that some expedient has been found for obtaining Supplies without continuing this ruinous practise.

Drat to Governor Tonyn

2d April 1777. (No 4)

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/557, 101-09.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM DEPTFORD, APRIL 2." <sup>1</sup>

Three new men of war, the *America* of 74 guns, *Magnanime* of 74, and *Alexander* of 64, are upon the stocks here.

The *Grasshopper* sloop is waiting for a fair wind to join the convoy for America.

Our sail-makers work double hours, and a draft of our shipwrights is ordered to be made to go to Halifax in Nova Scotia.

1. *London Chronicle*, April 3 to April 5, 1777.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Paris, April 2, 1777

We did ourselves the Honour of writing some time since to your Lordship on the Subject of Exchanging Prisoners. You did not condescend to give us any Answer, and therefore we expect none to this. We take the liberty of sending you Copies of certain Depositions which we shall transmit to Congress; whereby it will be known to your Court that the United States are not unacquainted with the barbarous Treatment their People receive when they have the Misfortune of being your Prisoners here in Europe. <sup>2</sup> And if your Conduct toward us is not altered it is not improbable that severe Reprisals may be thought justifiable from the Necessity of putting some Check to Such abominable Practices. For the sake of Humanity it is to be wish'd that Men would endeavour to alleviate as much as possible the unavoidable Miseries attending a State of War. It has been said that among the Civilized Nations of Europe the ancient Horrors of that State are much diminished. But the Compelling Men by Chains, Stripes & Famine to fight against their Friends and Relations is a new Mode of Barbarity, which your Nation alone has the Honour of inventing. And the sending American Prisoners of War to Africa and Asia remote from all probability of Exchange, and where they can scarce hope ever to hear from their Families, even if the Unwholesomeness of the Climate does not put a speedy End to their Lives, is a manner of treating



Captives that you can justify by no Precedent or Custom except that of the black Savages of Guinea.

We are Your Lordships [&c.]

[Endorsed by Franklin] Rough Draft return'd with Insult<sup>3</sup>

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, 348, LC.
2. Depositions were those of Dr. Eliphalet Downer and Captain Seth Clark, March 30, 1777, *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, August 5, 1777.
3. Stormont returned the letter with an unsigned note: "The Kings Ambassador receives no Letters from Rebels but when they come to implore His Majesty's Mercy." Although the letter was seemingly unopened, Stormont did in fact make a copy which he sent to Lord Weymouth, PRO State Papers, 78/302, 14, 15.

#### LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Separate & Secret

No 58

My Lord

Paris April 2d 1777

It is now very generally, and certainly known, that M de la Fayette is gone to join the Rebel Army, and has taken with Him twelve french Officers, Nine of them, Actually in this service: Three have sent their Dismission. They embarked at Bordeaux on Board a french Vessel, which Mr de la Fayette has freighted, and for which He gives fifty thousand Livres. As soon as His Intentions were known here, a Courier was dispatched, with Orders to stop Him, His Brother in Law, the Vicomte de Noailles, likewise dispatched a Courier at the desire of his Family, and pressing him in their Name, to abandon this wild Enterprize, but both these Couriers arrived a few hours After he had sailed, as Nothing further can be done in this Business now, I did not think it proper to enter upon the Subject with M de Vergennes. Another foreign Minister did Speak to him of it as the news of the Day, and to that foreign Minister M de Vergennes said, that for a Young Man of the first fashion, with every advantage of Fortune, and Situation, to engage in such an Adventure as this, was such unaccountable Folly, as there was no foreseeing, no guarding against. He then mentioned the Courier, that had been sent to stop M de la Fayette, and added, that a Batiment was gone to endeavour to come up with Him, and bring him back. It is very likely, continued M de Vergennes, that the English will meet with him by the Way, if they do, they will pretend not to know him, and treat Him rather roughly, which will be treating him, as his folly deserves. This Folly however, est montée dans la Tete de nos Jeunes Gens, to a degree that you cannot conceive. I have had numberless applications to me, My Answer to those who are absolutely free, is this, they may to be sure do as they please, but I tell them, that if they come to ask my advice, I give it strongly against their going, if they ask my Orders Je le defends. This My Lord is the Substance of what M de Vergennes said, as repeated to me, by my Friend. It would I think, be no difficult Matter to collect M de Vergenn[es]' real sentiments, and wishes, even from this Language, fair and guarded as He thinks it.



*Marquis de Lafayette*

Mr de la Fayette's Relations seem to be much displeased with his Conduct, many of them certainly were not privy to this Design, His Friends and the Public at Large affect to Say, that to be sure this step is imprudent, and Irregular, and in that Light liable to Censure, but that it shews a Spirit of Enterprize, and Strong Enthusiasm in a good Cause. It is proper to inform your Lordship, that M de la Fayette goes under a feigned Name, He calls himself Gilbert Du Moutier Natif de Chavaniague Monsr de Lugny Mr Quade an Officer of some Reputation and that Baron Kalb whom I have frequently mentioned to your Lordship are three of the Officers that are gone with Him.

I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

[Endorsed] Paris 2 April 1777 Lord Stormont (No 58) Septe & Secret R 6th by Express from Dover

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 7-8.

3 Apr.

LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

Remarks Thursday April 3d 1777

At ½ past 6. A.M. Made a Sail Gave Chace At 8 Came up With the Chace fired a Swivel at her she Struck her Coulers, she proves to be a Brigg from Lisbon bound to Ireland Called the *Fleece* Comandd by Capt Fortune Laden'd With Salt & 28 Casks Wine hoisted our boat out & Sent a prize Master & four hands on board.

At 10. She Returnd With the Capt & five hands hoisted the boat in & made Sail<sup>2</sup>

Set the Close Reef T. Sails.

Cloudy

No Obsn: this Day

First part of these 24 hours begins with fresh breezes & Cloudy Weather.

At ½ past 6. P.M. Made a Sail but Night Comeing on, twas thought not proper to give chace -

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

2. "Still in the Bay of Biscay April the 3d we fell in with a Brigg *Fleece* from Lisbon bound to Cork lading with Wine and Salt, we took her and put on board of her Mr [Arthur] Dillaway as prize Master, and men sufficient to work her and sent her for France," Journal of Timothy Connor, LC. Connor, a seaman on board the Massachusetts privateer Brigantine *Rising States* opened his journal with the following: "Forton Goal, June the 15th 1777 - I now shall begin to keep a journal and recollect the particulars that has happen'd since we sailed from Boston, of which I shall take the following particulars according to the best of my remembrance since I left Boston." Hereafter cited as Connor's Journal, LC.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE<sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 3 April 1777

I received on the 19th Ultimo by Captn Fanshaw of the *Carysfort*, the Honor of your Lordships two Letters of the 1st and 6th & two of the 13 of

Feby last which with their several Inclosures were immediately communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty.

The Private Signals enclosed in the first mentioned Letters will be given to the Captains of such of His Majesty's Ships as shall from time to time be order'd to join you for their guidance until your Lordship may Judge it necessary to make any alterations therein.

As to the Doubts & Difficulties Stated in your Lordships Letter of the 6th of February with respect to the Holding of Courts Martial, and the insufficiency of your power to restrain by proper punishment the Criminal Excesses committed by the Seamen belonging to the Transport Vessels, my Lords Command me to acquaint you that, as the former depends upon the construction of an Act of Parliament, they cannot take upon them to decide thereupon; but that they will order a Case to be stated for the Opinion of Council & transmit to your Lordship a Copy thereof as soon as it can be obtained.

With regard to the latter, their Lordships are inclin'd to think that Naval Expeditions might perhaps be carried on with more advantage to the publick service if the Masters & Crews of Transport Vessels were subject to Military Law, but that it is very much to be doubted whether Parliament would adopt such a Measure, if it were to be proposed, and that all that can [be] done at present, is, to take the Opinion of Council, upon the Matter stated by your Lordship for your future guidance, which will be accordingly done & transmitted to you without delay.

My Lords entirely approve of the account you have given of your proceedings in your Letter of the 13th of Feby numbered 22; as also of the permission your Lordship has given to the several Officers to return to England for the recovery of their health, whose Applications for that purpose, with the reports thereupon, accompanied your Letter of the same date numbered 23, and are pleased to permit your Lordship to fill up the vacancies occasioned thereby except those in the *Carysfort*, which Ship being in England, their Lordships will send Commissions to the Lieutenants who are now acting in her by virtue of your Lordships orders. The Allowances to be annexed to the Extra appointments your Lordship has made are now under the Consideration of the Board & I shall have the Honor to send you their Lordships determination thereupon by the next conveyance, which will probably be very soon.

The *Raisable* sail'd from Plymouth on the 22nd Ultimo with orders to Cruize for one Month between the Island of St Pierre & the entrance of the Gulph of St Lawrence, for the protection of the Victuallers &ca bound to Canada, and then to join your Lordship.

The *Nonsuch* sail'd from Plymouth on the 23d & the *Augusta* on the 28th Ultimo with orders to proceed immediately to your Lordship, having on board the Aids du Camp and the dispatches that were to have been convey'd in the *Albion*, which Ship having received considerable damage will be replaced by the *St Albans* whose Capt'n will have orders to take under his

Convoy the remainder of the Hessian Chasseurs and the Waldeck Recruits, which are daily expected to arrive at Spithead.

The *Isis*, *Camel*, *Swift* Sloop, & *Bute* Armed Ship sail'd from Spithead on the 27th ulto with the Transports & Storeships named in the inclosed List the Transports having onboard the British Recruits mentioned in my Letter of the 4 Ultio and the Storeships the Ordnance Stores for the Fleet & Cloathing & Camp necessities for the Army.

The *Apollo* Capt'n Pownoll is now in Hamoaze waiting for a Slatch of Wind to proceed to Quebec with General Burgoyne, & to carry into execution the orders of which I enclose your Lordship a Copy.

Their Lordships having found it absolutely necessary to send the *Ariadne* to the West Indies instead of Ordering her to join your Lordship, intend that the *Blonde* shall supply her place. The latter is now at Spithead waiting for the *Proteus* & *Porpoise* with Camp Equipage & Cloathing for the Army in Canada, & having seen them & the Trade bound to Quebec as far as the Island of Bic, will proceed without a moments loss of time to your Lordship. The *Proteus* & *Porpoise* being the same kind of Ships as the *Bute* and *Camel* when they have discharged their Cargoes will proceed to the West Indies to serve as Convoys for the homeward bound Trade. I have the Honor to be &c.

P S

By the *Somerset*  
Duplicate sent 12 Apr  
By the *St Albans*  
By a Messenger on the 4h at 2 in the Morning

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 332-37.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

Captain [George] Ourry Commr of His Majestys Ship *Somerset*, (by *Mercury* whom your Lordship will receive this) being directed to *Fox* take one of the Ships or Sloops named in the Margin under his command and the Transport Ships named in the *Dispatch Slo.* annex'd List having on board the Anspach Troops and *Pegasus Do* the Hessian Chasseurs and Recruits whose numbers are therein specified under his Convoy and to proceed with them with the utmost expedition to New York, where he is to put himself under your Lordships command, and to follow your Orders for his further proceedings; Your Lordship is hereby required to take him & also the Commander of the Ship or Sloop which accompanies him, under your command, and to employ them and also the Ship or Sloop to which they respectively belong, in such manner as you shall judge best for His Majesty's Service entrusted to your care. Given &c. the 3d April 1777

J. Buller C. Spencer H. Palliser

By &c P.S.

[Enclosure]

Admty Office 3d April 1777

A List of Transport Ships now at Spithead having on board, & intended to carry to New York, the foreign Troops undermention'd Vizt

<u>Ships Names</u>	<u>Masters Names.</u>	<u>Troops.</u>				
<i>Stag</i>	James Saunders	Anspach Troops.				
<i>Friendship</i>	Wm Coldstream					
<i>Symetry</i>	Wm Foxen					
<i>Durand</i>	Wm Mabb					
<i>Myrtle</i>	Wm Walker					
<i>Hopewell</i>	Wm Hepden					
<i>Diana</i>	Thos Brown					
<i>Providence</i> (2d)	Richd Ware					
<i>Juno</i>	Robt Smith					
<i>Polly</i>						
		Officers	Surgeons.	Men	Women.	Total.
		60	11	1271	62	1404

<i>Lively</i>	Robt Wetherden	Hessians Chasseurs & Recruits.				
<i>Apollo</i>	James Adamson					
<i>Providence</i> (1st)	James Watson					
		Officers	Surgeons.	Men.	Women.	Children.
		5	3	489	29	12
		Total				
		538				

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 396-97.

WILLIAM KNOX TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir, Whitehall 3d April 1777.

The *Springfield* Transport, having got the Ordnance Stores and Indian Presents on board, Lord George Germain has directed me to desire you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to give Orders to the Master to proceed with the said Transport, without delay, to Portsmouth, and put himself under the Convoy of such of His Majesty's Ships as their Lordships have ordered to conduct the German Troops to New York, from whence he is to proceed to St Augustine, and there deliver his Lading; And it is Lord George Germain's further desire that their Lordships will be pleased to give Orders to the Commander of His Majesty's Ships appointed for this Service, to give particular Attention to the *Springfield* during the Voyage to New York; and also that their Lordships will instruct Lord Howe to order One of His Majesty's Ships under his Lordship's Command, to convoy her from New York to St Augustine, and not to leave her untill she shall have entered the Harbour, or, if that be found impracticable, untill she shall have discharged her Stores without the Bar. I am &c

Will<sup>m</sup> Knox

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 2, 373-76.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GOSPORT, APRIL 3." <sup>1</sup>

The *Resolution* armed ship, purchased by government, (now named the *Drake*) is put into commission, and the command given to George Burden, Esq; of this town.

1. *London Chronicle*, April 5 to April 8, 1777.

4 Apr.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N., TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLEMENT  
FINCH, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

Isis at Sea 4th April 1777

Mr Stephens secretary to the Admiralty having enclosed to me in a Packet (not to be opened till clear of the Channel[]), a Commission appointing you Captain of His Majesty's Ship the *Camel*

I was in hopes to have had the Pleasure of seeing you on board to have delivered it to you in Person, but as I find that cannot be done without retarding the Convoy, I take this Opportunity of sending it you by the *Swift*, as I would not wish to defer executing their Lordships Commands in a point that I flatter myself will give you Pleasure.

Mr Stephens in his letter upon this Occasion desired that I would receive the established fee £2. .3s. .0d & be accountable for it to the Office but I think you may as well settle that matter yourself I am Sir [&c.]

W<sup>m</sup> Cornwallis

To The Honble Captn Finch  
Commander of his Majs Ship *Camel*

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, NYHS. On the same day Cornwallis addressed a similar letter to Captain Benjamin Hill, of H. M. Armed Vessel *Bute*, sending along his commission as commander.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

at London the 4th April 1777.

... It has been learned from the latest news from America that forty ships had departed in one single day from Philadelphia bound for various ports in Europe and the West Indies. At the same time a ship entered the Delaware River loaded with ten thousand Barrels of Salt, an article that is greatly needed by the Colonies. This cargo, added to those from successive Prizes which the Americans continue to take, is causing murmurs from the Merchants of the City in reproach of Lord Howe for his inactivity. We know, however, that this Admiral profiting by the fact that the Season has been less severe in this region than anyone recalls for twenty years, has kept his frigates and other Ships cruising during the whole winter and has only kept at New York the Ship which he himself commands. But the English merchants had the idea that all Ports in America would be blockaded, or destroyed in the beginning and their ships taken or burned. They had not taken into consideration the impossibility of guarding a Coast 1500 miles long and their over confidence caused them considerable losses during the last Campaign. These have at least taught them not to depend entirely on the Fleet, and to protect themselves.

Even with these precautionary measures they can hardly be sure of avoiding other setbacks. It is true that it will cost them dearly to put their Ships on a war footing at a time when the scarcity of Sailors here has raised wages

up to 3 Pounds sterling per month for those employed in Commerce. But they hope to find indemnification in the prizes which they will capture. I greatly fear that the need they have to indemnify themselves and their spirit for plundering and the all too natural hostility of English sailors will make them rather bold in their choice of means and less respectful than they should be towards neutral Flags. It appears however that they are in no way authorized to run down Ships of other Powers, judging from an announcement which the Government has just made, the Admiralty has made public that it is prepared to issue Commissions to Merchant Vessels belonging to private persons which are trading for its account, as well as to Ships engaged in the Service of the Government, to take and Seize all Ships, Goods or cargoes belonging to inhabitants of the Colonies now in rebellion, provided they possess the necessary qualifications and that the owners post bonds in accordance with the Act of Parliament. Those Commissions or Letters of marque at the same time confer the power to take and Seize all Vessels belonging to Great Britain or Ireland which might be discovered going to or coming from those same Colonies for the purpose of Commerce. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 319-25, LC Photocopy.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, APRIL 3 TO SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1777

London. Friday, April 4.

The *Lydia*, Dean, from Jamaica to Liverpool, is carried into Maryland; the ship and cargo are condemned and sold for a very considerable sum of money.<sup>1</sup>

On Monday se'nnight arrived at Liverpool the *Laurel*, Samuel White, master, with a schooner which she had taken in 28 deg. N. long. 60 deg. W. bound from Corunna, in Spain, for Philadelphia, with sundry dry goods on board, and a considerable sum of specie.

1. See Volume 7.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, APRIL 4." <sup>1</sup>

Yesterday Gen. Burgoyne, with his two Aides de Camp, embarked here on board the *Apollo* frigate, and sailed with a fair wind for Quebec.

1. *London Chronicle*, April 8 to April 10, 1777.

5 Apr.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 5 April 1777

Having received a Letter from Mr [John] Robinson one of the Secretaries to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury representing that he hath received from a Person of Credit the following Intelligence

There is a French Ship to sail from Bourdeaux about the 12th of this Month (April) loaded with Wines, Brandy Coarse Linnens, Leather Hatts and Shoes 2000 Stand of Small Arms, 4000 lb of Gunpowder and



10 Field Pieces, and is bound to Boston and failing to make that Port readily has orders to make the first Port she can to the Southward of Philadelphia.

I am commanded by My Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty to acquaint your Lordship therewith. I have the honor to be [&c.]

P S

Rt Honble Lord Viscount Howe, at New York  
(By the *Somerset* at Spithead)

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 353.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, APRIL 3 TO SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1777

London. Saturday, April 5.

The *Ann*, Kennedy, from Jamaica to New York, is taken by the rebels, and carried into Philadelphia.

The *Polly*, Denny, from the West Indies to Liverpool, is taken by the Americans, and carried into Philadelphia.

The Lords of the Admiralty have put his Majesty's frigate *Venus* into commission.

#### Postscript.

The following is a list of prizes taken by the *Alfred* frigate in one month: — Sailed from Rhode Island with 140 men, Nov. 2, 1776; the 12th took a brig with a valuable cargo from Liverpool for Halifax; on the 13th took ship *Mellish*, bound for Quebec, with cloathing for the army; she had 12,000 complete suits; on the 16th a snow from Gaspee for Barbadoes; on the 22d chased a transport, on shore off Canso, laden with provisions, and burnt her; on the 23d three transports, under convoy of the *Flora* frigate; on the 26th a ship from Liverpool to Halifax, mounting 10 carriage guns; on the 16th of December arrived with the *Mellish*, in Nantasket road, with 140 prisoners on board, among whom are the Attorney-General of Canada, his lady and family, with several officers and soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

1. See Volume 7.

*The General Advertiser. Liverpool*, FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1777

London, April 5.

A gentleman in a letter to Lord Germaine, relative to some captures at sea says, — "I observe by the public papers, that Sir Jos. Yorke had instructions to remonstrate strongly to the States General on the conduct of their Governor of St. Eustatia, in not only admitting American privateers into the road, but even suffering them to make captures almost under the guns of the Fort. To the latter complaint I happened to be an eye witness of the only circumstance that is brought to support the charge, namely, the taking a brig belonging to Dominica by an American privateer, called the *Baltimore Hero*; but I can with truth assure your Lordship, that so far from the vessel being taken near Fort Orange, that she was taken going round St. Kitt's, within a league of Sandy Point; and I am positive the Dutch Governor could no more

prevent the capture, than if she had been taken off the Western Islands. In respect to their being admitted into the Road, it is what the Governors of Martinico, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia and St. Domingo, unanimously do. The Danes at St. Croix go still farther; they even furnish false clearance to the American merchant vessels, to screen them from the men of war. I myself saw two vessels loaded with rice, &c. bound to St. Eustatia, taken by the *Hind*, released through means of these clearances."

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[On board H.M.S. *Burford*, Plymouth Harbor]

[1777] April 1. To-day I took an emetic of the doctor. There is another one of our company attacked with the *small-pox*, and to all human appearances it will go through the company. I do not know that I ever can have it better than now, as I am well dieted, and therefore do not try to escape it.

2. To-day the Admiral<sup>2</sup> and his lady, with several other ladies, came on board this ship to dine. This afternoon the man with small-pox was sent on shore, to the hospital.

3. Windy, cold weather. We hear that *three American* privateers went into Ireland, victualed and watered, and went out again, before it was known who they were.

4. This ship is bending her sails; it is reported that she is bound to sea soon. I suppose she is bound to Spithead, where a number from this place have gone.

5. Last evening the master-at-arms told us that we were to go on shore to-day at ten o'clock, but we are not there yet. To-day we had an opportunity of reading a newspaper, wherein is an account of the Americans taking nine hundred Hessian troops, on Christmas evening.<sup>3</sup> As we are not allowed a paper, when we get one we are obliged to be very cautious how and when we read it.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 30, 31.

2. Vice Admiral Molyneux Shuldham.

3. Battle of Trenton.

SILAS DEANE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

Paris 5th Apl 1777

I have the honor of inclosing to Your Excellency agreeable to my promise to Mr Gerard Copies of my Letters respecting Monsr La Fayette, which I hope will be agreeable, & can only say, I have felt much on the Occasion, for the delicate honor of the Marquiss, lest some report injurious to him should be spread, in either Country; — No Country need be ashamed of him, & I am sure he will one Day justify to The World, that my early prejudices in his favor were well founded. —

Our Intelligence by the last express, came down to the last of February, the Vessel sailed the 2d of March, & at that Time, nothing material had happened Lord Cornwallis was at Brunswic, & Amboy, and Genl Wash-

ington at Elisabeth Town, Morris Town, &c & was increasing his Army – daily encounters happened, & generally to the Advantage of The Americans – the Congress were well united and fully determined to support their independance, but were under many Difficulties, on Acct of Cannon & Warlike Stores, but particularly on Acct of a Number of Vessels of considerable Force to secure some of their harbors where Their Fleet might Assemble; meantime, Lord Howe has spread his Cruisers from one End to the other of the Continent, so that should only Two Shippes of the Line, strike on him, in any one part, he must be broken essentially, & the Operations of His succeeding Campaign frustrated. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 167, LC Photocopy.

### JOHN BARTON & CO. TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

Bordeaux 5 April 1777 –

As British Subjects We think it our Duty to Inform your Excellency of Matters which Regard the Welfare of Our King & Country, if such Informations as We May give can be Usefull to Either, We hope to procure thereby your Excellencies Approbation of our Loyal & Dutiful Sentiments, if Otherways, we flatter Ourselves, that in favor of these Sentiments your Excellency will pardon the Liberty we take in Troubling You – the cause of doing so at present proceeds from the Arrival here of An American Ship of War Caled the *Lexington*, Commanded by a Captn [Henry] Johnson, mounting 16 four pounders with a Number of Swivels & 50 Men, she parted from Baltimore the 28 Feby & come to an Anchor in this port the 3rd Inst, on her Passage she took the following Prizes –

The Brigg *Northam* of Biddeford, Richard Westcott Mastr in Government Employ, bound from Rhode Island to England, & Set fire to her Immedeatly After –

the *Hanover*, of Glasgow, Robert Pollock Mastr, bound to Jamaica with a Cargo of Herrings & Coals – this Vessell Was Ordered to get into the first port of France or Spain, to be disposed of – the Crews of Both Prizes Were taken on Board the American. – Capt Westcott & his Came soon to a Good Understanding with the Rebels & have been Kindly Treated, but Capt Pollock with all his were loaded with Irons, & Confined in the Ships Hold – on their Arrival they were Set at Liberty, & we have procured means for them to Return Immediatly to England – Most of Captn Westcotts Crew we fear may Engage with the Rebels, the American Ship was Immediatly Admitted to an Entry in the Admiralty, & is to be Refitted & Süpplied with what She may Want, Captn Johnson her Commander, set off Yesterday for Paris, with Dispatches from the Congress for Doctor Franklin & Mr Dean which We hear are of Mighty Consequence, he is to Return with Answers & proceed Back to Baltimore, as Soon as his Vessell is Repaired, this is the Information of Consequence, if your Excellency finds it of Any Use for the Welfare of our Country, we shall Aplaud

Ourselves for giving it & it Now procures Us the Honor of Subscribing Ourselves – Your Excellencys [&c.] John Barton & Co.

[Endorsed] In Lord Stormont's No 61

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 29.

6 Apr. (Sunday)

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM DARTMOUTH, APRIL 6.”<sup>1</sup>

Sailed from hence for Newfoundland, the *Sparks*, *Payne*, and *Royal Oak*, *Topley*. We are cramped much in our trade to Newfoundland this year, for want of sailors, the press-gangs having swept off great numbers, and many are fled into country villages, because they would not be dragged into the service.

1. *London Chronicle*, April 8 to April 10, 1777.

7 Apr.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN JERVIS, R.N., AND  
CAPTAIN JOSHUA ROWLEY, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas we have received information that several Ships have lately sailed from Philadelphia which may probably make for some French Ports in the Bay, You are thereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command with the first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & Cruize between Ushant and Cape Finisterre for the Protection of the Trade of His Majestys Subjects Diligently to look out for & use your best endeavours to take or destroy the above Ships or any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America which may be found in those Parts.

You are to continue upon the above Station for Three Weeks after passing the Latitude of Ushant & then return to Spithead and remain there until you receive further order.

Given &c 7th April 1777

Capt Jervis – *Foudroyant* – Spithead  
– Rowley – *Monarch* – Do  
By &c PS

Sandwich  
J Buller  
C Spencer

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 400–01.

PHILLIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN JOHN JERVIS, R.N., AND  
CAPTAIN JOSHUA ROWLEY, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 7th April 1777

My Lords Commrs of the Admty having received well grounded information that a Schooner of about 70 Tons,<sup>2</sup> arm'd against Boats & com-

manded by one Hammond, a little man who wears a green uniform with red Lappels & anchor Buttons lately arrived at Nantz from Baltimore in Maryland with Dispatches from the Congress, is to return with other dispatches when clean'd & new fitted, I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you (in addition to their Orders to you of this date) to look out for & to endeavour to intercept the said Vessel and upon your so doing to secure & send to me unopen'd by one of your Officers immediately after your return to Spithead, the Dispatches & Papers you may find on board her I am &c.

Ph<sup>d</sup> Stephens

Capt<sup>n</sup> Jervis – *Foudroyant* }  
 “ Rowley – *Monarch* } Spithead

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/1333, LC Photocopy.
2. *Jenifer*, Captain Larkin Hammond.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 7th April 1777

Having communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of the 1st instant, transmitting a Petition which you received from Joseph Rowe, the Master of the American Vessel lately taken by the *Albion*,<sup>2</sup> praying for the dismissal of his Brother in Law Enoch Grinliffe one of the Crew of the said Vessel, who is at present detained on board the *Albion*, and informing their Lordships that Capt Allen hath reported to you he believes what is set forth in the said Petition to be true; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to set the said Man ashore with the Master, for the reasons he has given, and in consideration of his being under Eighteen Years of age. I am &c

P: S:

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 361.

2. The Massachusetts ship *Montgomery*. See Volume 7, 393.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1777

London.

The *Andrew Doria*, one of the American armed Vessels of 14 Guns, has taken a King's Sloop of War of 12 Guns, after a smart Engagement.<sup>1</sup> By the American Accounts, published by Authority, it appears, that the West Indiamen taken by the American Cruizers, to the 1st of February, 1777, amounted to 250 Sail, valued at least at two Million sterling, exclusive of Transports, European, and other Vessels.

1. H. M. Sloop *Racehorse*. See Volume 7.

SILAS DEANE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Sir

The present Situation of England, and of her Fleet and Armies in America afford an Opportunity for making such a diversion, in favor, of the United States as cannot fail of weakening, & exhausting England, & will undoubtedly give the United States of America a superiority by Land, and effectually releive their Commerce by Sea, which effected they would soon

be in a Condition to repay the Monies borrowed, or Sums for which they may become indebted in Europe, and establish effectually their Credit. – The Strength of England at This Time by Land, & Sea in Europe, is well known to your Excellency by Land they have no Forces, either in England or Ireland of any consequence; & the moment an invasion is really Apprehended in either Kingdom, the Militia must be called out; and whilst they make their principal, & first dependance on their Fleet, they know too well at the same time, that such a Security is not To be relied on without a Force by Land of some sort or other, & they must apply to their Militia, for they can have no other, – The moment they become so alarmed, as to call out the militia, all reinforcements to their Army in America must be stopp'd, an immense National expence, will be instantly occasioned, besides The Loss of the Time of their Labourers, & Manufactures This expence, with the alarm which occasioned it will sink the Stocks, & impede if not wholly prevent the Loan they are making, which will defeat at once their Operations for the coming Season –

by preventing their Reinforcements, the United States, will instantly obtain a Superiority by Land in America – Lord Howe would be instantly apprized of the Alarm given here, & must collect his Fleet, to one point, to secure not only themselves but the retreat of the Army, which is constantly obliged to the Fleet for its security & its Supplies; this would at once open the ports of the United States, & enable them to send their produce to Market of which they have large quantities in Store, sufficient if at Market, to supply their present demands – This may be effected with very little, or no additional expence, to France. – By embarking a few Thousand Men, on board the Fleet at Brest, & at other ports, & ordering them actually to sail, apparently, on an Expedition of importance, This would effect the Alarm wish'd for, with all its important Consequences, even if such Fleet, & Army, should after a few Days, return, to their former or a different position without actual hostilities – but if before intelligence, could be sent to Lord Howe, Four or Five sail only of the Line, could be sent directly to New York his Lordship would be found there with not more, than Two or three Vessels of any Force, and with near Three hundred Sail, of unarmed Transports which must fall into the hands of these Four, or Five Shipp's of the Line, & with the Number of Sailors, give such a blow to the English Marine, as would disenable them to continue the War with the United States, or to wage a New one with any other Power – but as this last proposition involves in it a War between the Two Nations I defer urging any thing on that Subject Untill We are favored with an Answer to the Memoire, We had the honor of presenting – meantime the movement which I have now the honor of proposing, can give no just grounds for Complaint, on the part of England and I humbly conceive, cannot fail of producing the Above Effects –

I have the honor to remain with the most profound Respect Your excellency [&c.]

Silas Deane Paris April 7th 1777

BEAUMARCHAIS TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Monsieur le Comte

Paris, Monday 6 [7] April 1777

I have just left the Spanish Ambassador, whom I had not seen for a long time. I have drawn him a most faithful picture of the importance of effectual help for the Americans, of their present state, and of the still more critical danger of their becoming reconciled to England on the arrival of the courier who is shortly to be sent them from France, If they do not receive any Help or encouragement. I gave him my ideas On the necessity of a mysterious and combined maneuver of the French and Spanish fleets, which would have the good effect, without compromising those two Powers, of keeping the English forces in Europe, of Preventing the King of England from completing His loan, by the tightening of private money and the fall in public Securities, and of making the Americans hope that these movements are made in their favor, which would increase a hundred-fold the courage and strength of that nation. That If, during that time, actual Help reached them, I would answer for it that the English campaign Would again fail; and that, finally, my plan was, If he Approved of my step, to go and stir up the Spanish Ministry, and draw from them some help, which, Along with what I could steal from France, would give me the means of Maintaining the great edifice of the American successes Until next December, and Above all to prevent the reconciliation.

He replied – As a private person you know what I think and desire, but as Ambassador of Spain I can tell you neither one thing nor the other. And why so, Sir? Because the French Ministry has told me nothing of the matter – But, M. le Comte, it is with its consent that I speak to you – In such an affair and at a time of such importance, Sir, I must learn from the Minister that he approves your views before I can answer anything – M. le Comte, they will speak to you about it whenever you wish, for I am going to write to M. le Comte de Vergennes a summary of our conversation. – Sir, I will go tomorrow to Versailles, although it is not Ambassadors' day. Your Ministers Are all my friends, and should be at ease with me on all points. Arrange that they speak to me on the subject, otherwise, I shall not open my mouth. They well know that we ask nothing better than to act in concert.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 354–55, LC Photocopy.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO CONDE D'ARANDA <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Passy, April 7. 1777 –

I left in your Excellency's Hands, to be communicated, if you please, to your Court, a Duplicate of the Commission from the Congress, appointing me to go to Spain as their Minister Plenipotentiary. But as I understand that the Receiving such a Minister is not at present thought con-

venient, I am sure the Congress would have nothing done that might incommode in the least a Court they so much respect. I shall therefore postpone that Journey, till Circumstances may make it more suitable. And in the mean time, I beg leave to lay before his Catholic Majesty, through the Hands of your Excellency, the Propositions contain'd in a Resolution of Congress, dated Dec. 30. 1776. viz –

That if his Catholic Majesty will join with the United States in a War against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the Possession of Spain the Town & Harbour of Pensacola, provided the Inhabitants of the United States shall have the free Navigation of the Mississippi, and the Use of the Harbour of Pensacola; and they will (provided it shall be true that the King of Portugal has insultingly expelled the Vessels of these States from his Ports or has confiscated any such Vessels) declare War against the said King, if that Measure shall be agreeable to and supported by the Courts of Spain and France.

It is understood that the strictest Union subsists between those two Courts; and in case they should think fit to attempt the Conquest of the English Sugar Islands, the Congress have farther propos'd to furnish Provisions to the amount of Two Millions of Dollars, and to join this Fleet with 6 Frigates of not less than 24 Guns each, manned and fitted for Service; and to render any other Assistance which may be in their Power, as becomes good Allies, without desiring for themselves the Possession of any of the said Islands.

These Propositions are subject to Discussion and to receive such Modifications as may be found proper.

With great Respect, I have the Honour to be [&c.]

B Franklin

1. AHN, Estado, Legajo 3884, Section 3, LC Photocopy.

8 Apr.

CAPTAIN JONATHAN HARADEN TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

Onboard Brig *Tyrannicide* April 8 1777

Latt . . 45½d N. Longtd 35 W

Gentlemen

This day we fell in with and took the Bark *Lonsdale* James Grayson Masr from White Haven to Quebeck – after three Hours Engagement, Capt. Fisk gave chase at the same time to a Vessell which was a Frenchman and endeavour'd to come to our Assistance, but she struck before he cou'd come up to us –

I hope she will prove to be of more Value than the first we sent. – <sup>2</sup>

I have sent every Necessary Paper by Mr Sibley the prize Master – having nothing more at present, I remain [&c.]

Jon<sup>a</sup> Haraden

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 144, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. *Lonsdale* arrived safely at Portsmouth, N. H. on May 13, 1777. See Littlefield Silsby to Massachusetts Board of War, May 13, 1777.



JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Tuesday 8th of April 1777
3	ENE	SE	Moderate weather at 6 AM saw a sail to the
4	NEbE		NE. & one in the SE. we gave chaise to the sail
5	NE		in the NE. at 7 spake her a french snow from
6			the Isle of ray for St Peters at 8 Capt Haridon
7	ENE		came up with the sail in the SE. they fought 3
8			hours we being so far to Leward we could not
9			assist Capt Haridon at 11 she struck to the
10			American Arms with the loss of 3 men Killed &
11	WSW	South	one wounded. Capt Haridon lost none she was
12	EBN		the Bark <i>Lonsdale</i> from White haven for Que-
			beck James Grayson Master, 10 Days out, both
			the Vesels much damadge in there Riggins & sails
			the bark mounted 6 six pounders & 6 three pound-
			ers & 29 men -
			Latt By Obs 46D. .22m Longd in 33D. .52m
1	WNW	SE	Saw a sail in the NW gave Chaise at 5 found
2			her to be a french man stood to the Eastward at
5	ENE		7 spake Capt Haridon he had sent the bark for
7	NEBE		boston at 4. AClock
10	ENE		
12			Middle part freash gale and cloudey weather

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN MONTAGU <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas you were directed by our Order of the 20th February last to take under your command the Kings Ships & Vessels intended to be employed this Year for the protection of the Fisheries at & about Newfoundland & of the Fishing Ships & Vessels belonging to His Majestys Subjects to & from that Island; You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & make the best of your way to the said Island; and use your best endeavours to protect the said Fisheries & Fishing Ships conformable to the Instructions you received from Us last Year. Given &c 8th April 1777

To John Montagu Esqr Vice Adml of the  
White &c &c at & about Newfoundland &c  
By &c PS

Sandwich  
C Spencer  
Lisburne

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 401. Montagu sailed from St. Helens on April 10, in H.M.S. *Romney*, *London Chronicle*, April 15 to April 17, 1777.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord,

Admty Office, 8th April 1777.

His Majesty's Ship *Proteus* which, with the *Porpoise*, has been appointed to carry the Camp Equipage, Cloathing & Stores intended for the Use of the Army in Canada, continuing Wind bound in this River and the *Porpoise* being on her Passage from the Nore to Spithead where she may be very soon expected, and where a great Number of Merchant Ships with valuable Cargoes are waiting for Convoy impatient to proceed on their Voyage: Under these Circumstances, we submit to Your Lordship whether it will not be adviseable that we should order the Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Blond* now at Spithead & ready to sail, to take the *Porpoise* on her Arrival there under his Command, as also the Merchant Ships aforementioned under his Convoy, and proceed with them to Quebec without waiting for the *Proteus*, as in that case another Frigate may be in readiness to sail with the *Proteus* from Spithead by the time she arrives there. We are &c

Sandwich C. Spencer H Penton

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 152-53.

*Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1777

London, April 7, 8.

A letter received from an Officer on board Lord Howe's ship at New York, says, "His Lordship has just been some time dangerously ill, but is now perfectly recovered. Our seamen in the fleet live extremely well, being put at three watches by order from the Admiral, and instead of bad provisions, which they were formerly supplied with, have now the best that can be got, their duty which used to be a toil, is since this new regulation become a pleasure; they are likewise allowed 20 or 30 men at a time from each ship (in proportion to their complement) to go on shore at a time, to regale themselves. These indulgences, added to the kind treatment from the Officers, has elevated the Sailors in general, so that they declare they give the preference to the Navy, which formerly they gave to the Merchants service, and dreaded serving on board of a man of war.[""]

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes. April 8. 1777

The foregoing is copy of my last P Capt Young who sailed from hence the latter end of last month. I have now the pleasure to send you the Tin Case I mentioned which has but just come to hand, with a packet of Newspapers. <sup>2</sup> I likewise send by Capt [Larkin] Hammond 13 Books which Doctr Franklin ordered to be transmitted one for each State -

P S April 14. 1777 The Ship I have mentioned in some of my Letters is now loaded & will sail in a few days. <sup>3</sup> Her Cargo being very valuable,

The Hon. Deputies have ordered her to be sent to St Domingo there to unlade her Cargo which will be shipped in different Bottoms I am &c  
 The Honl R Morris Esq  
 & Committee of Corr. Phila

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

2. In a letter of this date to Benjamin Franklin, Williams made an interesting observation: "I have ordered the *public advertiser* & *London Evening [Post]* for ½ a year certain and shall convey them regularly to the Congress—the first paper you know is in favour of Govt the latter is strong on the other side I therefore chose them as the truth may lay between the two," Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

3. *Thérèse*.

9 Apr.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN MILLIGAN  
 H.M.S. *Blonde*, SPITHEAD <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we intend that the ship you command together with His Majestys Sloop *Porpoise* which may be hourly expected to join you shall proceed forthwith into the River St Lawrence with such Storeships Victuallers & Trade as are assembled at Spithead or shall arrive there before you Sail; You are hereby required and directed to take the said Sloop under your command (Lt [Thomas] Hayne who commands her being directed to obey your Orders) and then making enquiry for & taking under your Convoy all such Storeships Victuallers & Trade as may be ready & where Masters may be Desirous of accompanying You put to Sea with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & make the best of your way consistent with their security with them into the River St Lawrence & having seen them as far as the Isle of Bic you are to direct Lt Hayne to proceed on to Quebec with the Ships & Vessels going thither, and upon his arrival there to deliver the inclosed Pacquet to the Senior Officer for the time being of His Majs Ships & Vessels in the abovementioned River & follow his Orders for his further proceedings and you are to make the best of your way in the Ship you command to New York (calling however at some convenient Port in your way to recruit your Wood & Water if you find it necessary) where you are to deliver to Vice Adml Ld Visct Howe the Pacquet you will also receive herewith addressed to him, and putting yourself under his Lordships command follow his Orders for your further proceedings

In case the *Silver Eel* Transport laden with Cloathing & Stores for the Army in Canada arrives at Spithead (to which place she is ordered from the River Thames) before you sail, you are to take her under your Convoy and to be particularly attentive to her during the Voyage; but if she does not arrive at Spithead before you are in other respects ready to proceed you are not to delay your departure upon her account.

And Whereas we have ordered Vice Adml Sr Jas Douglas to cause Forty of the Supernumerary Seamen & Landmen who have been raised for His Majestys Fleet to be put on board the Ship you command in order to their being carried to Quebec to be disposed of as the abovementioned Senior

Officer shall direct, You are hereby further required and directed to receive the said Supernumeraries on board and to carry them into the River St Lawrence so soon as they shall have been paid two Months Wages advance & also the Bounties to which they may be respectively entitled, for which we have this Day sent orders to the Navy Board; And when you get to the Isle of Bic You are to put them on board the *Porpoise* or if she cannot conveniently carry the whole to put such as shall remain on board any of the Merchant Ships bound to Quebec to be disposed of on their arrival at that place as the Senior Officer abovementioned shall direct.

You are to bear the said Supernumeraries on a separate List for Wages from the time of their coming into the Service respectively until you shall dispose of them as abovementioned, and for Victuals during their continuance on board; taking care to deliver to them Pay Lists to enable them to receive their Wages accordingly.

You are to be very attentive to the Ships & Vessels which proceed under your Convoy: keeping them together by every means in your power; & on no account leaving them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep Company with you as we expect that in the course of your Voyage you accomodate your progress to that of the worst sailing Ships amongst them.

You are at the same time to take all possible care to prevent the said Ships & Vessels from seperating from you & to give their Masters respectively such Orders & directions as you judge most conducive to that purpose: And in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part Company with you or disobey your Orders you are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names with the Circumstances attending such seperation or disobedience that such measures may be taken thereupon as shall be judged necessary. Given &c 9th April 1777.

Sandwich Lisburne H Palliser

By &c PS

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 404-08.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, APRIL 8 TO THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1777

London [April 9].

Yesterday there was a full Board of Admiralty, when several officers attended and received their commissions, with orders to repair on board their respective ships.

The same day application was made for several letters of marque and reprisals against the Americans, pursuant to an act for that purpose, which were granted accordingly.

A Lieutenant of a man of war belonging to Admiral Young's squadron, stationed at Antigua, who commands a schooner of 10 guns, and 38 men, writes thus, "I am just returned from a cruize off Martinico; have met with no success, but had a very near chance of being sunk, for in chasing an American brig, which ran into the above place for protection, I stood too

far in after her, and was fired at from the battery, which killed three of my men, wounded several others, and greatly damaged the hull of my vessel."

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF  
SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

[Extract]

[Paris] April 9 [1777].

... these Courts [France and Spain] have particular strong Reasons for keeping out of the War as long as they can, besides this general One, that on both sides the Nation attacking loses the Claim which when attack'd it has for Aid from its Allies. And we have these Advantages in their keeping out of War that they are better able to afford us private Assistance, that by holding themselves in Readiness to invade Britain they keep more of her Force at home, and that they leave to our arm'd Vessels the whole Harvest of Prizes made upon her Commerce, and of Course the whole Encouragement, to encrease our Force in Privateers, which will breed Seamen for our Navy.

Capt. Wickes made a Cruise this Winter, and return'd with 5 Prizes, of the Produce of which we suppose Mr [Thomas] Morris will acquaint you; for they are sold, tho' the bringing them into France has given some Trouble and uneasiness to the Court; and must not be too frequently practised. We have order'd him to make another Cruise before he returns to America, and have given him for a Consort the arm'd Cutter [*Dolphin*] Capt. Nicholson; they will sail in a few Days.

Mr [William] Hodge writes us that he has provided another Cutter. We intended to have employ'd one of them as a Packet, but several of yours being now here, and having lately made a Contract for sending one every Month, a Copy of which we enclose,<sup>2</sup> we shall make use of this new Purchase as a Cruiser.

All Europe is for us. Our Articles of Confederation being by our Means translated & published here, have given an Appearance of Consistence & Firmness to the American States & Government, that begins to make them considerable.

The separte Constitutions of the several States are also translating & publishing here, which afford abundance of Speculation to the Politicians of Europe. And it is a very general Opinion that if we succeed in establishing our Liberties, we shall as soon as Peace is restored receive an Immense Addition of Numbers and Wealth from Europe, by the Families who will come over to participate in our Privileges and bring their Estates with them. Tyranny is so generally established in the rest of the World, that the Prospect of an Asylum in America for those who love Liberty gives general Joy, and our Cause is Esteem'd the Cause of all Mankind. Slaves naturally become base as well as wretched. We are fighting for the Dignity & Happiness of Human Nature. Glorious it is for the Americans to be call'd by

Providence to this Post of Honour. Cursed and Detested will every one be that deserts or betrays it.

We are glad to learn the Intention of Congress to send Ministers to the Empire, Prussia and Tuscany: With Submission We think Holland, Denmark, Sweden & Russia, (if the Expence is no Objection) should not be neglected. It would be of great Service, if among them we could get a free Port or two, for the Sale of Prizes, as well as for Commerce: A Commencement of Intercourse has been made with Prussia, as you will see by the enclosed Copies of Letters between his Minister and us. We suppose as the Congress has appointed one of us to Spain, they will order another of us to some of the other Courts: as we see no utility equal to the charge, & yet some Inconveniency, in a joint Commission here, where One, when freed from Commercial Cares & Action is sufficient for the Business. As soon as the Court of Spain shall be willing to receive a Minister (which from Mr Lee's Information seems not to be at present the Case) Mr Franklin intends to go thither in Obedience to Orders he has received. Mr Lee had express'd his Readiness to go to Prussia or Tuscany before the Intention of Congress to send to those Courts was known. And he waits here awhile by the Advice of his Colleagues expecting that perhaps the next ship may bring his Future Destination.

For the procuring and sending more certain and Speedy Intelligence, We have as before mentioned entered into a Contract here, whereby we are to have a Packet boat dispatched every Month. The first will sail in about a fortnight. As we are yet without an explicit Answer from Court, on several important Points, and we shall have that speedy Opportunity, we do not now enlarge in Answer to the several Letters received by Hammond, Bell, Adams, and Johnson. We only now assure the Congress that we shall be attentive to execute all the Resolutions & Orders they have sent us for our Government, and we have good Hopes of Success, in most of them.

. . . The British Fleet is not yet half mann'd. The Difficulty in that Respect was never before found so great, and is ascribed to several Causes; viz. a Dislike of the War; the Subtraction of American Sailors; the Number our Privateers have taken out of British Ships; and the enormous transport Service. The French are free from this Difficulty, their Seamen being all Registred, and serving in their Turns. Their Fleet is nearly ready and will be much Superior to the English when join'd with that of Spain, which is preparing with all Diligence. The Tone of the Court accordingly rises; and it is said that a few Days since when the British Ambassador intimated to the Minister, that if the Americans were permitted to continue drawing Supplies of Arms &c from this Kingdom, the Peace could not last much Longer; he was firmly answer'd, *Nous ne desirons pas la Guerre et nous ne le craignons pas.* — We neither desire War nor fear it. When all are ready for it, a small Matter may suddenly bring it on; and it is the Universal Opinion that the Peace cannot continue another Year. Every Nation in Europe wishes to see Britain humbled, having all in their Turns

been offended by her Insolence, which in Prosperity she is apt to discover on all Occasions: A late Instance manifested it towards Holland; when being elate[d] with the News of some success in America, and fancying all that Business ended, Sir Joseph York[e] delivered a Memorial to the States, expressing his Masters Indignation against them, on Acct of the Commerce their Subjects carried on with the Rebels, and the Governor of Eustatia's returning the Salute of one of the American Ships: <sup>3</sup> remarking that, (if that Commerce was not Stopt, & the Governor punished) the King knew what appertain'd to the Dignity of his Crown, & should take proper Measures to vindicate it. The States were much offended, but answer'd coolly, that they should enquire into the Conduct of their Governour, and in the meantime would prepare to secure themselves against the Vengeance with which Britain seem'd to threaten them. Accordingly they immediately order'd 26 Men of War to be put on the Stocks.

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 33-44, NA. Continuation of March 12, 1777 letter.
2. The agreement for monthly packet boats was executed between Franklin, Deane and Le Ray de Chaumont, Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 45-46, NA. There is no evidence that the packet boat plan ever became fully operative.
3. Salute from the fort at St. Eustatius to the Continental Navy brig *Andrew Doria*. See Volume 7.

10 Apr.

LORD SUFFOLK TO COUNT DE WELDEREN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Copy

St. James's, April 10, 1777.

His Majesty has heard with pleasure, that their High Mightinesses have fulfilled his expectation; that they have recalled their Governor; that the insult is disavowed, <sup>2</sup> and that orders are dispatched to the governors and commanders of the colonies of their High Mightinesses in the West-Indies, to observe strictly the placarts and orders against the exportation of military stores to his Majesty's colonies in America, actually in rebellion; and being persuaded that their High Mightinesses will watch over the punctual execution of their ordinances, with pleasure puts an end to all cause of vexation that the consequences of the offensive conduct of the Governor of St. Eustatia may have given them. I have the honour to be,

Suffolk.

1. Almon, ed., *Remembrancer*, V, 94, 95. De Welderen was Dutch Minister at London.

2. Salute to Continental Navy brig *Andrew Doria* at St. Eustatius.

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

Whitehall 10th April 1777

Orders having been given to provide the Cloathing for His Majesty's Troops serving under General Sir William Howe & to be in readiness for shipping by the 20th of July next, for the Freight of which 750 Tons will

be necessary, I am commanded by the King to signify to Your Lordships, His Majesty's Pleasure, that you do direct the Navy Board to engage Transports for its Conveyance, capable of being sufficiently armed to make a good Defence, against any Rebel Cruizers it may be expected they might meet with in case of Separation from the Convoy they shall be appointed to sail with, and also of accommodating at least Fifty of His Majesty's Troops on board of each for their greater Security.

I am also to signify to your Lordships His Majesty's further Pleasure, that you do direct the Navy Board to provide Transports for the Conveyance of about 350 Recruits to the said Army, which will be in readiness to embark at Chatham on the 25th of this Month. I am &ca

Geo: Germain

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 2, 425-28.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, APRIL 8 TO THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1777

London [April 10].

Yesterday four ships, that have been fitted up as Letters of Marque against the Provincials, came out of dock, and began to take their guns on board, in order to sail.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A MERCHANT IN DUNKIRK, TO HIS FRIEND IN LEITH, DATED DUNKIRK, 10TH APRIL, 1777" <sup>1</sup>

I have been in company with Capt. Watson, of the ship *Congress*, who arrived here, a few days ago, from Charlestown, with a cargo of rice, indigo, tobacco, and skins; and is now loading with military stores, and sundry goods. He assures me, that there were no fewer than twenty privateers out from Charlestown, from 6 to 20 guns, and from 50 to 300 men aboard: That from the beginning of December last to 10th February, when he left that port, upwards of thirty-five vessels had been taken from the British, and carried in within these two months; some of the best and largest were fitting out as privateers when he came away, and would be ready to sail in a few weeks on their cruises. Many French and Dutch vessels had arrived with military stores and goods, and taken the produce of the country in return so that trade was pretty brisk; yet the majority of the people were sick of this war. No English ships of war had been on their coast cruising since Sir Peter Parker's fleet left them.

1. *The General Advertiser*. Liverpool, May 16, 1777.

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris 10th April 1777 -

Since writing my anixed of 8th Inst have discovered what was the intention of Mr [Arthur] Lee's Journey to Spain, in the first place he went to borrow money on account of the Congress, in which he has succeeded, but



to what amt I cannot say, in the next place to desire permission for the Continental Cruizers to carry their prizes into the Spanish Ports, in this also he has been successfull, hope to have some more concerning his Journey by the next Conveyance –

Nicholson plan is altered since my last, he is to have the Cutter which was purchased at Dover, in which he and Weakes [Wickes] with his own Ship are to Cruze together, on the Spanish Coast, I cannot say at present in what Latitude but Nicholson will inform me by letter from Nantes, when the same shall be mentioned to you, – The Capt [Thomas] Bell which arrived some time since, has purchased a twenty Gun Ship in which he means to proceed to America – his and Nicholsons Vessells will be manded by french Officers & Seamen, (I think this worthy your notice) – A Capt [John] Adams is also arrived in little Vessel, (unarmed) <sup>2</sup> with dispatches from the Congress to Mr Deane, he left Boston the 2d March last, he will depart tomorrow with two other Gentlemen for Nantes, in order to return, Can't learn that he is to carry any dispatches –

Two Ships just arrived at Nantes loaded with Tobacco, the one from Philadelphia and the other from So Carolina. . .

Several French Merchants have offered Nicholson Vessells from 20 to 64 Guns to Cruze against his Majesties frigate[s] &c, all of which he has declined for the Present – Nicholson informed me before his departure that Carmicheel told him, that if Great Britain should offer any terms to the Americans, (save acknowledging their Independency) France and Spain would not allow the same, this too plainly proves how Closely linked they are already,

Their is at present 6 French men of War cruizing in the Bay of Biscay, these Vessells conduct the American Ships into Port – Carmicheel Corrisponds with a Mr [Joshua] Johnson of your City Merchant, he is from America, his business is chiefly in the Tobacco business, he Yesterday received a letter from him while we were at Dinner at Mr Deanes – did not hear the contents, he signs no name to his letters (this I saw by making a side squint) I believe they have a private Channell thro' which they receive their Accounts from England, – a Mr [Samuel] Petrie whent from here few days since and carried many letters, Immagine this man will return soon, and bring answers to the same, is their no possiability of coming at this man in England, I mean just before he intends to Cross the Water for France, by which means you would be made acquainted with the Contents of his letters and the different Corrispond[ent]s fictitious Names &c &c, (this by way of hint) – Alderman [William] Lee is expected over here in short time, perhaps 'twould be prudent to play the same t[r]ick on him at Dover or wherever he means to embark, – I hope you'll excuse the Liberty my Dr Sir which I take, but be assured 'tis from mere motives of your being better acquainted with your Enemis & their Secrets &c, – I dont mean to dictate but only give it as my humble Opinion, I think this might be done upon Sea, without any great bustle as he has made himself Notorious, but I am done on this Subject – If you recollect when I was in England you asked me if

I knew wether any Muskets, Locks or &c had been ship from the port of London for America, or on Account of any American, at that time my answer was, I did not know positively; since my arrivel here I have been informed it has been done from Birmingham, Diggs [Thomas Digges] is the man and I have some reason to think that Lee was concerned, 'twas only Locks for Guns or Musketts, they where cleared out at the Custom for Bilboa in Spain but went to America, – Lee I realy think was conc[e]rned in this adventure, as he very frequently [had said] to me that scheem was practicable, and might be done without the knowledge of any person, but wether he was actually concerned or not, I will not take upon me to say, – all I could wish is that no notice m[a]y be taken of this as its already past, and Diggs a particular friend –

And now for peice of news, the noted Yankey, Capt. [Henry] Johnson who was taken some time last summer and brought into London, but afterwards made his escape onboard the man of War in which he was confined is arrived here, he brought dispatches from the Congress and this day delivered them to Mr Deane in my Presence and while we where at Dinner. he left Baltimore 28th Feby last, the Congress was at that place at that time, – he arrivd at Bourdeaux where his Ship is at Present, She is called the *Lexington*, mounts 16 four pounders, is a remarkable fast sailing Ship; She has about 60 Men onboard, on his passage he took two prizes, the one an empty Transport, which he sat fire to at Sea, after taking everything that was valuable from onboard, the Scoundrel says She lighted him along very pretily for the best part of a Night, and at last went to the bottom, the other was a Scotch brig bound from Some port in London to Jamaica loaded with Herring & Coals this Vessell he brought into port with him 'tis thought she will sell for near one thousand pounds Sterling<sup>3</sup>

this Captain is the most conceited Chap I ever met with, and I am much mistaken if his own Imprudence don't bring him into your hands once more, from whom I am convinced he not make his escape to very easially, this fellow I immagine will not depart from here, this week or two, before he sets out you shall be properly informed . . .

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 681.

2. Massachusetts schooner *Lynch*, formerly one of the vessels commissioned by Washington.

3. *Hanover* was retaken, not brought into port by Johnson. See "News from Falmouth dated April 14." *Northam* was the ship burnt.

11 Apr.

# LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

Remarks Friday April 11th 1777

Close thick foggy Weather

Close Reeft the T Sails Got the Main Top Gallant Yard Down

At 10. handed both T. Sails, Struck both T. Gallt Mast

Fresh Gails with Rain

Nothing More Remarkable this day

No Obsn this Day

First part of these 24 hours begins with fresh Gails & Rain  
 At 5. P.M. Made a Sail. Loos'd our Close Reeft T. Sails & Stood  
 for her. At 6. Came up with the Chace, she being a Sloop from  
 Lisbon bound to Southhampton. Order'd her to keep under our Lee  
 & make Sail, the Weather being so bad that we Could not board her. –

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

#### LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY <sup>1</sup>

My Lords,

St James's 11th April 1777.

In addition to the Vessels engaged and prepared to sail for the last Division of Hessian Chasseurs as soon as We learn that they are in readiness to embark at Boemerleh, I am to instruct your Lordships to give Orders for the Conveyance of 200 Tons of Hessian Stores which are left in Depot at that Place. The Hatchway of the Vessel destined to this Service should be large, as the Casks, in which the Stores are packed up, are said to be particular so – and from the Nature and Importance of the Cargo it would be material that the Vessel should be capable of some defence against Pirates in Case she should be separated from Her Convoy. I am &ca

Suffolk.

1. PRO, Foreign Office, 95/355, 335.

#### MINUTES OF THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD <sup>1</sup>

[London] Friday 11th April 1777

The Board took into consideration the protest of X'pher Yeoman, Master, and Wm Stonehouse, Carpenter, of the *Favourite* Transport, inclosed in Mr [John]Wilkinsons Letter of the 1st instant, desiring a Bill to be made out for the said Ship according to the Deptford Officers Valuation, and it appearing by the said protest that their parting with the Convoy was by bad Weather, and that her being taken by the Privateer was unavoidable, having no Guns to defend the Ship All which Circumstances being confirmed by the Master of the said Transport, who attended the Board upon the subject, The Board think it therefore unnecessary to put the Owners to the trouble & expence of procuring any further proof by a Court Martial or otherwise, and do direct that Bills be made out for her Freight to the day she was taken, and for the Value of her according to what is stipulated in the Charter party, after a proper Abatement shall be made for her Wear & Tear during the time she was in the Service, and a Bill of Sale of her shall be made to his Majesty, to enable the Board to property in her in case she should be retaken.

Give a Copy to Mr Davies

Write to Deptford Officers for their Valuation of her. <sup>2</sup>

1. PRO, Admiralty 106/2595.

2. *Favourite*, Christopher Yeoman, master, was condemned at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, valued "about £2300 lawful." See Volume 7, 1274.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

at London the 11th April 1777.

... I am completely convinced of the importance at this time of keeping abreast of additional forces which England can procure through the issuance of Letters of marque. It is a subject to which I shall continue to give all the attention I can. . . .

I have always thought, M. le Comte, that with the coming of Spring, and the resumption of navigation, there could be only two ways by which we could relieve ourselves of all anxiety on the intentions of this Country: either protect our Commerce by Squadrons which we will send to our Islands; or keep our Fishermen from Going out. This last choice is doubtless the best, since it has been adopted by the King and his Council.

East Winds which have been blowing for a long time have prevented the arrival of Ships from America so that we have been without news from that coast for nearly two months . . .

As for the [French] Sailors who sign on [English ships] voluntarily and who are content with their Lot, it is not possible to get them back. For those who are pressed and who let me know, I will appeal to the Admiralty at once, which up to now has not made any difficulty in giving back to me the men for whom I asked. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 384-93, LC Photocopy.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN JOHN ADAMS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Paris, April 11, 1777] <sup>2</sup>

With this, you will receive Dispatches; with which you are to sail with all possible expedition. You will enclose the Dispatches in a Box with Lead, & have it always ready to sink, should you be in unavoidable danger of falling into the Enemies hands. To prevent this misfortune you will constantly keep a good look-out, & be very cautious how you approach any vessel to speak her; which should not be attempted, but in case of absolute necessity & want of information on the Coast. You will steer for the northern ports, & make the first harbour you possibly can, belonging to the United States. On your arrival, apply to the continental Agent or (if there should be none such) to the person in authority there, to have your Dispatches immediately forwarded to Congress, from whom you will wait for future orders.

Confiding much in your diligence & discretion We wish you a speedy & prosperous voyage.

1. Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 25, 2147, LC.

2. The date is based upon the statement of George Lupton written in Paris on April 10 to the effect that Adams "will depart tomorrow . . . for Nantes, in order to return."

SILAS DEANE TO ROBERT MORRIS <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

My Dear Friend

Paris April 11th 1777

Your letter by Captn [Thomas] Bell I receivd & immediately took measures for procuring a vessel of Force for him - I had the good Fortune

to meet Mr Cunningham here, who agreed for his house. The Vessel is proposed to carry 20 nine pounders & 150 men & I hope will sail in 20 days from this time on a cruise – The difficulty is in procuring men, France arming calls for all her Seamen – As to Commerce Mr Delap fitted out a brig on our joint acct, viz  $\frac{1}{3}$  to your house  $\frac{1}{3}$  to me &  $\frac{1}{3}$  to himself; She has sailed some time – Mr Bromfeild sailed with a cargo of goods addressed to your house to the amount of one hundred thousand Livres; These are all the joint concerns I have taken. Insurance is not yet obtained in Europe on acct of the extreme unsettled state of affairs here & the expectation of a war breaking out suddenly at Sea; which renders every thing uncertain . . .

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

12 Apr.

LOG OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE *Rising States* <sup>1</sup>

Remarks Saturday April 12th 1777

At 6. A.M. Sent Mr. Bullfinch on board the prize & made a Sail & Gave Chace.

At 10. A.M. Came up with the Chace She being a Dutch Ship from the Straits bound to Rotterdam, hove our Mn T. Sail to the Mast, to wait for the prize to come up.

At Medr prize Came up Sent her men on board hoisted our boat in & made Sail <sup>2</sup>

Nothing More Remarkable this day

Lattd by Obsn 46. . 34 N

1. Log of the *Rising States*, PRO, HCA 30/716.

2. "Still continuing our cruise in the Channel of England till the 12th of April when we fell in with a sloop from Lisbon bound to South-Hampton having on board Wine and fruit. we took her and put Mr Bullfinch on board her as prize master (being our 1st Lieutt) and men sufficient to work her into France and we proceeded for France as fast as possible the wind being to the Southward," Connor's Journal, LC.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

[Admiralty Office] 12th April 1777

There being various reports of the number of Captures made by the several Ships under your Lordship's command, and my Lords not finding any account of that nature among the Papers which have accompanied your Lordships Dispatches, I am commanded by their Lordships to desire you will send them, with your next, a List of the several Captures which have been made by the Ships of your Squadron, and that your Lordship will continue to do so, from time to time as opportunity offer.

And it having been represented that many inconveniences have arisen from the want of a Court at New York duly authorized to take cognizance, and proceed to the adjudication, of Prizes carried into that Port, I have their Lordships permission to acquaint you, that a Bill is now preparing,

and will soon be presented to Parliament for authorising the Board of Admiralty to institute such a Court.

I have only to add that the *Somerset* sailed from Spithead the 7th Inst with her Convoy to join your Lordship, and that the *Apollo*, with General Burgoyne onboard sailed from Plymouth the 2nd inst for Quebec: I have the honor to be &ca

P S

By the *St Albans*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 391-93.

*The General Advertiser. Liverpool, FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1777.*

London, April 12.

So far from the American Admiral Hopkins having sailed with his Fleet from Providence, some Letters received from Philadelphia, by the Way of Amsterdam, assert, that the Vessels which compose his Squadron were so effectually blocked up by some English Men of War, that it was impossible for them to put out to Sea, without being taken. It is likewise added, their Guns had been all taken out and carried on Shore, as were all their Provisions and Stores, and that Hopkins was so apprehensive of the above Vessels sooner or later being taken by the King's Ships, that preparations were made on board to burn them whenever an Attempt may be made to take them.

The Fees which belong to the Secretary of the Admiralty on granting Letters of Marque, together with those on Protections, make his Office more beneficial than that of the First Lord, viz. 300 l. per Annum.

#### JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[On board H.M.S. *Burford*, Plymouth Harbor]

[1777. April] 9. Two more of our company are quite unwell, and we expect it is small-pox. A lad who stole, and was obliged to run the gauntlet twice before, stole again, and to-day was punished in the same manner.

10. To-day three more were sent on shore with the small-pox, and three returned from the Hospital well, who were carried on shore the 15th of February. They tell us that they were used well. We hear that Captain Joseph Rowe has been taken in the ship "*Nancy*" from Newbury, and has been brought in here. He has now his liberty on shore, but his men are on board the *Ocean*, which is the Admiral's ship.

11. To-day the same lad who has stolen and run the gauntlet three times before, stole again; and we took another method with him. We tied him up, and our boatswain's mate gave him two dozen with the cat, on his bare back. At the least computation, in the three times which he run the gauntlet, exclusive of the punishment he received to-day, he must have had seven or eight hundred lashes, with hard nettles, on a bare back.

12. Pleasant weather. To-day *eight* more of our company were carried on shore to the Royal Hospital, with the *itch*, and myself amongst the number. Alas! little did I think, six months ago, that I should ever set my foot on this island. It is four months and seventeen days since I left Ports-

mouth, all of which time I have been on the water. There are now twenty-four of our company in these hospitals, some with the small-pox, and the rest with the *itch*.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 31–33.

SILAS DEANE TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

Memoire

[Paris] April 12th 1777 –

The request of the Congress for Eight Shipp's of the Line not being granted it is proposed to supply this want of theirs as far, and as early as possible that Three stout Shipp's of Fifty to Sixty Guns each be purchased, or hired in Sweden.

That they take on board, and under their convoy, in other Vessels, The brass Cannon, & other Stores, requested by Congress, also Anchors, Cordage, Sail Cloth, and materials, sufficient to equip, the Number of Capital Ships, wanted in America, where they may soon be built.

That to Effect This, one of the Commissioners, make a Journey to Sweden, and in this way, pass thro' Prussia and endeavor to obtain there the Liberty of their Ports, and of raising, & recruiting Seamen &c. &c.

By succeeding in this plan, just hinted at, The United States may be furnished with the Fleet they want, & though not so early in the Season, yet on some Accounts in a better manner, & productive of better Consequences, since could they obtain The Ships they want, of either France, or Spain it would, it is true weaken their Freinds just so much in Europe, whilst by the other method, the United States will be in a Situation to render their Freinds essential aid either in America, or Europe. –

The Commissioners may pass in a private Capacity, & may with proper Letters of introduction to principal persons in Sweden, undoubtedly succeed and the Advantages must be great every way, – These Ships may convoy back a Number of Tobacco Vessels to Europe, & open the Commerce of America to a considerable degree –

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 179, LC Photocopy. The Memoir was enclosed in Deane's letter of the same day to Gérard.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, LORIENT<sup>1</sup>

Versailles 12th April 1777

I am informed, Sir, that the Privateer *Reprisal*, Capt Wickes, has not yet left l'Orient. The repairs which he has made to the Ship could not require such a considerable time as has been taken to repair her. Therefore, you will not postpone Notifying Capt Wickes that he must set sail, and you will declare to him His Majesty will not Permit him to station His Cruizer Upon the Coasts of france. You will advise me of His departure, which you will hasten as much as possible. I am, Sir [&c.]

de Sartine

1. APL, 1E478, 23. Gonet was a naval representative at the port.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Gentlemen

Nantes April 12. 1777

When I wrote last the Cutter was arrived tho' I did not know it.<sup>2</sup> As soon as I recvd your orders I lodged the necessary ones at painbeuf for the Capt when he should arrive, he had then come up to town to find out to whom he was addressed & returning without Success he found his orders on board this little accident has been attended with no other disadvantage than the loss of two or 3 Days time. – I have got her to an unfrequented part of the river where the necessary alterations to receive 8 3 Pounders 4, 2 pounders for Bow & Stern Chasers & 10 Swivels will be made as soon as possible in the mean time every necessary & cautious method is taking to secure the Crew –.

When this Vessell is ready for Sea she will still be french property & apparently bound to Goré, when american Colours are hoisted the real design can be no longer concealed, for fear of difficulty with the Commisaire when the property is altered it may be necessary to have a hint from authority that the officer may venture to shut his Eyes, of this you are the best Judges. Capt Nicholson desires me to ask for a Commn for a Lieut. . . .

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

2. *Dolphin*.

13 Apr. (Sunday)

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir

Nants April 13th 1777 –

On my arrival here last Thursday I found the Cutter in the River, about 10 miles below this Place; we are much Plaged with the People that brought her round from Havre, the Men Say they wont go, that they were Shiped to go in her as A Packet to America, as Such they will go, & no other ways, the French Capt first told me he wou'd be very glad to go in her, if we wou'd make up his wages to him, that he Shiped at, wch is 100 livres pr Month, So we Proposed giving him the Masters birth, wch we thought woud Please him, & render him very useful to us, as he Speaks very good English, however Mr Clark who is first Lieut, is Just come up from the Vessel, Says he wont go out in her at any rate, for we Sent Some guns on board of her this Day, wch has frighted him So much, that he says he wont go in an Arm'd Vessell agst the English, I Shall go down in the Morning, & if that is the case, discharge him imediately, with his People; I have got a Second Mate (of Discharged American ship,) & Six hand, all Americans Signed Articles with me, have Promised the Second Mate the 2d Lieutts birth, So that You will be Pleased to furnish us with two Lieutts Commissions, wch Capt Wickes Says we are obliged to have, You have forgot to Send us the Register of the Vessel, Capt Clark & the Doctr Seem well satisfied with their Ship; She is a very fine, Stout, little Vessel, I shall make her look very Wicked; am afraid She will cost You A deal too much money; however Shall do nothing to her but what is



absolutely Necessary, that is all I can Say; & You may depend all I can do; shall be done; to make her Pay for herself the first Cruize, You have made A Mistake in dateing my Commission, it is dated 10th Decr 77, Suppose You Meant 76, with Your leave I will alter it, I should have wrote You Sooner but the day the Post left this was down the river, I shall be better able in 3 Days to give You Some Particular Acct of our being Maned; My Dear Sir You will Accept my hearty Acknowledgements for the Many Obligations I am under to You, & You may depend I shall never be Satisfyed till I have rendered myself deserveing of them. I am Dr Sir with my best respects to Doctr Franklin & Mr Lee [&c.]

Sam Nicholson

P.S. my Complts to Mr Carmichael & Doctr Bancroft

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

14 Apr.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

Sr

Admty Office 14 Apl 1777

Vice Admiral Amherst Commander in Chief of His Majts Ships at Plymouth, having in his Letter of the 10th Instant, represented to my Lords Commissrs of the Admty that the Small Pox having broke out among the Rebel Prisoners on board the *Burford*, he has ordered such as are attacked with it to be immediately sent to the Hospital, but that he is nevertheless apprehensive of its spreading amongst the Ship's Company, I am commanded by their Lordships to send you the enclosed Extract of Admiral Amherst's said Letter <sup>2</sup> for Lord Suffolk's information, as his Lordship will thereby see how necessary it is, that my Lords sh[ould] receive as soon as possible His Majesty's Pleasure for confin[ing] the Rebel Prisoners on Shore instead of continuing them any longer on board His Majesty's Ship I am Sr [&c.]

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

[Endorsed by Lord Suffolk] sent to the [Attorn]ey & Solr Genl

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 94-95.

2. The extract of Vice Admiral Amherst's letter read: "Captn [George] Bowyer having informed me that the small Pox has broke out amongst the Rebel Prisoners; I have given directions that such as are attacked with it be immediately sent to the Hospital. But as very few of the Americans have ever had that disorder, I am apprehensive of it's continuing so long in the Ship as to Effect such of her Company as may not have had it, & the same inconvenience must attend their being removed into any other of the ships in Commission," PRO, State Papers, 42/50.

NEWS FROM FALMOUTH DATED APRIL 14 <sup>1</sup>

Arrived the *Hanover* Packet, from Glasgow for the West Indies, who was taken in her Passage by the *Lexington* Privateer, who put on board her a Lieutenant and seven Men, and left three of the Crew belonging to the *Hanover* on board. Some Time after a French Vessel appearing, the Lieutenant took with him in the Boat two of his Men to go on board to get Necessaries; after their being gone some Time, the three Men belonging to the

*Hanover* got Possession of the Arms, and declared to the Americans, if they made any Resistance they would put them to Death; they submitted.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, April 19, 1777.

2. Lieutenant David Welch, prize master of *Hanover*, in a letter to Benjamin Franklin, July 6, 1778, wrote: "Sr I hope you doant reflect on me on the Acct of my Misfortune in regard of the Prias I lost comeing to Bordix;" Franklin Papers, vol. 2, 65, HSP. The captured Americans were committed in June 1777 to the recently opened Mill Prison, Plymouth. According to Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 249, they were "Nicholas Simpkin of Jersey; William Stearns, Maryland; Thomas Haley, England; Benjamin Locket, England; William Lane, Philadelphia, and John Gordon, Ireland."

15 Apr.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *Terrible*, CAPTAIN SIR RICHARD BICKERTON<sup>1</sup>

April 1777                      Bellisle N56E Distance 20 Leagues  
 Tuesday 15                    at 5 AM Saw a Sail on the Lee Quarter, Wore Ship and gave  
    Chace, Set all Sails, the Chace bore away and Set all the Sails  
    she Could, at 7 Set Studding Sails below & aLoft, got the  
    Spritsail Topsail out and Set it; Saw a French man of War to  
    Windward; she hoisted her Colours, We hoisted ours, at 11  
    hoisted our Colours, and fired a Shot at the Chace, She hoisted  
    American Colours, Fired Several Shot at her, at Noon She  
    fired two Stern Chace at us.  
    P.M Still in Chace, firing Several Shot at her, at 1 She Struck  
    her Colours and Shortened Sail; We began to take in our Sails,  
    Secured our upper Deck Guns, brought too as did the Chace,  
    hoisted out a Boat and Sent an Officer on board her, She proved  
    an American Privateer Brig, Called the *Rising States*, James  
    Thompson Commander, Carrying Sixteen Six Pounders, (eight  
    of which they hove overboard while Chaced) and Sixty one  
    men; she had taken three English Vessels, Vizt a snow bound to  
    Jamaica, a brig to Dingle in Ireland, and a Sloop to Guernsey  
    and Southhampton; The Privateer Sail'd from Boston the 29  
    of February 1777. at 3 took out the Prisoners and Sent Lieut  
    Calder with Twenty Seamen and Seven Marines on board the  
    Prize, at 4 Saw an English Man of War to the Eastward, she  
    made a Private Signal, We answered it, at 1/2 past 7 hoisted  
    in the Boat, Wore Ship and made Sail with the Prize in  
    Company.

1. PRO, Admiralty 51/979.

JOURNAL OF TIMOTHY CONNOR, MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE  
*Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

on the 15th April about Sun rise we spied a large ship to windd and another  
 astearn this one astarn began to make Sail after us we called all hands on  
 deck to do the same and making all the sail we could we found they gained  
 on us then we began to lighten our Ship by throwing 8 of our carriage

guns overboard and every thing else we came a cross we [when] they came within gun Shot they began firing at us their Nine pounders from their fore castle when some came over us and some along side we knew that we was taken and that we would not be behind hand in returning the compliment we got out two of our stern chases and began firing them at the Ship the Capt of the Ship enraged at our small ship firing upon him (a 74 gun ship) ordered the Guner to get out three Eighteen pounders forehead and sink us when we came along side but our having English Prisoners on board prevented its being put into execution. We had 37 on board when we was taken and 19 Prisoners thus was our situation when we were taken it was by his Majesty's Ship *Terrible* of 74 Guns Sir Richard Bickerton Commander as soon as we had struck they sent their Cutter on board and ordered Capt Thompson into the boat and pushed him off of the Quarter Deck and used him very ill likewise carried all of our People, Prisoners and all, except Mr [Josiah] Martin and 3 boys, who was ordered to stay on board till they arrived at Spit-head. our Officers were ordered into the Gunroom of the Ship and the men under the half Deck on three Quarters of allowance with Marine Sentinels over us

I. Connor's Journal, LC.

#### BEAUMARCHAIS TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris 15th April 1777

The moment I finished this letter, I received one from Nantes, which informed me of the refusal to give sailors to the ship-owners. And so my richest vessel is stopped at the moment of sailing. I was asked to obtain from the Minister of Marine Secret and private permission to employ only ten sailors. They are making up the rest of the crew with novices &c. I beg you therefore, Monsieur le Comte, to arrange promptly with M. de Sartine what is necessary for the departure of this vessel. Have him Write to the Commissary of Marine at Nantes, to Secretly allow Mons. Pelletier dudoyer to take and embark On *le Comte de Vergennes*, now named *la Thérèse*, ten experienced seamen, which with 4 others who Are on that vessel, and a Sufficient number of novices, will enable her to set sail. For the last twelve Days she has been held up at Paimboeuf by this hindrance. On my part I shall write to Mons. Pelletier as soon as you are kind enough to let me know that I may do so, and this will be one more difficulty removed.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 405-07, LC Photocopy.

#### CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nants April 15th, 1777

We Arrivd hear Late Last Wednesday Night, & the Cutter <sup>2</sup> Got up to pileren [Le Pellerin] thursday & Afriday We Went on bord her in order to Giv the Nessesary orders for fiting her after Doing this We Went Down to Pain Beaf [Paimboeuf] in order to procure All the American Seamen in

our power We Was tolerable Suckcesfull We have Now Nine Americans Engaged Includeing Captn Clarke & the Docktor <sup>3</sup> the Captn, and the Crue that Came from Haverdegrass in the Cutter is Inclined to Giv us Sum trouble but I am in hopes We Shal be Able to take Such Measures as Will prevent them from Doing any Dammage the Cutter is a fine Stout vessail And much Better than I Expected She Would be for the purposes intended We Shal mount her With 10 Carrage Guns And 12 Swivels & About 30 men She is Now in the Carpenters Hands & I am in hopes We Shal be Able to Get her fitt for Sea in 6 or 7 Days I Shall Remain hear with Captn Nicholson Until he Gets things in A fair Way & then Make the Best of my Way for L'Orient I think our Little Squadron Would Recv, a very Nessesary Addition of Streng[th] if joined By Captn Johnston of the *Lexington* if he is Not Distened for Any Particular Service or Cruize Would be Glad if he Would join me I think you Would Do very Well to procure the Kings Pass for All persons Who Comes from parris to this With your Dispatches or on Any Other Urgent Business Where Despach is Required I think this hint Nessesary on Account of A Number of Delays that We met With from the postmasters & post Boys Comeing Down & I Beleav We Should hardly Got here yet if We had not forced them to proceed by Beating & hard Threats from Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 154, APS.

2. *Dolphin*.

3. Captain Seth Clark and Dr. Eliphalet Downer. See their affidavits of March 30, 1777.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Sir. —

Nantes April 15. 1777

I recvd your Favour by Mr Cunningham inclosing the Captains orders. — Mr Peltier & I are now agreed in every thing except one, which is relative to the disposal of the Ship after she arrives at St Domingo, you say that if the Capt can find Convoy he is to go directly thence to America Mr Montieu makes no such Condition on the Contrary gives absolute orders relative to loading the Ship back with Sugar &c; In translating your orders I must do it faithfully & the Capt (if he should find Convoy) cannot obey both. Will you give me liberty to erase that part of the orders, or must I insist on their being observed as they stand

All the Goods we can send are now on board they have only to take their provisions bend their Sails &c &c but I very much fear we shall want hands all the Sailors here being taken for the King

The Batteau <sup>2</sup> will wait for nothing but the necessary alterations in her waist & Men in every thing else I could fit her away in a Day. We have had a great deal of trouble with her Crew I have been trying to keep some but they all refuse say they have been deceived so I must turn them off they have recvd 2 months pay I understand As to them or the Captain I know not how to settle for I have not a single paper by which I can be directed I know not what is due to them nor what they have received neither have I

any Register or other paper to entitle me to the possession of the Vessel except a Copy of the Captains orders. Mr Cunningham tells me that there was a Register or (*l'amirauté*) to be sent to me but I have recvd no such paper. –

When I recvd your orders about the Vessel I went to Painbeuf to engage Sailors out of a Ship<sup>3</sup> that came from Boston to be sold on accot of the Massachusetts States & after obtaining the necessary Information I returned Capt Nicholson & Capt Wicks arrived in the meantime and the next morning went down & engaged 7 men who signed a paper acknowledging themselves to be in the Service of the United States this was done after I had spoken to Capt [Joseph] Chapman the Commander who said he would not hinder the men from engaging but he says he will not pay them 2 months advance on their discharge as the Men think they have a right to demand being customary when discharged in a foreign port. Today he tells me that Mr Gruel Penet & Co is a going to send his men away in another Ship which they intend to fitt out for america, & that if they do not he shall carry some of his men back passengers with him Now I have reason to believe that all this is only a pretence to get the men for a private armament of which you without doubt are acquainted if so I shall think be very sorry to see the public Service give away to private Interest.

Without some English Sailors we can do nothing I therefore think that they should be had at any rate. As to Capt Chapman he is not desirous to prevent our having the men but he is very timid about disobeying orders & if we get his men he will want a certificate from You that it is for the public Cause they are wanted – Will you please grant this? If I should be obliged to make advances to these Sailors I hope you will suppose the necessity of the Case obliges me and I shall consult & act in concert with Capt Wickes & Capt Nicholson

I apprehend the Arms will turn out rather more than less than the list you bought them by. I am &c

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

2. Cutter *Dolphin*.

3. *Versailles*.

16 Apr.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK<sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Wednesday 16th of April [1777]
5	NNE	East	
6			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
11			Moderate & clear weather
			Latt By Obs 47D. .53m N Longd in 27D 56m
1	SSE	East	Freash gale & Cloudey weather & learge sea from
2			the eastward at 4 saw a sail to the Southward
3	SBE		standing to the westward gave chaise at 8 came up

5 WSW

with the chaise the Brig *Eagle* Capt Saml Holloway  
from Dartmouth for St Johns in Newfoundland --  
sent prize master on board

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLOUSTON TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

On Board the Brigantin *Freedom*

In Latt: 48: Long: 8 00

Gentlemen

April the 16 1777

I wold Infor your Honnours that the Last night I fel in with a Large fleet under Convoi of a Man of War this Morning Took the Brigantine <sup>2</sup> [ blank ] from Dartmouth Bound to Newfound Land hav Dispach'd hur have Dispach'd one Snow one Brig one Sloop and Burnt too Briggs sence I have bin Cruzg a nother Vessel in sight am In hast Remain with Due Respect [&c.]

John Clouston

P S Blows very hard Larg Sea

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 160, Board of War Letters, 1776-1777.

2. *Britannia*, William Wicker, master. It was erroneously stated at her trial and condemnation that the brigantine had been taken May 10, 1777, Mass. Arch., vol. 159, 118.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Separate

No 70/

Paris April 16th 1777

My Lord There was nothing very material, in my Yesterdays Conversation with M de Vergennes. . . . I then My Lord, went to a Subject of more importance, I mean the french Vessels, that are preparing for the use of the Rebels, that are to be Manned by french Sailors, and Commanded by American Captains. I told him, that it was the more Necessary for me to Repeat, what I had said, both to His Excellency, and M de Maurepas, upon this very unpleasant Subject, As I found, that the Number of those Vessels increased, and that Instead of four Ships, which my first Intelligence mentioned, there would be eight, or ten, I added My Lord, that I did not indeed know the Names of those Ships, nor the Ports of France, from which they were to Sail, but that I did know, there was such a design, and was certain, that there were several American Captains now at Paris, who expected the Command of those Ships, and were waiting here, till they could be got ready, I likewise Informed him My Lord, that according to my last Intelligence, those Ships are designed not only to cruize in our Seas, but to insult our Coast; (I have information which Says, one of the Projects is an Attack on Glasgow) I ended with Saying, that we had to be sure, little to apprehend from such Enterprizes, but I begged him to consider, what an Impression the mere Attempt must necessarily make, Ships built in France, for the use of the Rebels, manned with french Sailors, and commanded by American Captains,

who sail from the Ports of France, to insult, and attempt to ravage, the Coast of Great Britain! I spoke to Him My Lord very Strongly, but in the politest, and most friendly Manner, and went all along upon this supposition, that After the Mutual Assurances, that had passed, and the public Proofs we meant to give, of our Pacific Intentions, every thing that had a Contrary Tendency, must be as disagreeable to this Court, as it could be to mine. He readily Assented to this, Said, that if there was any such Thing in Agitation, it Should be prevented, qu'on y mettroit ordre, and that no such Attempt ever Should be made, from the Ports of France, and that they never would suffer their Sailors to be so employed. In a Word My Lord, his Promises were as fair as I could Wish, but I do not expect the performance to be Compleat. I see but too plainly, that my best Endeavours, will not prevent these Secret Succours, but Still my Lord, I shall continue them, as they Shew that we are upon the Watch, and tend to retard, and Lessen, the Evil they cannot remove. . . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 85-87.

17 Apr.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Thursday 17th of April 1777
1		East	
4		Calm	<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
7			went on board prize <sup>2</sup> took out all the goods that
8			was Valuable gave her to the prizoners of both
9			veseles to proceed to the Island of Britain -
10			
11	NE	SE	
			Latt By Obs 47D 49m Longd in 27d-56m
1	NE	ESE	Small breaze & cloudey weather -
5	EBN	SSE	
9	ENE		
11	East		
12			Small Airs of wind & rain

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

2. *Eagle*.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LISBON, DATED APRIL 17." <sup>1</sup>

The *Nostre Signora de Caravallos* arrived here, reports, that she was brought-to about 12 leagues off the rock of Lisbon, by an American privateer of 16 guns, who boarded her, rummaged her papers and cargo, and took out several chests, as also four hogsheads of wine, and then suffered her to depart using a number of scurrilous names towards them, on account of the orders of their Court concerning the American shipping which might arrive in the several ports of Portugal.

1. *London Chronicle*, May 17 to May 20, 1777.

18 Apr.

*The General Advertiser. Liverpool, FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1777.*

For Sale by Auction, By Order of the Commissioners, At the Warehouse of Messrs. T. and J. Backhouse, in Church-street, Liverpool, On the 28th instant, The Cargo of the Ship *Aurora*, a Prize from York River, Virginia; Containing about 416 Hogsheads Tobacco, condemn'd as a Droit of Admiralty, to be sold duty free, and for inland Consumption only.<sup>1</sup>

1. *The General Advertiser. Liverpool*, May 2, 1777 noted: "On Monday last the *Aurora's* cargo of Tobacco (a prize brought into this port) divided into about 80 lots, was sold by auction, in one hour and a half, for upwards of 30,000 l."

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN AMHERST<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 18th April 1777

My Lords Commrs of the Admty having received the inclosed Petition from Wm Wright and John Williamson Seamen representing that having thro' want, entered on board an American Brig at St Eustatia, they were taken in her, by His Majts Ship *Experiment* & carried to Plymouth and are now on board the *Queen*, and praying that they may have permission to enter on board that, or any other of His Majts Ships; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to report to them a State of the Petitioners Case, and with your report you will please to return their Petition to &ca

P S

Vice Adml Amherst at Plymouth

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 415-16.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

at London 18th April 1777.

I venture to assure you, Monsieur le Comte, that you will never grant me any mark of confidence, which I shall not seek to deserve, either by the well considered use which I shall endeavor to make of it, or the value which I shall never cease to attach to it. You were kind enough to inform me by the private letter with which you honored me on the 11th of this month, that the counter-armament, which we had proposed to oppose to the fresh armament of England, seemed to have produced a good effect, that Lord Stormont appeared to be very concerned about it, and was beginning to speak of compromises. You judge that they fear singularly the dispatch which we might make, of a squadron to Newfoundland, and they appear to you disposed to offer safety for our fishermen. You desire at the same time, Monsieur le Comte, that I should regard this communication as being exclusively for myself. You need not doubt my discretion any more than you doubt the interest which I cannot fail to feel in all the disclosures which you may be good enough to make to me. One favor which I have to ask you, Monsieur le Comte, is to allow me to explain myself to you once in all liberty on the present situation of affairs. It is a confession which I beg you to listen to, and not a dispatch which I propose addressing to you.



From the moment that the flame of war was kindled in North America, and had made sufficient progress to threaten England with the loss of her colonies, I said to myself, His Majesty's Council has adopted a policy, which must be either to maintain the independence of the Americans, or to feed the quarrel in such a manner that we may see England and America exhaust each other.

Without giving myself up to any sort of passion, desiring simply, since I have been here, to make myself well acquainted with the greatest political dispute which England has ever had to sustain, but being obliged to recognize that this dispute cannot be settled without France being concerned in it, I will expose in a few words, Monsieur le Comte, the ideas which I have been able to collect, in reflecting on the alternative whether to maintain the independence or to feed the quarrel.

Is it necessary to point out the advantages which might make us decide to maintain and protect the independence of the Americans, from the moment that their situation should become critical and unsteady, and when there would be a possibility of seeing them contract some alliance equivalent to their first union with England? We will remark that the separation taking place without any sort of modification for the latter country; her navy, which composes her entire strength, is crushed. The possessions which would be left for her with Jamaica and the Leeward Islands would hardly be worth as much as the colonies which we have in the Atlantic. Her maritime activity being thus contracted into a very narrow area, England, regardless of the riches which she would lose, would have to diminish the number of her squadrons, having fewer different stations to give them. Should her prosperity in the East Indies continue, it could not compare with what she would have lost, seeing that this kind of maritime commerce is too expensive and too far distant to employ a large number of powerful vessels.

But, of all considerations, the most overwhelming for the British Empire is that of thinking that three million inhabitants are today in arms, and will only lay them down when they have been assured of their liberty, and have been relieved from dependence on English industries and manufactures. I have neither the time nor the necessary knowledge to calculate how much these losses will affect that country and how much it will increase our own riches. I heard it said, some time ago, on the occasion when the Americans suffered from a scarcity of clothes and other necessities, that if peace should be concluded, it was estimated that nine million sterling would be the value of the first orders coming to Europe to fill the needs of the Americans. Our situation is doubtless the most advantageous to induce the Americans to give us the preference over all other European nations.

There is another question which affects our personal safety. Ought we, it will be asked, to aid in the creation of this new power? Shall we have reason to be more easy as to the security of our colonies? But will our possessions run more risk with America independent than with America united to England? Do we fear that the thirteen confederated colonies may one day form a very powerful state? But they would in any case arrive at

that degree of power, as they are called to it by the form of their government, and the territorial resources which they possess. The view of America will be the same as it was, before the British Government conceived the scheme of taxes, which is the cause of the revolution. But if the moment has come, when the New World should profit by the mistakes of the Old, in order to obtain for itself an independent existence, it is important for us in every respect that this revolution should be carried out at the expense of our natural enemies, and as the serious quarrels from now for at least several centuries onwards, which we shall have in America, should have their origin in Europe, we have everything to gain now in the weakening and dismemberment of the British Empire.

It is only in order to open my heart to you entirely, Monsieur le Comte, that I have ventured some of the principal reflections I have made on the ending which the present American crisis might have. I have reason to believe at present that the course adopted by the King's Council is to look at it as only a civil war, from which we can at little cost draw great advantage, by the exhaustion of the two sides. This policy has been followed by the King's Ministers with a masterliness which is causing to-day all the embarrassment of the British Ministry. It had flattered itself to impress us by the extraordinary armaments on which it has worked all winter. But the illusion it has created for itself can last no longer. It feels that we are determined to have forces as large as those with which it seems desirous of opposing us; that we do not calculate exactly what it will cost us to put our navy in a respectable condition; that we use the financial condition of England to judge of our own; and that we consider our money invested with interest when we cause our rivals to incur heavy expenses.

For two days, since your letter reached me, Monsieur le Comte, I have searched my own mind, since you have forbidden me to consult anyone, as to what kind of security it would offer us for our fishermen.

The British Ministry, finding in us as much prudence as firmness, no longer being able to hope that we would put ourselves at its mercy as before the last war, recognizing perhaps its imprudence in having provoked measures contrary to the peace which it needs to preserve with us, imagines that it is making gestures leading to a mutual disarmament. France ought to feel her good fortune, Monsieur le Comte, in having so enlightened a Ministry as ours, to resist the fallacious propositions which are being offered to us at this moment by England. Our safety depends no longer on any one but ourselves, and on the state of strength in which we shall continue to show ourselves. What would England propose in the way of disarmament? The cessation of impressment? For several weeks this has resulted in the return of very few men. She would at the same time suspend some works in her ports and in her dockyards, but she would still have her guard ships; one squadron has gone to Newfoundland, another is cruising in the East Indies, and more than 80 Frigates are employed in her war in America: that is to say, that her disarmament would still leave her with forces infinitely superior to the condition in which we find ourselves while remaining armed.

As long as the war with America lasts, the proposals for disarmament amount to a trap laid for us. If we desire that this war should be prolonged, we must keep England continually in fear of us. In this way we shall oblige her to divide her forces, and we shall enable the Americans to preserve a hope of getting assistance from us, if they should find themselves reduced to the last extremity.

With regard to the special engagements of the Ministers, and even of the King of England, I want no more in order to judge of them, than an incident of Lord Sandwich, who was, some years ago, Secretary of state of the Southern department, and who is now first Lord of the Admiralty. Prince Masserano called attention, in support of a private matter, to the verbal promises which had been given here by the Government, and asked for a promise in writing. What! said Lord Sandwich to him, you have been some time in London, and you count on verbal promises made here? Did not George I engage in writing to surrender Gibraltar to King Philip V? Have we ever surrendered it?

I suspect, Monsieur le Comte, that the English Ministry is cajoling us at present, only in order to make their financial operations succeed, which would have been very much hampered at the least rumor of a squadron leaving our ports to go to our islands. For the rest, I can guarantee you that the security in which they are here in relation to us does not in any way correspond to the feigned concern of Lord Stormont, and that Lord Rochefort, who is still on very good terms with the King, and with several ministers, said, not four days ago, that there was nothing to fear for the moment from France.

My security is still greater than theirs, Monsieur le Comte. If they wish to deceive us, their falseness cannot fail to miscarry, and furnish a fresh triumph to the superiority of your intelligence and to your indefatigable zeal for the interests of the King and the nation.

I have the honor to be with the most sincere and most inviolable attachment [&c.]

Le Marquis de Noailles

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 522, 431-38, LC Photocopy.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, APRIL 17 TO SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1777

[London] Friday, April 18.

As the *Arethusa* man of war, with her convoy, from Lisbon, sailed through the Bay, they saw at some distance two American privateers, watching the motions of the fleet, to see if there were any stragglers; but as the merchantmen kept close to the man of war, the privateers did not attempt to come near them.

CAPTAIN HENRY BELLEW, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S.] *Liverpool* in Hamoze 18th April 1777.

I have the Honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, with the inclosed from His Excellency the Prince de Masereno to My Lord Weymouth, which is here returned, and have agreeable to their Lordships Orders,

stated the case in the most particular manner of the Spanish Snow *St Barbe* [*Santa Barbara*].<sup>2</sup>

On the 24th of May 1776 I was laying at single Anchor with His Majesty's ship under my command under Cape Henlopen the southern boundary of the River Delaware, when a Snow under Spanish Colours appeared in sight standing for the channel of the river. I got under sail and brought her too, On board Her I found four chests of Silver, mark'd with the Firme of one of the greatest Rebel Houses upon the Continent; Willen [Willing] & Morris of Philadelphia, Men who had assumed the names of Treasurers to the Congress and a letter directed to them, but being wrote in the old Spanish characters I could not translate it. I thought it my duty and strictly consonant with the late Act of Parliament, to prevent such a Treasure getting into the hands of the Kings Rebellious subjects, therefore took it on board the *Liverpool*, and sent the said Snow to Virginia, with only one Man as Pilot belonging to me, the Spanish Supercargo, an Irishman, knowing me to have neither Pease, Oatmeal, Butter, or Cheese, on board, and at short allowance of Meat, He offered me some small quantity of Rice, and Melasses, and two or three Casks of Beef; I made him all the return the scarcity of my situation would admit of. It was my intention agreeable to Captain Hammonds Orders to return to Virginia when in want of provisions. It was likewise my intention as the Spanish Supercargo had represented to me the extreme scarcity of Flour at the Havannah, on My own risque to have taken his Bills for any quantity of that Article I could procure him at that place, giving me bond for the value of the ship. These intentions were superceded by my meeting with two large Store Ships who had been blown to the West Indies the preceeding winter, I convoy'd them to New-York. Captain Parker who commanded there, ordered me directly on a fourteen days cruize off Block Island, on my return from that Service, My Lord Howe ordered me instantly on the coast of New England, where by retaking several West India Ships I was constrain'd to see them to Halifax, at that place, I libell'd the Dollars, and delivered the papers and Letters to the Court of Admiralty, they were condemned agreeable to the Act of Parliament, and according to that Law, I divided the Neat proceeds in the proportions assigned by His Majesty's Proclamation. The Ship could not be libelled, as she was not on the spot.

The Supercargo had One thousands Dollars, half of which He took with him to Virginia, the other half he had my word of being return'd to him if on his declaration they were his own property.

The Vessel was in very good condition, wanted no repair as is pretended, and had a sufficient quantity of provisions on board for the Supercargo pressed me to take more.

It very evidently appear'd by her journals She had never attempted to make the Island of Dominica.

I wrote Captain Hammond and sent him a copy of the Decree of the Court of Admiralty to be shewn to the Spanish Supercargo, whether he ever received it, I am still ignorant of.

This being a true Narration of the Cases, I flatter myself shews clearly

that His Excellency the Prince de Massarino has been imposed on by their misrepresentation, and I trust will sufficiently exculpate me from the least censure, as well as convince their Lordships, My Conduct has been consistent with the Duty of that Commission I have the Honor to bear.

It may not be unnecessary to observe that the Supercargo took it for granted the Money would be condemned but exprest himself very easy concerning it as he said it was insured in England. I have the Honor to be Sir,

Henry Bellew

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/1497.

2. See Volume 5 for capture of the Spanish snow.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentn

Nantes April 12. 1777. –

Since writing by this days post I have recvd the inclosed plans & Memorandum from Messrs Jean henry Wilfelsheim & Compny who wish to be employed to build in some port in the Baltic Sea ships of war on accot of the Congress if they or you for them will give orders. They say that they can do this in a very advantageous manner that being the Country for Wood Iron Hemp & naval Stores. If you think such an undertaking worth prosecuting & will either keep the Plans for your own Government or will send them to the Congress they are at your Service (but if you at once decide not to have any thing to do in the Business it is desired that they may be returned) If you desire particular proposals I will examine into the whole Intention but without your permission I did not think proper to make farther Enquiry as it may only give false expectations in the mean time I think it my duty to communicate thus far & have the honour to be – Gentn &c  
[P. S.] It is reported to day that a privateer called the *Dr Franklin* has carried 3 prizes into Bayonne

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

19 Apr.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas an Act passed in the present Sessions of Parliament “To empower His Majesty to secure & detain Persons Charged with or suspected of the Crime of High Treason committed in any of His Majestys Colonies or Plantations in America or on the High Seas or the Crime of Piracy” in which there is a Clause that makes it lawful for His Majesty by his Warrant under his sign Manual to appoint one or more Place or Places of Confinement within the Realm for the Custody of such Prisoners; And Whereas His Majesty hath by his several Warrants under his Sign Manual, bearing date the 16th Inst ordered and appointed the following Places (which are

the Property of the Crown & were used for the Custody of Prisoners of War in the last War) vizt Forton Prison in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth and Old Mill Prison in the neighbourhood of Plymouth to be places of Confinement for such Prisoners & for all & every Person or Persons who have been, or who shall thereafter be seized or taken in the Act of High Treason committed in any of His Majestys Colonies or Plantations in America or on the high Seas or in the Act of Piracy, or who are or shall be charged with or suspected of the Crime of High Treason committed in any of His Majestys said Colonies or Plantations or on the High Seas or of Piracy and who have been or shall be committed for such Crimes or any of them or for suspicion of such Crimes or any of them by any Magistrate having competent Authority in that behalf; You are therefore hereby required & directed to cause such part of the said Places to be immediately fitted up & put into proper condition for the reception of Persons charged with or suspected of, the Crimes abovementioned or any of them, as may be sufficient for the reception of 200 Men in the former & of 400 Men in the latter causing separte Provision of room to be made in each of the said Prisons for the reception of such of the abovementioned Persons as may happen to fall sick; And you are to consider & report to Us as soon as possible in what manner it may be most proper to victual the said Persons & what number of Centinels will be necessary for their security.

And Whereas we think fit that the said Two Prisons shall be put upon the following Establishment with respect to Officers & Servants to carry on the necessary Duties who are to have the Salaries & Allowances against such exprest, You are to cause each of those Prisons to be put on that Establishment of Officers & Servants accordingly, And to appoint such Persons to those Offices (except the Keepers & Agents concerning whom You will receive particular directions from Us) as you shall judge properly qualified to execute the same; And to pay them the Salaries & make them the Allowances against each respectively expresst in the said Establishment giving them, and also the Keepers & Agents whom we shall appoint, such particular Instructions for their conduct and guidance & establishing such general rules & regulations for the management & safe Custody of the abovementioned Prisoners as you shall judge necessary.

So soon as the abovementioned Prisons shall be in all respects ready for the reception of the Persons intended to be confined therein as aforesaid, You are hereby further required & directed to give Orders that all such as shall be from time to time committed to them by any Magistrate having competent Authority in that behalf to be forthwith received and safely kept therein until released by due Course of Law. Given &c 19h April 1777

Commissrs for Sick & Hurt  
By &c PS

Sandwich  
Palmerston  
H. Palliser

Establishment of Officers & Servants for Forton  
and Old Mill Prisons — —

A Keeper of the Prison and Agent	}	£	120	}	P Annm
for taking care of the Prisoners					
A Clerk to — Do —	50				
Three Turnkeys — each at —	40				
A Steward — — — — —	25				
A Cook — — — — —	20				
A Labourer — — — — —	5/	p Week			
NB. The three last to have also their Provisions					
A Surgeon — — — — —	at	5/	p Diem		

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 441-44.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN HENRY BELLEW, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

You are hereby required & directed after having received on board the Ship you command Major Genl Sr Henry Clinton with his Suite, Servants & Baggage to put to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind & Weather & make the best of your way with them to New York; victual-ling the said Persons during their continuance on board as the Ships Com-pany

Upon your arrival at New York you are to deliver the inclosed Packet to Vice Adml Lord Visct Howe Commr in Chief of His Majestys Ships & Vessels in North America & putting yourself under his Lordships Com-mand follow his Orders for your further proceedings. Given &c 19h April 1777

Sandwich Palmerston Lisburne

Capt Bellew — *Liverpool* — *Plymo*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 436.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, APRIL 17 TO SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1777

[London] Saturday, April 19.

The *Friends Adventure*, Cummings, from London to St. Kitts, is taken and carried into New England.

The *Maria*, Welch, from the Leeward Islands to St. Augustine, is taken and carried into South Carolina, condemned, and sold.

Postscript.

The *John*, Capt. Walker, for Antigua; the *Penelope*, Booth, for Africa, and the *Mary*, Mandell, for Cadiz, are all taken by the *Freedom*,<sup>1</sup> an Ameri-can privateer.

1. Massachusetts Navy brigantine, Captain John Clouston.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT<sup>1</sup>

[Royal Hospital, Plymouth]

[1777. April] 13. Sunday. I have been taking sulphur, to prepare for anointing this evening.

14. The first day I came here I was put upon diet; I had only half a pound of bread and a quart of milk, but now I am put on full allowance, which is a pound of beef, a pound of potatoes, and three pints of beer, per day.

15. We take a large spoonful of sulphur mixed with honey and cream tartar, morning and evening, and in the evening also use the ointment.

16. Within these hospital wards there are *ten grand buildings*, three stories high. Each building contains six wards, each ward can accommodate twenty-five patients – so that there is room for fifteen hundred patients, besides attendants. To-day our food, with our names entered in a book, was sent, which was headed, “Upon such a day a ward was opened for the *rebel prisoners*,” I scratched out the word rebel and wrote American. When the book was returned, a messenger was sent with sixpence reward for any one who would tell who did it, but he returned no wiser than he came.

17. There are now fifteen of us in this ward, and seven are upon what they call half-diet, (on account of their drawing coals and candles;) so that every other day we draw a half a pound of mutton, a pound of bread, a pound of potatoes, and a pound of greens.

18. To-day there are two more of our company brought on shore with the itch.

19. I am very unwell; I have a bad pain in my head and back – the symptoms of small-pox – and the doctor ordered me something to take, immediately.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 33–35.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract].

Sir. –

Nantes April 19 [1777].

I have just recvd your favour of the 16 Inst. The Cutter will soon be in readiness Capt Nicholson keeps on board in order to hurry as much as possible, he desired me to present his Compts

I have got rid of all the French Crew with the loss of upwards of 50 Louis there was no avoiding this for the Admiralty would have compelled us. – I have been obliged to employ the workmen this week in getting the small arms ready for nicholson & some pistols for Capt Wickes which he desired to have immediately, but I will send as many P adams as the few workmen we have can get ready.

The *Thérèse* will be ready to sail on Tuesday, she is now cleared out & every thing on board. I hope I shall on Tuesday morn have some explanation of that part of your orders relative to convoy else I shall be much troubled I must beg leave observe that the custom of this Country is for the armateurs to give orders to the Captains who has nothing to do but to make the best of their way to their destined port that part of your orders therefore relative to the distribution of the Cargo had better have been address'd to the merchant of St Domingo. If you have not yet answered this



matter please to see Mr Montieu immediately & make both his & your orders agree for the Ship may perhaps be waiting with a fair Wind for this Eclaircessement

S Deane Esqr Paris

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

JOHN BARTON & CO. TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Bordeaux 19 April 1777

We have now the Satisfaction of informing your Excellency that the Masters and Crews of the two Prizes, made by Johnson,<sup>2</sup> are all parted for England & Ireland, not One of the Men would Engage with the American's, Or people here who are fitting out Ships to go on an Illicit Trade to America, tho tempted by Extraordinary Offers – the American Cruiser is Refitted, & its said will part as Soon as her Commander Arrives from Paris, the Officers & Men belonging to her Are Mostly Irish, that appear to have Been transported from their Country, notwithstanding they have mett a very friendly Reception and are Supply'd abundantly with every thing their Agent Requir's. . .

The Prize Master put on board the *Hanover* of Glasgow,<sup>3</sup> when taken, Arrived here yesterday with four Sailors, he gives Out, that he went with them on board a French Barke in the Baye in Order to buy provisions & Liquers, & that those he left on Board, Immediately after his Quitting the Prize crouded all the sails they could & stear'd directly for England, we doubt this, and Suspect the Prize & Cargo has been disposed of Either at Sea or in this River, we shall Enquire into the Matter, and if we find it is so Acquaint your Excellency thereof.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 125.

2. Captain Henry Johnson, Continental Navy brig *Lexington*.

3. Lieutenant David Welch.

21 Apr.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK  
AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

By the Commissioners for executing  
the Office of Lord High Admiral  
of Great Britain & Ireland &c.

Whereas we think fit that Mr William Cowdry shall be Keeper of the Old Mill Prison, and Agent for taking care of the Prisoners intended to be confined therein; You are hereby required and directed to appoint him Keeper of that Prison and Agent for taking care of those Prisoners, accordingly; with a Salary of one hundred and twenty Pounds p Annum, to commence this day and to continue til' further Order. For which this shall be your Warrant. Given under our hands the 21st of April 1777. –

Sandwich Lisburne H Palliser.

By command of their Lordships.

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

[Endorsed] Reced 23d by Mr Cowdry, Warrant Signed the 28th

1. In Letters to Commissioners for taking care of Sick & Hurt Seamen, NMM. In another letter on the same day John Newsham was appointed keeper and agent for Forton Prison. It was endorsed: "Mr Newsham delivered this at the Office the 26th April Warrant Signed the 28th."

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, APRIL 19 TO TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 1777

Admiralty-office, April 21, 1777.

Captain Balfour, of his Majesty's ship the *Culloden*, writes from Torbay, dated the 16th inst. that on the 29th of last month he fell in with and took a ship from South Carolina, called the *Liberty*, Thomas Sherman, master, of about 400 tons bound to Bourdeaux, loaded with rice, indigo, deer skins and tobacco.

London [April 21].

An American vessel is just brought into Clyde. Her name is the *George*, Capt. Cozens, Commander. She sailed from Charlestown, South Carolina, and was bound for Bourdeaux in France; the Mate (a British sailor, who was taken about six weeks before, and entered into the American service) rose up with the rest of the crew, confined the Captain, and brought the ship into Clyde.<sup>1</sup> She is loaded with rice and indigo, and said to be worth from 3000 l. to 4000 l. sterling. For this cargo she was to receive arms and ammunition at Bourdeaux in return. The mate was brought in here this day and examined before the Hon. Board of Customs. He brought in a large packet of letters directed to Dr. Franklin and other persons. They are supposed to contain material intelligence from the Congress, and were sent off by the Commissioners of the Customs by express to the Secretary of State in London. The Mate says, that another ship sailed along with him from Carolina for France, and several more were preparing to sail in a few days.

Another account says, the cargo consists of 350 barrels of rice, and a great quantity of indigo; one gentleman and two ladies were passengers, and letters were found on board for Dr. Franklin and Mr. [Thomas] Morris, which the Captain had been ordered to destroy, if attacked by any English ship.

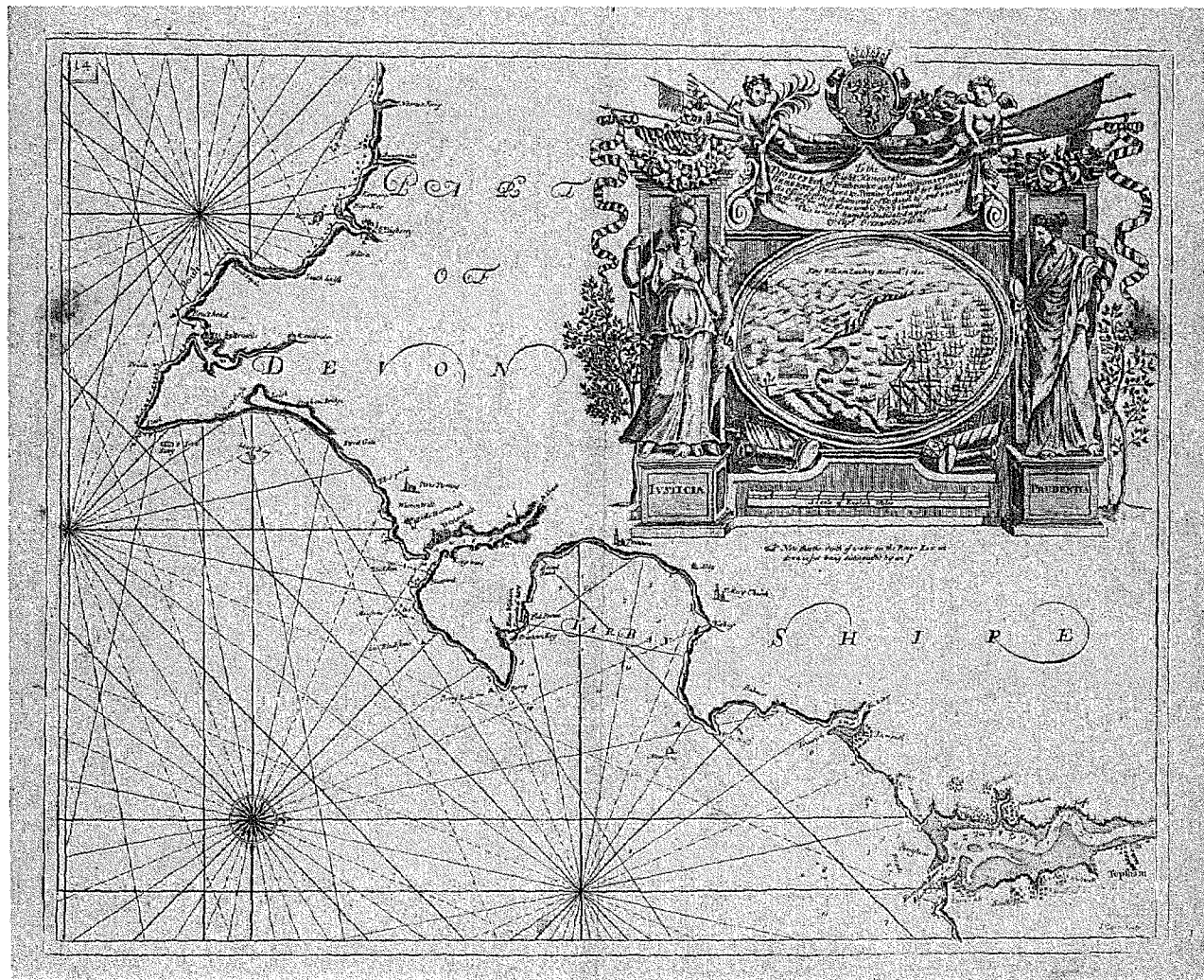
1. Under date April 23, in the *London Chronicle*, April 22 to April 24, 1777, an item reads:

The name of the Mate who brought the *George* from America into Clyde (as mentioned lately) is Archibald M'Lean. He is a Highlander, and was formerly taken by the Provincials on board the *Caledonia*, belonging to Greenock. . . .

The two American ships brought into the Clyde and Torbay, are reckoned worth upwards of 12,000 l. the greatest loss the Americans have as yet sustained at sea.

In a letter from Edinburgh (in Postscript, same issue of newspaper) is noted:

When Mr. Maclean and the crew took possession of the vessel, they changed her name from the *George* to the *True Briton*. The ship was sent out by the Congress, though the cargo, which is said to be worth 5000 l. sterling, was private property.



AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN HENRY JOHNSON <sup>1</sup>

No. 2

Sir

Paris April 21st: 177

You are directed to call on Capt Wicks on Your return, & inform him, that We have pursuant to his proposal, ordered the *Lexington* under Your Command to proceed with him, on the Cruise on which he is bound; You will agree with Capt Wicks, on the place of Your Rendezvous, Your Signals &c which You are to take in writing, & carefully attend to – You will also follow Such directions, as he shall give You, in writing, and by no means suffer Yourself, to be separated from him, if you can avoid it; – should You miss seeing him on Your Return, the Letter delivered You for him must be given to Mr Williams, of Nantes, & if he is not Actually sailed, and there is a probability of Your joining him in Season, You are to write to him from Nantes, informing him in what time You may be able to join him, & asking his directions express, But should You neither meet with him, at Nantes, nor receive Letters from him You will get ready for Sea, as quick as is possible, and Sail from Bourdeaux, to the Entrance of the Channel, where You will cruise for a few Days, more or less as the Winds &c shall with the advice You may receive direct You; thence You will continue Your Course up the Irish Sea, keeping a good look out, lest You get deceived by a Vessel of Superior Force under the Mask of a Merchant man, You will Cruise here, in case You do not meet with Capt Wicks, for Three or four Weeks after which return to Nantes or Morlaix or Rochelle, & send Us an Account of Your proceedings –

should You meet with Capt Wicks You are to consult with him & attend carefully to the Instructions he shall give You, – in Case of making a Prize leave not more than Two or Three at the most, of the Prisoners on board her, & guard carefully the rest, – send her if taken at the Mouth of the Channel to Bayonne, or Bilboa, if the Winds are favorable, & You receive no News, particular, of danger, in crossing the Bay, otherways to L'Orient, or Morlaix – at Bilboa, address to Messrs Gadoroqui [Gardoqui] & Fils, – order Your prize Masters to keep what prisoners they may have committed them in the strictest manner consistent with humanity, & neither permit them to go on Shore on their Arrival untill after the Sale of the Prize, or to hold conversation, with Your People on board, should You by any Accident, fail of meeting with Capt Wicks, at Nantez, or of receiving his Directions, or joining him You will calculate Your cruise at the furthest, not to extend beyond Four or Five Weeks – You will order Your Prize Masters instantly on their Arrival to inform Us of their Situation & Proceedings – At Nantz, they must address Themselves to Mr Williams, & at Bordeaux to Messrs Delaps it will not be prudent to send prizes far up the Channel On your return from the Cruise You will give Us direct & immediate intelligence of Your Situation & proceedings, as well as by every other Opportunity in Your Way – but as We have established an Express

between this & Nantes it will not be Necessary unless on some extraordinary emergency for You to leave Your Vessel to come up to Paris –

We have wrote Mr Delap to Furnish You with the Necessaries You may want at Bordeaux for Use of the Vessel and must Urge You to make all the dispatch in Your power, & the most Vigilant Attention to avoid future deceptions, & to obtain reparation for those You have already suffered – You are to converse with Messrs Delaps, & every other Person, at Bordeaux as if You were bound directly to America, & if Letters are offered You, take them, but excuse Yourself as to Freight – Your People, must not know, but that You are bound for America, but by no means admit passengers –

We are wishing You a successful Cruise Sir [&c.]

B Franklin Silas Deane Arthur Lee

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/7, 123-24. This is listed by the captors as No. 2 of twelve original letters found on board the Continental Navy brig *Lexington*, when taken on September 19, 1777 by H. M. Cutter *Alert*.

22 Apr.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Tuesday 22th of April 1777
4			Freash gales with squalls of wind and rain
5			at 5 AM came up with the chaise a dutch Ship
7	ENE		
8			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
9			at 9 saw nine sail of ships to the Eastward Stand-
10			ing to the westward sum of them Appeared to
11	South		be Large
			freash gale
			Latt By Obs 48D 55m Longd in 16D 8m
1	NEBN	SW	Bore away after the Stern most of the f[l]eet at
3	SE		1 spake her the Brigt <i>Favorite</i> Jno Bell Master
			from Portsmouth for N. York, 6 Days out with 63
			Hessens Chausers on board & 7 women he told
			me the fleet was the <i>St Albins</i> of 64 guns & the
			<i>Dispatch</i> of 14 guns & 6 transports with Troops
9	ESE	lay by	for New York. sent the first Lieutenant on board

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

23 Apr.

CAPTAIN JOHN FISK to SAMUEL PHILLIPS SAVAGE <sup>1</sup>

Sir

on the 2d of April I took the Ship *Chaulkley* from Hondoras for Bristol & sent her for Boston. <sup>2</sup> on the 8th of April Capt Haraden took the Bark *Lonsdale* after an engagement of three Hours from Whitehaven for Que-

bec. I was so far to Leeward that I could not assist him he dispatch'd her for Boston on April 17th we took the Brig *Eagle* from Dartmouth for Newfound Land we took out of her to the Amount of £600. Sterling gave the Brig to the Prisoners 40 in Number to proceed to Bristol on 22d April we fell in with a fleet of 9 Sail bound to the Westward, one of 60 & one of 14 Guns, British Ships of War with 7 Transports from Plymouth for New York being a Fresh gale we could not bare down on them however finding one Briga<sup>3</sup> to lay a Stern we took the liberty to take her under Convoy she had on board 63 Troops, Hessens Chussers, with their accoutrements compleat, which I have taken on Board<sup>4</sup> we have sent you the most part of the Goods taken from on board the *Eagle* in the *Favourite* with Invoice of the same.<sup>5</sup> we have been in Company with Capt Haraden since we left Salem, both Ships Crews in good health – having not to add, Rest Sir Yours with Respect

Jn<sup>o</sup> Fisk

At sea April 23rd 1777.

Lattd 48d. .30m N. Longt 16d. .00 West

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 165, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. In sending in the *Chaulkley*, Fisk mentioned that the manifest was incomplete, and added the following note: "Acct of Sundries belonging to Capt James Furze, on bd the Ship *Chaulkley* 91 Logs of Mahogany 1 Bundle of Sarsaperilla 16 lb Wt 64 lb of Turtle Shell," Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 166½, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

3. Brigantine *Favourite*.

4. *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, July 3, 1777:

Boston, July 3, 1777. Yesterday, the Cargo of Hessians, lately mentioned to have been taken by one of this States Vessels of War, and sent into Townsend, arrived safe in this Town, under a proper Guard, and were escorted to a Place of as great Safety as New-York, to which Place they at first set Sail for.

5. "Invoice of Goods put on board the Brig *Favourite* taken out of the Brig *Eagle*," totaled £179.10.8 sterling cost," Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 166, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

#### LORD SUFFOLK TO LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY<sup>1</sup>

My Lords

[St. James's ] April 23d 1777.

His Majesty having been pleased by Warrant under His Sign Manual to appoint places of Confinement at Portsmouth & at Plymouth pursuant to the late Act of Parliament "to empower His Majesty to secure & detain Persons charged with or suspected of the Crime of High Treason committed in any of His Majesty's Colonies or Plantations in America, or on the High Seas, or the Crime of Piracy" I am now to signify to your Ldps His Majesty's Commands that All Persons subject to the Provisions of the said Act of Parliament, who have from time to time been brought into the different ports of Great Britain & have been directed to be detained in safe Custody till farther signification of His Majesty's Pleasure; also that all others subject to the said Provisions, who may hereafter be brought into any Port of Great Britain, [be] forthwith carried before a [person] having proper Authority in [this] behalf in order to their being committed to one of the Places of Confinement abovementioned. – I am &ca  
Suffolk

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50, 102.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND TAX<sup>1</sup>

Gentn

[Admiralty Office] 23d April 1777.

Inclosed I send you a List of such Persons as have Salaries and other Allowances from the Admiralty, agreeable to your desire signified in your Letter of Yesterday's date. I am &c

P.S.

		£		
Lords Commissioners	{	The Earl of Sandwich	1,000	} Salary P Annum each, for which one Shilling in the Pound is deducted Quarterly by the Treasurer of the Navy
		John Buller Esqr	1,000	
		Lord Viscount Palmerston	1,000	
		Lord Charles Spencer	1,000	
		Lord Viscount Lisburne	1,000	
		Henry Penton Esqr	1,000	
		Sir Hugh Palliser Bart	1,000	
Secretary	Philip Stephens	800	}	Ditto
Deputy Secretary	George Jackson	£ 500 .. 0 .. 0		
	as Judge			
	Advocate	182 .. 10 .. 0		
		682 .. 10		
Clerks on the Establishment	{	Mr John Ibbetson	200	} Ditto
		Mr Henry Hastings	150	
		Mr Harry Parker	120	
		Mr Thomas Fearne	100	
		Mr Willm Bryer	80	
		Mr Chas Wright	70	
		Mr Joseph Belson	60	
French Translator	Mr John Brindley	100		
Extra Clerks	{	Mr Simon Devert Barkham	50	
		Mr Robert Robinson	50	
		Mr William Gimber	50	
		Mr John Bindley	50	
		Mr Charles Spriggs	50	
		Mr Robert Dale	50	
		Mr George Kite	50	
		Mr Willm Gascoigne	50	
Door Keeper	Mr Willm Cooke	50		
Messengers	{	Thomas Butler	40	
		William Downing	30	
Porter	Richard Hutchinson	30		

House Keeper	Elizabeth Bell	40
Gardener	John Tucker	30
Watchman	{ John Maryan	20
	{ Robert Allpress	20
	{ John Man	20
Inspector of Repairs	Mr James Arrow	30

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 445-46.

24 Apr.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N., TO CAPTAIN PATRICK FERGUSON<sup>1</sup>

Sir

*Isis* at Sea 24th April 1777

I have been favoured with your letter of this days date relative to the Boats having been prevented from passing backward & forwards between the different transports, – In Answer to which I am to acquaint you, that observing the Transports frequently brought too & hoisted their boats out, by which the Convoy was detained, I directed the *Swift* (Sloop) to prevent their doing it, Imagine there must have been at least a Surgeons mate on board each Ship, as the Sick must be in a miserable way, if they can receive no Assistance but when a boat may be sent without retarding the Convoy –

My only motive was to forward the Service by conducting the Transports with the utmost dispatch to the Place of destination I am [&c.]

W Cornwallis

To Captn Ferguson 70 Regt  
Commanding the Partys of Recruits  
for Genl Howes Army –

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Letter Book, NYHS.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD<sup>1</sup>

Gentn

[Admiralty Office] 24 April 1777

Captn Bover Regulating Captain at Newcastle having represented to my Lords Commrs of the Admty, that John Lewis an Able Seaman who entered Voluntarily at Sunderland for His Majts Ship *Barfleur* about two Months ago, and who acted as Midshipman on board the *Speedwell* Tender in her way up, died lately of the hurts and bruises (most probably) which he received in the said Tender, at the time of the press'd Mens raising, in attempting to suppress the Insurrection; and Captn Bover having submitted to their Lordships that as the said Man has left a Wife and Child destitute of support, that directions shou'd be given to Lieut Campbell, by whom he was raised to pay his said Wife the Kings Bounty of £5, to which he himself had an undoubted right & charge it to his contingent Expences, together with the Mans Wages, and £2 .. 4 .. – which he (Mr Camp-



bell) has already distributed in having a Coroners Inquest over the Mans body, & having him buried afterwards And their Lordships having signified to Captn Bover their approval of Lieut Campbell's paying the whole of the sums beforementioned, & charging the same in his contingent Account; I am commanded by their Lordship to signify their direction to you to allow thereof, upon his said account; and am &c

P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 449-50.

25 Apr.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

L:Orient 25th April 1777

I left Nantz aWednesday Evning to Come here & by a letter from you and one from Capt Johnston [Henry Johnson] I find he Arrived at Nantz soon after my departure I Returned an Answer to Captain Johnston and desired him to Come imeadiately and Join me, but have Since received a possitive order from the Commissary of this port to depart the port in 24 hours, in Consequence of those orders Write by this Evenings post desiring Capt Johnston to Join me at St Auzear [St. Nazaire], as Soon as possible As Capt Nicholson is not yet ready I think it will be best place to Meet and depart from, you may depend on my Utmost attentions to your orders & Make no doubt We shall be able to give Satisfaction if we are not taken There is three Brittish Ships War Cruizing in the Bay, which has been seen last Monday Evning A prize Sloop Arrived here yesterday, taken by Capt Thompson of the Brig *Rising States* from Boston, this was the third Prize taken by her, Since her departure from America, this Prize is from Lisbon bound to London, loaded with Fruit & Wine <sup>2</sup> I shall leave this port to Morrow or Next day if the Wind & Weather permits and go imeadiately for St Auzear, where I will inform you of my further Proceed-ings, from Gentlemen [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 165, APS.

2. Brigantine *Fleece* taken April 3.

CAPTAIN HENRY JOHNSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Hon'ble Gentlemen

Nantes April 25th 1777

I arrd here Thursday Morng 4 o'Clock where I found Capt Weeks [Wickes] was gone for L'Orient. Have sent Express as I was much fatigued, Shall wait here for Capt Weeks's orders which when I receive shall instantly set off for Bourdeaux and make every possible dispatch agreeable to your Instructions.

Capt [Larkin] Hammond has not as yet gone he now lays at the mouth of the Loire. You'll perhaps be surprized at that, he was time after time forewarn'd off the small draft water there was on the bar a little below this

Town, except Spring Tides, however being obstinate his Vessel <sup>2</sup> grounded on said bar, and he lost them fine Easterly winds.

Capt [John] Adams is below, has taken the precaution, has been ready some time to take in Goods and complained to me Yesterday of the backwardness of the Agents here, he is determined he says to follow his Instructions from Congress and when your dispatches arrive he'll take, in Stone ballast & proceed immediately, as he is determin'd not to have any thing said after his departure, of his not having acted with that necessary precaution that is required in his Case. I from Capt Adams inform'd Mr [Thomas] Morris of this and that his Vessel was ready to take the Goods, and had actually been several times to let them know it, and they put him off, Mr Morris answer was he thought Capt Adams had no right to expect any Goods, as he bro't no Cargo, and if they put any Goods on board it would be on advance. However Since which Capt Adams has told me that they are to send the Goods to day. He Capt Adams complan much.

Now Gentlemen, If you think I am too busy, in speculating into any matters where you are not personally yourselves (as I shall as long as I have that pleasure of serving the Honbles the Congress I shall ever do) till I have your orders to the Contrary as I think it the duty of every officer in the Service, and knowing the imediate want of the many Articles (Capt Adams can take) on the Continent I thought it a great pity that Vessel should go without the Goods. and respecting the Conduct of the other Captain, You'll be pleased if you think I am too officious in these matters to acquaint me of it. Shall be every opportunity troubling you with my Scrawls, if any thing turns up. And with wishing you all Gentlemen, every possible blessing you can ask for. With due Respect [&c.]

Henry Johnson

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. Maryland schooner *Jenifer*.

26 Apr.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Satterday 26th of April 1777
3			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
6			Saw a sail to the NE gave chaise at 9 Spake her
7	NNW		the Snow <i>Salley</i> from London for Quebeck – Jones
10	North		master saild in Company with a fleet of 40 sail for Quebeck his Longd 15 Wst 2 days since he saw Cape Clear
			Latt By Obs 49D 22m Longd in 12D 25m
1	NW	SSE	Freash brease of wind hasey weather Capt Harridon dispatched the Snow for boston.
6	WBS		at 6 saw a sail barring SW gave chaise at 7 spake

7 NNW

her a dutch snow from St Eustatia for Amsterdam  
cloudey weather

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLOUSTON, MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIGANTINE *Freedom*, TO  
THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

Lat 47° . 57' Long 7°  
April 26 – 1777

Gentlemen,

On the 22 inst I took and burned a Sloop in Ballast from Glasgow to Cadiz – While she was burning there came up another Brig bound from Lisbon to Corke – After taking out what was most valuable & putting on board another Prize I have this day discharged this Brig with a large number of Prisoners who I could not otherwise dispose of <sup>2</sup> – The next day I took two Brigs – one from Antigua to London the other from the Bay of Vandoris to Amsterdam – by the last of which I send this Letter – It has been so windy & rough that I could not discharge any of the aforesaid Vessels till to day – This Brig called the *Phoebe*, is loaded with Logwood & Mehogany & is almost a new one built of red cedar & Wild Cherry-tree –

Since we left America I have taken eleven Prizes – seven of which I have sent to America – burned three and discharged one with Prisoners – Out of this last I have taken several casks of wine & Boxes of Lemmons – which with three Cables & the Sails belonging to other Vessels I have burned, I have put on board a Brig called the *Two Betseys*, this day discharged under the care of John Procter Master of the *Freedom* I remain [&c.]

John Clouston

P.S. It has been excessively windy & bad weather so that We have scarcely had three days moderate since we came from Port but thank God, have suffered no misfortune

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 178–79, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. A letter from Cork, dated April 28:

Capt. Regan, of the Brig *Dispatch*, arrived here this Morning from Lisbon, was boarded by an American Privateer, Lat. 50 Deg. 50 Min. Lon. 10, off Cape Clear, who took from him eight Tons of Wine and Thirty Boxes of Fruit, and put on board him 19 Men belonging to several Ships the said Privateer had taken on this Coast, three of which had been taken whilst Capt. Regan was on board the Privateer; the *Betty* from Glasgow for Cadiz, in Ballast, burnt; the *Phoebe*, Capt. [Nicholas] Devereaux, from Honduras for London, sent to Boston; and the *Two Betseys*, Captain Matthew Boosen, bound for London: She had burnt five others, and sent three to America. The Privateer's Name is the *Freedom*, Capt. Clewston, carries 12 Guns, and had taken a New Vessel from Dublin, bound to Bourdeaux, and another from Waterford, with Herrings.

*Public Advertiser*, London, May 16, 1777.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN BROOKS, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather & proceed & cruize between Cape Clear & Ushant

for the Protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, & diligently to look out for, & to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America which may be found in those parts.

You are to continue upon the said Station for three Weeks after passing Scilly, & then return to Plymouth sound and remain there until you receive further Order: Given &c. the 26th April 1777.

Sandwich Palmerston H Palliser

Captn Brooks – *Belle Isle* – Plymo

By &c. PS.

By Express at 6. P M

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 454. Similar orders went this date to Captain Samuel Barrington, H.M.S. *Prince of Wales*.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, PORTSMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 26 April 1777

Capt Balfour of the *Culloden*, who was directed to enter as part of that Ships Complement the Crew of the *Liberty Prize*, except the Master & Super-cargo, having informed my Lords Commrs of the Admty that he had enter'd Five of them, but all the others being French, Italians and Boys, & having already a great many Foreigners on his Books, he wishes they may be ordered on board some other Ship; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to distribute the Men & Boys abovementioned on board the Ships under your Command accordingly. I am &c P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 463.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 1777

Admiralty-Office, April 26, 1777

Sir Richard Bickerton, Captain of his Majesty's Ship *Terrible*, took on the 15th instant, in the Bay of Biscay, and has sent to Spithead a Rebel Privateer, called the *Rising States*, mounted with 16 six Pounder Guns, 10 Swivels, 4 Howitzers, and 61 Men. She left Boston about ten weeks since.

It also appears by Letters from Vice Admiral Young, dated Antigua, March 10, that since his last Account the Ships of his Squadron had taken 27 Rebel Vessels, and re-taken seven Ships that had fallen into their Hands.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, APRIL 24 TO SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1777

Saturday, April 26.

London.

The *Amelia*, M'Neal, from Africa to St. Kitts, is taken by the Rebels; the *Weatheral*, Cox, to the West Indies, is also supposed to be taken; and the *Mercury*, Seaton, from Bristol.

Orders were on Thursday sent to Portsmouth for three men of war to sail immediately, to cruize within a few leagues of Bourdeaux, though not

so near as to give offence to the French, but in the proper track to intercept the American ships which trade to that place.

The *Gurney*, Doyle, from Cork to Bourdeaux, and the *Britannia*, Wicker, from Topsham for Newfoundland, are both taken by the Rebels; the latter 30 hours after she sailed from Plymouth.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[Royal Hospital, Plymouth]

[1777. April] 20. I have had six applications for the itch, but am not half cured; and to-day when the doctor came in to see me, he told me I had the small-pox, and ordered the nurse to remove me immediately, into the small-pox ward, which she did. After I got there, I was ordered to strip off all the dirty clothes that I had upon me. I washed myself in warm water, and put on a clean linen shirt, a woollen gown, waistcoat and drawers, and turned into bed with clean sheets.

21. I feel something better, and my pock comes out very fast; but it is the small sort, which is the worst. Also, last evening three prisoners made their escape from the fifty-sixth ward, which is the same I left yesterday.

22. This morning got up, but my pock has come out exceedingly thick.

23. We are informed that the men who ran away are taken.

24. I am broken out so very thick, and the ointment for the itch inflamed my blood so much, that my flesh feels as if I was raked up in a bed of embers; and I am so sick at my stomach that I vomit up every thing I eat, and am unable to write.

25. Kept my bed, and was in great pain.

26. My head was swollen very much, and I was so blind that I could scarcely see daylight.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 35-36.

PICARDY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Amiens 26 April 1777

My Lord: We believe it our duty to inform your Excellency of an incident which seems to us to compromise the honor and safety of the French flag as well as the interest of national navigation. It is the seizure by an American privateer of the vessel *Le Dillon*, Capt'n Lefevre, from the port of St Valléry. This ship had loaded in London last month en route to Genoa and Leghorn. The privateer seized it and convoyed it to America on the allegation that its cargo belonged to the English.

Although it is not probable that the Americans will be able to confiscate this ship or be able to refuse to pay for it, it still seems to us of the greatest importance that our government should prevent the repeti-

tion of such an occurrence and that it should insure the complete freedom of our flag. So long as the English and Americans continue to disagree, it is of the greatest importance to French navigation that its flag be a refuge for the belligerent parties. It was because of such freedom that the Dutch became the universal navigators for Europe during the recent wars. There are at this time in the Thames a great number of French ships which hope to enjoy the same advantage, in spite of the incident of which we have just informed you. . . .

The intentions of His Excellency in this respect will no doubt be respected by the Americans, as soon as they will have been made aware of them. . . .

1. AN, Marine, B<sup>4</sup>, 130, 221-22, LC Photocopy.

27 Apr. (Sunday)

CAPTAIN JONATHAN HARADEN TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR<sup>1</sup>

Onboard the Brig. *Tyrannicide*

Lattd. 49.27. Longd 15. W

April 27 1777

Gentlemen

I with pleasure inform you, this Day we fell in with and took the Snow *Sally*, Stephen Jones Comr from London bound to Quebec, her Cargo Consisting of English goods, the Particulars of which you will Learn by the Invoices sent. You will observe in the General Invoices, that there is Considerable in them shipt onboard other Vessells, and I hope shall be able to give you a much better Account of them, than their Invoices alone, as the Captain says he so far outsail'd them that he Imagines they must be to the Eastward -<sup>2</sup>

I am much afraid we shall be oblig'd to go to Some Port to Water before the Expiration of One Month, tho' I am in hopes to finish our Cruize before that - I had almost forgot to mention that we took a Transport Brigt with 63 Hessians onboard bound for New York & hope she will safe arrive to you. -<sup>3</sup> Captain Jones informs me there is 8 or 10 Men of War off Cape Finister & in the Bay of Biscay, cruising for our Ships with Tobacco & armed Vessells, nothing more at this time worth Notice therefore subscribe myself Gentlemen [&c.]

Jon<sup>a</sup> Haraden

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 182, Board of War Letters, 1776-1777.

2. "Boston, June 12, 1777. Friday last arrived in a safe port the Snow *Sally*, a Prize taken by Capt. Harriden, in the Brig *Tyrannicide*, belonging to this State, having on board a Variety of European Goods, among which are 3 or 4000 Blankets. This Vessel, with the *Intrepid*, *Salisbury*, *Jane and Ann*, were loaded by a Merchant in London, and sailed in Company, their Cargoes amounting to £22,000, and consigned to a Gentleman in Quebec," *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, June 12, 1777.

3. Haraden's reference to the capture of the vessel with Hessians on board caused confusion in the Boston newspapers. *Independent Chronicle*, June 12, reported the capture of two transports, one by Haraden, in the *Tyrannicide* and the other by Captain John Fisk in the *Massachusetts*.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

L'Orient April 27th 1777 –

I wrote you last post acknowledging the receipt of your letters by Capt Johnston & informing you of my Intentions to proceed to Nantz and there wait the Arival of Capt Johnston – I am very Sorry to inform you of the Mutiny that has happend amongst my People since my Arrival, they have all refused to go to Sea untill they Received their prize Money; With much threats & a promise that the prize Money should be paid before they left Nantz, have prevailed on them to go to Nantz, but do not expect to get them from there till they are paid, As the time they ship'd for was One Year, which is now expired. I hope you'll be Punktual in giving orders to Mr [Thomas] Morris for paying them as soon as We Arrive in order prevent delays, I think this will be Necessary in order to prevent any dispute between Me and Mr Morris, the People has promised to Continue in the Ship & behave well provided they Receive thier Money & if not, I shall be under the disagreeable Nessesity of Proceeding directly for America with a few [of] the People I Can get to go with me, which will not exceed 30 or 40 Men. I have this day received my certain Orders from Mr Gonet, Commissary of this Port ordering me out this day and not to offer to Cruize or make any Prizes on the French Coast on any pretence whatever. these orders was handed to me to Sign which I refused to do and told the Commissary I would comply with those orders, as far as was Consistant with my orders from the Honble Continental Congress of the United States of America, I told him that I never had Cruized on the Coast of France or Made Prizes on Sd Coast, nor would I do it, I should be glad to Receive your Advice on those different Subjects as soon as possible

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 5, pt. 2, 170, APS.

JOSEPH GARDOQUI & SONS TO SAMUEL PHILLIPS SAVAGE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Honoured Sir

Bilbao the 27th April 1777 –

Just as we are dispatching back for your port the Ship *Lydia* William Andrews Master Bearer hereof has made her safe appearance in our river in 27 days passage the Schooner *Marblehead* Capt Samuel Dugard – on which happy Event we most cordially congratulate your good self & as said Master has punctually placed in our hands your very Esteemed & agreeable favour of the 18th Ulto with Copy of what you was pleased to write us on the 10th Feby pr Capt Tucker of the Brig *Benjamin*; we Acknowledge ourselves greatly obliged to your kindness for honouring us with your commands, therefore be pleased Good Sir to assure the Board of Warr, that our most constant attention will be made use of to serve their Interest with the greatest reggard & attachment, accordingly shall Immediatly attend to discharge & land with all possible Expedition the 982. Quints of fish you have been pleased to consigne us pr Capt Dugard which shall Endeavour to

dispose off on the highest ratte that its quality will admitt, tho are not a little sorry to informe you that at present our Markett promisses but poor Encourndgmt for the Sale of old fish, on Account of the large Stock still remmaining on hand, as also the advanced Season we are in. . .

We take the livery to mention to your good self that the good browne Virginea Tobacco is selling at st Sebastians a port only 18 leagues East from ours & where this article has a free admition, from 38 to 40: Currnt dollars Pr hundred & as it is only a day & half's Journey from us, on the Master's advice one of us will atend there at the disposall thereof, good Carolina rice rutles here from 100 to 110 riales pr Quintale, Pittch, Tarr, Turpentine, Whale oyl, Whalebone, Masts yards & Sparrs, are mantained at adventageous prices. . .

[P.S.] a Cask of Pitch about 600 lb wt is worth 35 hard dollars . . .

[Duplicate – unsigned]

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 180–81, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

28 Apr.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admty Office 28th Apl 1777

My Lords Commissioners of the Admty intending that when this summers Campaign in America is over, Rear Admiral Sr Peter Parker shall proceed to Jamaica, to relieve Vice Adml Gayton in the Command of His Majts Ships & Vessels on that Station; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith and that your Lordship will have orders in form by the next conveyance for sending him thither accordingly. I have the Honor to be &c.

P. S.

Rt Honble Vice Adml Lord Howe  
at New York by the *Liverpool*

By Express at 1½ past 5 PM

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 469.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, APRIL 28.” <sup>1</sup>

I think there is the finest fleet of ships in this harbour that ever I saw; they consist of three 90 gun ships, ten 74 gun ships, four 64 gun ships and several frigates, all ready in two hours for sea. The *Culloden*, of 74 guns, is ordered to proceed to sea for the French coast, on account of one of our 64 gun ships being there a few days ago, when a French 74 gun ship came along-side of her, and demanded to know the reason for cruizing there; which was answered, to take all American privateers that he could come across. The Frenchman then told him, that while he could hinder him, he should take none. On which the Captain of the English man of war told him, that he would first take the American privateers, and him afterwards, if he should make any opposition; and that he only waited for him to fire one gun at him, and that he should receive three English cheers in return,



and as many guns as would sicken him; upon which the French man of war thought proper to sheer off.

1. *London Chronicle*, April 29 to May 1, 1777.

CAPTAIN KEREDERN DE TROBRIANT TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

on board the King's flute *L'Etoile* at Lorient 28th April 1777.

. . . The Privateer *Reprisal* <sup>2</sup> having Saluted our pennant with three cheers of Long Live the King, I had one salute returned as a matter of politeness. However, not knowing the King's intentions on the manner in which the Warships of the English American Colonies must be treated, I have the Honor of advising you of my Conduct, which I Know to be inconsequential, but it Would displease me to have you learn of it from anyone else. . . .

1. AN, Marine, B<sup>4</sup>, 130, 139, LC Photocopy.

2. Continental Navy brig *Reprisal*.

29 Apr.

CONVOY INSTRUCTIONS OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

[*Isis*, at Sea]

When I make the Signal for to lead the Convoy she is Immediately to make the Signal for the Convoy to come under her Stern, & to fire at any Ships that presume to go ahead of her; the Other Men of War are to assist in keeping the Convoy together & never to quit there Stations or Chaces unless I make the Signal for that Purpose

If I would have any Particular Ship keep between a Ship in chace of me, or between me & the Convoy if I am in Chace myself, to repeat Signals, I will make the Ships signal & hoist a Dutch Jack at the Mizon topmast head, which if at any distance the Ships signal will be made by hoisting it at the top Gallt mast head instead of letting it Fly from the topmast head

For the Masters of Merchantmen

If I make the Signal for any of the Men of War to lead & take care of the Convoy, whilst I make sail, which you will know by that Ships making the Signal for the Convoy to come under her Stern; you are immediately to follow her, & Obey her Signals & pay no further Attention to me, untill I re-join the Convoy & take that Ships Place

Dated 29th April 1777

To The Captains of his Maj's Ships

*Camel*, *Bute*, & *Swift* (Sloop)

1. Captain William Cornwallis' Order Book, NYHS.

CAPTAIN JOHN JERVIS, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

*Foudroyant*, at Sea, 29 April 1777.

I desire you will acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that being six or eight Leagues to the Westward of Nantes in His Majesty's

Ship under my Command, at day break this morning, we saw two Brigs Steering for Nantes; upon discovering what we were, the headmost kept on her Course, and the other stood out to Sea, there being little wind, and our short run to the land giving Us small hopes of getting up with the former, before she reach'd it, we chac'd the latter, and came up with her at Noon, she proved to be the *Barbara* from Bourdeaux bound to Dublin, and was taken yesterday by the other Brig, the *Freedom* Privateer, John Cl[o]uston Master belonging to Boston. she had been out seven Weeks, and has taken, by Relation of the Prisoners, twelve Prizes, seven of which were sent to Boston (one of them an outward bound Guinea Man with a considerable Quantity of Gun Powder and Arms on board) three burnt, one given to the Prisoners, and one Retaken, as recited – I shall stand well in with Nantes this Evening, and am not without hopes of falling in with the Privateer.

The Want of proper Petty Officers obliges me to send a Lieutenant in with the prize, as her Cargo consisting of Wine and Brandy, is reported to be valuable. I am Sir [&c.]

J Jervis

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/1987.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

My Ld

29th April 1777

I have communicated to my Lords Commrs of the Admty your Lordships Letter of the 25th Inst inclosing the State & Condition of His Majts Ships & Vessels under your command & Copy of a Letter from Captain Robinson of the *Queen* Stating the Case of Wm Wright & John Williamson two Prisoners on board that Ship taken on board an American Brig by the *Experiment*; And I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to order them to be enter'd as part of the *Queens* Complement (but not to be allowed the Bounty) if they were not taken in any Armed American Vessel but one solely employed in trade; With Respect to the Six Rebel Prisoners late belonging to the *Lexington* Privateer who have been brought from Falmouth in the *George & Molly* Tender; It is their Lordships direction that You order them to be confined on board one of His Majts Ships under your command until further Order. &c

P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 474.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, APRIL 26 TO TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 1777

[London] Tuesday, April 29.

The *Worcester*, Bentley, from Jamaica, is arrived at Liverpool, after having had an engagement with an American privateer of 14 guns, in lat. 37, a few days after she sailed from Jamaica, and obliged her to sheer off.

The *Newman*, Smith, from Newfoundland to the West Indies is taken by the Rebels, and carried into Guadaloupe.

The *William and Mary*, Howe, from Petersbourg, was taken the week before last by the Americans.

Postscript.

Narrative of Capt. Gregory Cozens, of the *George* Brigantine, a Rebel Vessel, brought into Clyde by the Ship's Crew, as taken from his own Mouth, by a Gentlemen who was on Board at the Ship's Arrival in Port Glasgow, April 21, 1777.

We sailed from Charlestown, in South Carolina, the 24th of February last, bound to Bourdeaux in France, having on board 319 whole and 85 half barrels of rice, and 19 teirces of indigo.

The day before we sailed, the *Comet*, Capt. Allan [Edward Allen], an American privateer, sent in under Fort Mutrie [Moultrie], in Sullivan's Island, a ship and a snow from the Bay of Honduras, the ship said to belong to Glasgow. Fort Mutrie is now strongly fortified, there having been 500 negroes constantly employed in working at it, from the time that Sir Peter Parker's fleet left Charlestown.

A brigantine from Nantz, in France, arrived three days before we sailed, with clothing and other dry goods, and brought in with her one of the transport ships from London, Combs, master.

French vessels are coming and going every day, in particular one arrived about a month before we sailed, having on board from Martinico, upwards of twenty tons gunpowder, the Dutch have a great trade from Curacoa and St. Eustatia to Charlestown. The Spaniards do not interfere.

A great deal of rice was upon hand when we sailed, last crop having been very good, but indigo was scarce, owing to the great export of that article for some months before.

All sorts of European articles were very dear in Charlestown, though not scarce: the people were all peaceable, and minding little else but trade and cultivating the ground, being resolved to act only upon the defensive.

Trade was never known to be brisker at Charlestown than when we sailed, and it was said the Congress had called in a number of their privateers, in order to man the merchant ships.

A Bermudian sloop was ready to sail for France, loaded with rice and indigo, and a brigantine was to sail about a fortnight after us, one Steel master, for Nantz, with a valuable cargo of rice and indigo, particularly the latter, said to be upwards of 2000 l. sterling.

On Sunday the 16th of March, being then in latitude 44. 10, and longitude 27. 20, the crew took possession of the vessel from me: she was formerly called the *May*, belonging to Liverpool, and was taken off St. Eustatia, bound for Jamaica, with provisions; 200 barrels beef, and 100 firkins butter: the rest of the cargo had been landed at Dominica.

A ship, formerly the *Savanna*, Fraser, from Piscataqua, is sent into Antigua by the *Portland* man of war; and the *Little John*,——, from Mississippi to the Leeward Islands, is retaken and sent into Antigua.

The *Percy*, Rogerson, from Cork for New York, and the *Renfrew*, Somerville, from London, are both taken by the Rebels.

On Sunday night the *Elizabeth*, Capt. Toone, arrived in the Downs; his dispatches were immediately sent to Lord George Germaine's Office, and we hear contain the following interesting particulars:

That the popular Mr. Dickenson, (who wrote the Farmers Letters in favour of the Americans) from the ill treatment he has received from the Congress, has declared for the King, and brought over 5000 of the inhabitants on the banks of the Delaware, and being joined by a corps of 600 marines, from the men of war in that river, had cut off a numerous body of the rebels, and had prevented a great quantity of provisions from being sent to General Washington.

Capt. Toone has also brought advice, that the *Phoenix* man of war has sunk and destroyed 24 sail of Provincial ships in the river Delaware, not having men on board sufficient to secure them as prizes.

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris Tuesday Evening April [29] 1777 –

... Mr Deane is very anctious to bring about a plan or Scheem which he has in agitation & which I think is impracticable, his intention is to ship American property from hence in French Bottoms, by the way of New Orleans, from thence to proceed to Fort Pitt in Order to supply the back Inhabitants & Indians on the Continent, this plan I believe wont take owing to the great distance of Land Carriage – but at the same time its very political in the French to forward the Scheeme, as it will be the means of Inriching the French settlements on the Misisipi, at the expence of the poor deluded Americans, and throwing all the trade into that Channell – this as I hinted before is only in agitation & it appears to me so blind, that I immagine 'twill be drop'd therefore shall say no more on that head till hear further Conce[rnin]g same. I have great reason to believe something of Importance is going forward at Dunkirk, but what it is I have not been able to learn, & doubt if its possiable to discover the same, however if it can be done; I think I can do it as soon as any person, all I shall [say] on that head at present is, that behoves you to keep sharp look out at that place, as it lays very convenient to your Channel, and small Vessells may slip out and take what they please of your homeward bound Ships, as they immagine when they are off[f] Dover that they are perfectly safe, – I am apprehensive Mr Deane has some such plan, and am confident another Cutter or Vessell has been or is buying up, but wether there or at Dover I know not, however they mean to make Dunkirk a very usefull place for their purposes, therefore beg a Constant watch may be kept at that Hole of a place, –

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 147. Cutter purchased was named *Revenge*.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO JOHN BRADFORD <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Nantes April 29, 1777.

Inclosed is Bill of Lading for thirty Cases of Arms as at foot shipped onboard the *Lynch* Capt [John] Adams. (No 1 a 21 contains five hundred & twenty five Fuzils & No 22 a 30 contains four hundred & fifty pair of pistols) on accot of the Hon. The Continental Congress who you will please to advise of their arrival

I would recommend them to be proved before put into the Hands of the Soldiery – I have the honor to be &c

The Agent for the Continental Congress

Boston.

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

30 Apr.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H.	Courses	Winds	Remks on Wednesday 30th of April 1777
1			Small winds & fair weather
6			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
7	SE		
9			Cloudy weather with small rain
10	ENE		
			Latt By Obs 49D29m Longd in 11D41m
1	NEBN	SSW	Saw a sail in the NE gave chaise at 3 Came up
3	North		with her the Brig <i>Trapasey</i> [ <i>Trepassy</i> ] Elias
4	NNW		coomes master from Topsham for Newfoundland
12			6 days out <sup>2</sup>
			Moderate weather

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

2. Libel against *Trepassy*, published in the *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, July 10, 1777, gives master's name as Isaac Follet.

JOURNAL OF TIMOTHY CONNOR, MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE  
*Rising States* <sup>1</sup>

[April 15 to April 30, 1777]

the third day after we was taken which was the 18th of April the ship began to make the best of her way for Spite-head and standing into the Channel we had near Like'd to been lost of[f] the Rocks of Scilly, our Brigg being about one half a league a head made the first breech in the Night being close on board the rocks and fired several signal Guns which was answered by our Ship, and before we could put our Ship about the Brigg was afoul of our Quarter and carried away our Ship's Starboard Quarter Gallery our Ship struck twice but did no other damage when we had got clear of the rocks we stretch'd for the Westward in Bristol Channel and took us three

days to beat out again, when we met with a gale of wind and carried our Maintopmast by the board Sails all standing about 9 O'Clock at Night rain'd and blow'd very hard the next day employ'd about geting up a new top Mast and the riging over head and we almost starv'd not allow'd to go to any part of the Ship without a Sentinel sometimes we had nothing but burgue and Peas, without Salt, butter or Méat – only what we begged from some of the Sailors as it happen'd there was some of our own Countrymen on board. we arrived at Spitehead, the 30th of April and it is common when a ship comes in from sea for small boats to come of[f] and supply the Ships crew with such necessaries as they stand in need of where we sold what trifle of clothes we had to get supplied with provisions

1. Connor's Journal, LC. Connor was now a prisoner on board H.M.S. *Terrible* which captured Massachusetts privateer *Rising States* on April 15.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK  
AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

By the Commissioners for executing  
the Office of Lord High Admiral  
of Great Britain & Ireland &c.

Whereas you have represented to Us by your Letter of the 22d instant, that upon considering in what manner it may be most proper to victual the Prisoners to be committed to Forton & old Mill Prisons you are of opinion that the Allowance which was made for the subsistence of Rebel Prisoners under the care of your Board in the Year 1745, Vizt

Wheaten Bread	1 lb
Beef	$\frac{1}{2}$
Cheese	$\frac{1}{4}$ .

appears to be too scanty, and have therefore proposed the Scheme of Diet that was settled last War for the Prisoners of War, (a Copy of which is hereunto annex'd) as the most proper method for Victualling the Prisoners to be confined in the above Prisons, with no other Alteration than putting the Bread at 1 lb a day instead of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb a day, and establishing Water instead of Beer, We do hereby approve of the said proposition, except what relates to the substituting Water instead of Beer, and require and direct you to cause the Prisoners who may be committed to the said two Prisons to be Victualled in every respect agreeable to the said Scheme except in the article of Bread of which they are to have only one pound P day each instead of the quantity in the said Scheme mention'd as you have proposed.

Given under our hands, the 30th of April 1777.

Sandwich Palmerston Lisburne

By command of their Lordships  
Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

[Enclosure]  
Table of Victualling Prisoners of War.

Days.	Beer	Bread	Beef	Butter	Cheese	Pease
	quarts	lb	lb.	Ounces	Ounces	Pints
Sunday	1	1½	¾	—	—	½
Monday	1.	1½	¾	—	—	—
Tuesday	1.	1½	¾	—	—	½
Wednesday	1.	1½	¾	—	—	—
Thursday	1.	1½	¾	—	—	½
Friday	1.	1½	¾	—	—	—
Saturday	1.	1½	—	4	or 6	½
Total	7.	10½	4½	4	6	2 or greens in lieu

1. In Letters to Commissioners for taking care of Sick & Hurt Seamen, NMM.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD <sup>1</sup>

Gentn Admty Office 30th April 1777

Vice Adml Sr Jas Douglas having inform'd my Lords Commissrs of the Admty that the *Rising States*, taken by His Majesty's Ship the *Terrible* and lately brought to Spithead, is pierc'd for 18 Guns, well furnish'd with Sails, Rigging &c. and is said to sail very well, and that should such a Vessel be wanted, she may answer exceedingly well; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to cause the said Vessel to be survey'd and report whether she is fit to be purchas'd for His Majestys service. I am Gent. &c

P. S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 482.

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1777

London [April 30].

Letters by the *Worcester*, Capt. Bentley, who is arrived at Liverpoole from Jamaica, bring Advice, that the *Duckingfield*, Captain Foster, a missing Ship from London and Madeira, was safe arrived at Jamaica; that two Days after she left the Madeiras, she was chased by an Americn Privateer four Hours; but by some Accident the Privateer took fire, and Part of her blew up; and during the confusion the *Duckingfield* got clear of them. The same Letters say, that there are several American Privateers cruising around the Madeira Islands, which had taken some Prizes.

An American Privateer was some Time since taken by one of our Frigates. She carried the Continental Colours, which were thirteen red and white Stripes; but it was observed that this Privateer had but twelve Stripes in his Colours; on being asked the Reason, he answered, that since we had

taken the Province of New-York, the Congress had a Province less; and that whenever they lost any of the Provinces it was their Orders to cut away one of the Stripes from the Colours, so that there should be no more Stripes than Provinces.

LORD STORMONT TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Paris Thursday Morning April 30, 1777.

I return you many Thanks for the Honour of Your Letter. I have this Inst recd the inclosed with which I have taken the liberty You allow. The Vice admiral whose Name Your Correspt could not recollect must be Ct D'estaing. His activity and hostile Disposition towards us You well know. The Project of sending american Property in french Bottoms to New Orleans certainly exists, but I shd imagine that if we cannot stop it here a Frigate or two properly stationed in those Seas would render every Prospect of that kind abortive. I am [&c.]

Stormont

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 66.

1 May

CAPTAIN JONATHAN HARADEN TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

On board the Brig *Tyrannicide*.

Latt 49.32 N. Longd 13. W.

Gentlemen

May 1 1777

This comes by the Brig. *Trepassey* which we took Yesterday, from Topsham bound to Newfoundland with Salt &c an Account of which you have by the Prize Master Mr Nathl Webb By him we have shipt the Remainder of the goods taken out of the Brig *Eagle* –

The Captain informs us there was a large Ship Loaded with Indigo & Rice taken in the Bay of Biscay bound for Nantz by a 64 Gun Ship and by her Convoyed in to Portsmouth the day before he sail'd – judged to be worth £30,000 Sterling – she had on board several Frenchmen <sup>2</sup> – He also informs us that there is a great number of Cruizers in the Bay – Altho' this Vessell &c is of but small value, yet we thought it much better to send home, than to give the Prisoners, for fear of their information, as we were so near the Land. We are all in good health & high Spirits on board both Vessells <sup>3</sup> nothing more worth Notice at present, I remain Gentlemen [&c.]

Jon<sup>a</sup> Haraden

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 189, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. Ship *Liberty*, from South Carolina, taken March 29 by H.M.S. *Culloden*. See *London Chronicle*, April 19 to April 22, 1777.

3. Other vessel was Massachusetts Navy brig *Massachusetts*.



"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM DUBLIN, MAY 1." <sup>1</sup>

The *Freedom* privateer, of 12 guns, is now cruising from Scilly to Cape Clear: She lately took the *Dispatch*, Capt. Regan, from Lisbon to Corke, out of which she took about ten tons of wine, some fruit, &c. and put the prisoners on board her. She had then taken fifteen prizes on this station, amongst which is the *Phebe* from Honduras to London;<sup>2</sup> the *Betty*, from Glasgow to Cadiz; a ship from Dublin to Bourdeaux, supposed to be the *Lord's Gift*. Five of the prizes were burnt by the privateer.

1. *London Chronicle*, May 6 to May 8, 1777.

2. *Phoebe*, a 40 ton brigantine, was taken by the Massachusetts Navy brigantine *Freedom*, Captain John Clouston; libeled against July 10, 1777, and at the same time Clouston libeled against "sundry goods taken out of several British vessels on the high seas," *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, July 10, 1777.

CAPTAIN JOHN JERVIS, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

*Foudroyant*, at Sea. 1st May 1777 -

I desire you will acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admty, that I pursued the design mention'd in my letter of the 29th past, but was not fortunate enough to fall in with the Rebel Privateer; this disappointment was in some measure compensated yesterday afternoon by our intercepting a Bermudian built Sloop, called the *Alice*, John Porter master, from Charles Town in South Carolina, bound to Nantes, Bourdeaux, or the first Port in France, she could reach, and there, after delivery of her Cargo, consisting of Rice and Indigo, to arm and load with Cloathing and Implements of Husbandry, and to return to Charles Town - The Prisoners relate, that on the 28th at Noon, they saw a Rebel Brig Privateer of Force, quite clean, Steering W b N with a Crowd of Sail - She shew'd her Colours but did not speak with them.

The Sloop, tho' remarkable for her fast sailing, has had a long Passage, owing to incessant Easterly winds, which the Master imagines have prevented the arrival of many other American Vessels in the French Ports, so that we are in hourly expectation of falling in with some of them. I am Sir [&c.]

J Jervis

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/1987, 1, 50.

*London Packet*, or *New Lloyd's Evening Post*, MONDAY, MAY 19 TO  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1777

Corke, May 1

Yesterday arrived here the *Lord Lifford*, of this port, Capt. [John] Jones, from Boston, in 29 days. Several French vessels arrived at Boston and Piscataqua, with arms, ammunition and cloathing, a French General, and 50 officers. Two privateers of 36 and 26 guns, sailed from Boston, and many more of equal force were preparing. Capt. Jones brought home 12 Captains who had been taken. His vessel was also taken by the *Columbus* privateer, and carried into Boston, where he purchased her of the captors and obtained leave to depart.<sup>1</sup> When General [Charles] Lee was confined at New York,

Colonel [Archibald] Campbell was immediately deprived of his liberty, and confined in New England, it being resolved by the Congress to retaliate.

1. *Lord Lifford* had been taken by the Continental Navy ship *Columbus*, Captain Abraham Whipple. See Volumes 6 and 7.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN HUGH ROBINSON, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we have ordered Vice Adml Sr Jas Douglas to cause Ninety One of the Supernumerary Seamen & Landmen who have been raised for His Majestys Fleet to be put on board the Ship you Command in order to their being carried in her to Quebec to be disposed of as the Senior Captain of His Majs Ships & Vessels in the River St Lawrence for the time being shall direct; You are hereby required & directed to receive the said Supernumeraries on board & to carry them to Quebec accordingly so soon as they shall have been paid Two Months advance, & also the Bounties to which they may be respectively entitled for the Payment of which with all possible dispatch the necessary Orders are given.

You are to bear the said Supernumeraries on a separte List for Wages from the time of their coming into the Service respectively until you shall otherwise dispose of them as above directed; And for Victuals during their continuance on board

You are hereby further required & directed to receive on board the Ship you command Jean Derente Pilot for the River St Lawrence who will be sent to you by the said Vice Admiral, and give him a Passage to Quebec victualling him during his continuance on board as the Ships Company & bearing him for Wages as Pilot Extra

Upon your arrival at Quebec you are to dispose of him as the Senior Captain abovementioned shall direct. Given &c 1st May 1777

Capt Robinson – *Proteus* – Spithead

By &c PS

Sandwich

Lisburne

H Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 466–67.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN THOMAS MACKENZIE, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we intend that the Ship you command together with His Majts Ship *Proteus* which will be ordered to call off Plymouth to join you & whose Commr Capt Robinson will be directed to obey Your Orders, Shall proceed forthwith into the River St Lawrence with such Transports Storeships, Victuallers & Trade bound thither as he may bring with him from Spithead and with any other Ships or Vessels which may be ready & willing to accompany you So soon therefore as the *Proteus* arrives which you will know by her Commr hoisting a Jack at her Foretop Gallant Mast head; You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea & taking the said Ship under your command & such Transports Victuallers & Trade as are abovementioned under your Convoy make the best of your way consistent with their security with them

into the River St Lawrence and having seen them as far as the Isle of Bic, you are to direct Capt Robinson to proceed to Quebec with the Ships & Vessels going thither & upon his arrival there to Deliver the inclosed Pacquet to the Senior Captain for the time being of His Maj's Ships & Vessels in the abovementioned River & follow his orders for his further proceedings, And you are to make the best of your way in the Ship you command to New York (calling however at some convenient Place in your way to Wood & Water if you find it necessary) when you are to deliver to Vice Adml Ld Visct Howe the Pacquet you will also receive herewith addressed to him, And putting yourself under his Lordships Command follow his orders for your further proceedings.

You are to be very attentive to the Ships & Vessels which proceed under your Convoy; keeping them together by every means in your Power and upon no Account leaving them upon pretence of their not sailing fast enough to keep Company with You as we expect that in the course of your Voyage you accomodate Your progress to that of the worst sailing Sailing Ship amongst them

You are at the same time to take all possible care to prevent the said Ships & Vessels from separating from you, and to give their respective Masters such Orders & directions as you judge most conducive to that end, And in case (notwithstanding these precautions) any of them shall part Company with you or disobey your Orders You are to transmit to our Secretary a List of their Names with the circumstances attending such separation, And disobedience that such measures may be taken thereupon as shall be judged necessary. Given &c 1st May 1777

Capt Mackenzie – *Lizard* – Plymo

By &c PS

Sandwich

Lisburne

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 468-70.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM, PLYMOUTH<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

My Lord

Admiralty Office 1st May 1777

With respect to the application of the Persons who apprehended the three Rebel Prisoners who lately deserted from the Hospital, to be paid a Reward for their Trouble and the Expence they were at in bringing them to Plymouth, I am to acquaint your Lordship that the Navy Board are directed to pay a Reward of five pounds for Each with travelling Charges I am &c.

P. S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 485-87.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL ROBERT MAN<sup>1</sup>

Sir

Admiralty Office 1st May [1777]

I have communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of the 8th past acquainting them that you have received a Letter

from Captn [William] Hay, at Gibraltar informing you that Captain [George] Murray of the *Levant* had brought in there a Rebel Brigantine Privateer, called the *General Montgomery*, commanded by Benjamin Hill mounting 18 Guns, of 9 & 6 Pounders 4 Cohorns & 3 Swivels and Mann'd with 87 Men when taken; and the most material Intelligence is, that the Congress are issuing 400 Commissions to Cruizers which are intended mostly for the Banks of Newfoundland, and the Coasts of Guinea, Spain & Portugal, and in return, I am commanded by their Lordships to refer you to my Letter of Yesterday's date respecting the disposal of the Prisoners taken on board the Privateer before mentioned I am Sir:

P S.

Vice Adml Man, at Gibraltar, by the *Worcester*.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 496-97.

CAPTAIN JAMES WALLACE, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS<sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Spithead] May 1st 1777

Be pleased to acquaint their Lordships that at the Breaking out of the Rebellion in No America I had the Honor to command His Majesty's Ship *Rose* – with some other of His Vessels at Rhode Island.

At which Time the Rebels Stopt all communication and Supplies to His Majs Forces.

In this Situation Vice Adml Graves Commander in Cheif of [His] Majs Ships & Vessels in No America gave me Directions to Hire Vessels to send Intelligence & Keep up a Communication with the Different Stations & Supplies of cattle & provisions of all kinds that could be gott – Having seized Several of the Rebels Vessels, I armed, fitted, and employed them on that Service, In which I was very successful as repeatedly acknowledged by the Admirals & Generals.

The fitting the Vessels, and Keeping them in repair, the money I paid to gain Intelligence Have been an expence of about 500 pounds, which I beg their Lordships will take into their Consideration and order me to be reimbursed. I am Sir [&c.]

Ja<sup>s</sup> Wallace

[On verso] 31 May The E. of Sandwich signified the K. pleasure that he be allowed £ 500 direction accordingly to N Bd

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2672, 3, 6.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN BRADFORD<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Sir

(Duplicate)

Paris May 1, 1777.

I received your Favour of Feb. 25. by Capt. [John] Adams – I congratulate you on his safe Arrival with others of our American Ships, it being rather wonderful that so many get in through all the English Men of War actually cruizing in the channel & Bay of Biscay to prevent them. I make

no doubt but Messrs Penet & Morris will take proper Care in disposing of the Cargo and Shipping the remittance: And We have given Orders to Mr Jonathan Williams (formerly of Boston) who resides at Nantes, to add as much to her Cargo, as she can carry consistently with her fast sailing, in Military Stores or Cloathing for Soldiers, of which a great Quantity is in his Hands, & shipping for America by him with all Expedition. – His Diligence, Fidelity & Correctness in Business, have given us great Satisfaction, & we recommend him therefore warmly to our Friends, who may occasionally want an able Factor at Nantes, where he is about to Settle. I have written to Mr [Thomas] Cushing some News of one of your Cruisers, which he will shew you if requested.<sup>2</sup> Captain Wickes of Philadelphia, having put his Ship in good Order at L'Orient is about to make another Cruise, with two stout Tenders, before he returns to America. They sail in a few Days. It is extremely mortifying to proud Britain that all her boasted Naval Power cannot prevent her being insulted on her own Coasts.

I am, Sir, very respectfully [&c.]

B Franklin

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

2. Franklin to Thomas Cushing, May 1, 1777, Franklin Papers, Series 2, vol. 18, No. 358, LC.

# JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Nantes May 1 1777.

Capt Nicholson is by this time a long side of Capt Wickes under his american Colours. – I have not yet collected all the Bills but I imagine this armament will cost you upwards of 300 Louis exclusive of what we advanced to French Sailors from Havre & the present Crews adva wages which may amount to 150 Livres more: I have shipped on board Capt [John] Adams 30 Cases qt 525 Fuzils & 450 pair of pistols I intend to send Leather enough for the Holsters if I can obtain it in Time. I find this will come to about 5 Livres P pair the money for this & for the Cutter I am obliged to M Peltier for I shall therefore be glad to have a sufficient Sum ordered to be paid me here to discharge it. – Capt Wickes had given orders to Capt Johnson to meet him at L'orient – we were obliged to dispatch a Courier to Bordeaux to change these orders as the post would not arrive so soon as Johnson would probably be sailed – All the Swivels the Cutter brot from Havre are good for nothing Capt Nicholson has condemned them

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

## 2 May

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL MARSHALL, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

So soon as the Ship you command shall have been fumigated & be in other respects in a proper condition for the Sea, You are hereby required & directed to proceed with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather off the Island of Madeira, & diligently to cruize off that Island for the protec-

tion of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, & to look out for, & 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 may be found in those parts.

You are to continue upon this Service for the Space of three Weeks after your arrival off Madeira, at the expiration of which time you are to repair to that Island to recruit your Provisions & Water, and having so done (in which you are to use the utmost dispatch) make the best of your way back to Spithead, & remain there until you receive further Order, Given &c. the 2d of May 1777.

Captn Marshall, *Arethusa*, Spithead

By &c.

PS

Sandwich

Palmerston

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 481. Similar orders for anti-privateer patrol on various stations were issued this date to Captain Richard Hughes, H.M.S. *Centaur*, Captain Robert Sawyer, H.M.S. *Boyne*, and Captain John Carter Allen, H.M.S. *Albion*.

#### MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

at London May 2nd 1777.

. . . The *Exeter* of 64 returned to Spithead with the *Culloden* and reported meeting off our coast with the King's ship *Robuste* of 74, Accompanying her for a few hours; that the Captain of the French Ship Told Captain Moor, commanding the *Exeter*, that he had orders to protect all American or other Vessels coming to Trade in our Ports; not that the Government intended to encourage the Americans, but only to protect the Coasts of France against all insults on the part of any Power. In any case, the Captain of the King's Ship treated the English Captain with great Courtesy and even sent him some Wine as a present. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 10-19, LC Photocopy.

3 May

#### JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*, CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Satterday 3th of May 1777
2			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company -
3	ENE	WSW	
5			at 5 Am saw two sail one barring SE. the other
6	SWBS		SSW at 8 Capt Harridon brought too one the
			Brigt <i>Venus</i> from Dartmouth for N foundland
			at 9 I Brought two the Brigt <i>Frindship</i> from
10	SW		Topsham for N foundland two sail in sight we
			in Chaise Capt Harridon spake a french snow
			we in Chaise of a Brigt

Latt By Obs 49D 44m – Longd in 12D  
24m

11	WSW	NW	at 1 spake a Brigt from St malows for St
2	South		peters Saw a sail to the Southward at 2 spake
4	NNE		a duch snow from St Eustatia for Amsterdam –
			Spake Capt Haridon Saw two sail to the North-
7	SSW		ward I gave chaise to one Capt Haridon to the
8	SE	WSW	Other at 6 spake a french snow from St maloes
			for St Peters 8 days out the other proved to
			be a frenchman at 7 we came up with Capt
			Haridon & the two prizes lay by freash breaze –

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord,

Admiralty Office 3d May 1777

Your Lordship having in your letter of the 30th ultimo acquainted us that it was hoped the orders which were issued in pursuance of His Majesty's pleasure for preparing a Vessel to be ready to Sail with the Cloathing &ca for the Army in Canada by the 10th of March last, would have been carried into Execution with all possible Dispatch, and that the Vessel (the *Proteus*) would at the expected time have proceeded to the place of her destination; that it was not however the Business of your letter to forward an Enquiry into the causes of the very extraordinary delays which so visibly attended the preparing her for the Voyage; but only to remark that the King was extremely chagrined to find that there was any delay whatsoever in a Business of such National Importance: We, nevertheless, think it necessary, as your Lordship has intimated that there were extraordinary delays in the equipment of the *Proteus*, to enter so far into this Business as to shew your Lordship that there were no delays but such as were unavoidable from accidents of Winds and Weather, the effects of which could not have been obviated but by an earlier signification of His Majesty's pleasure from your Lordship. And before we proceed any further into the discussion of this Matter, it may not be improper to recall to your Lordships remembrance that the orders we received in your Lordship's letter of the 1st February were only to have Transport Vessels in readiness to receive their Loading onboard by the 10th March instead of being ready to Sail on that day as stated in your letter of the 30th of last Month.

The Tonnage which was at first ordered to be provided was increased by your Lordship's subsequent Letters of the 4th & 13th of February from 240 to 470 Tons – These augmentations, under His Majesty's possitive injunctions that care should be taken effectually to protect the Vessels freighted with such very important Articles against every danger either from the Treachery of the Master or the Force of the Enemy, made it necessary for us to lay aside the thoughts of employing Transport Vessels, and to hire or purchase a Ship of large Stowage and capable of being sufficiently manned and armed to defend herself against an Enemy's Ship of Force. – With this

view the *Talbot* India man (now called the *Proteus*) was purchased so early as on the 14th February (the day after the date of your Lordship's last mentioned letter) and was so rapidly prepared for the Service for which she was intended, as to be carried from Blackwall to Woolwich on the 8th March, and to be in complete readiness to receive her Lading on the 13th, of which the Board of Ordnance had notice, and were desired to hasten their Stores onboard. – Part of the Goods were taken onboard the 17th and the remainder, of what her great draught of Water would admit of her receiving at Woolwich, on the 23d, when a Pilot was sent onboard of her from the Trinity House to conduct her to Longreach she being then ready to proceed; but from the contrary Winds and bad Weather, which lasted for a considerable time, he absolutely refused to carry her down. – From these untoward circumstances the Ship did not arrive in Longreach till the afternoon of the 23d of last Month; but such was the eagerness of the Captain and Officers to forward the important Service in which they were employed that she took in her Guns and ordnance Stores and the remainder of her lading so expeditiously as to Sail from thence on the 25th at Noon to the Nore; and having compleated her Complement of Seamen and Marines proceeded on the 27th towards Spithead where she arrived Yesterday.

From this deduction of Facts, which we desire your Lordship will lay before the King, we are inclined to hope His Majesty will be graciously pleased to believe that there has not been any extraordinary delays in the Equipment of the *Proteus*, but, that, on the contrary every exertion has been used in this Department to forward a Business of such National Importance.

As to the Machine for carrying flat bottom'd Boats, which has been represented to your Lordship to have been received onboard the *Proteus* to the exclusion of about 20 Tons of Cloathing, Shoes, &ca, We can at present only express our great astonishment at it, not having given any order in that respect, or ever heard of such a Machine till the *Proteus* had sailed from the Nore; For, before we had received your Lordship's letter, we directed her Captain to let us know by whose direction, or upon whose application it was received onboard, and shall not fail of sending your Lordship, for His Majesty's Information, Copy of his Answer as soon as it comes to hand. – We have, in the mean time, ordered the Machine to be disembarked to make room for the Cloathing &ca if it arrives in time, as directed by Your Lordship's separate Letter of the 30th past. We are &c. –

Sandwich. H. Penton.  
Palmerston. H. Palliser.  
Lisburne.

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 159–63.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 3rd May 1777.

Lieutenant Oakly Commander of the *Union* Tender, having represented to their Lordships that on the 24th past he discovered that the impressed



Men on board had formed and near executed a Plan for their Escape from the said Tender, and that John Goldsworthy one of her Company had assisted therein, and recommended that he shou'd be put on board one of His Majestys Ships, being a Troublesome, mutinous & seditious Fellow. I am commanded by their Lordships to recommend it to you to take the said Man out of the Tender and put him on board one of the Ships at Plymouth going abroad. I am &c.

P.S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 506-07.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR. TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Nantes May 3. 1777

The *Freedom* Brig in the Service of the Massachusetts State arrived here the day before yesterday she sailed Mar. 10 so brings nothing fresh she has made 12 prizes 7 she sent into America 1 she gave to prisoners 3 she burned & one is coming into this River, this latter is a Brig from Bordeaux with Wine &c bound to Dublin. . . .

1. Jonathan Williams Letter Book, YUL.

THOMAS MORRIS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Nantes May 3d 1777

At the request of Captain John Robarts of the Schooner *Mary* lately arrived from Charles Town South Carolina I beg leave to acquaint you that William Machmaster one of his Sailors, is now detained a Prisoner in this City, charged with having drowned one John Hoggins belonging to the same Vessell – the real circumstances are as follows – The said Machmaster & Hoggins took the Ship's boat with an intention of going onshore together at Coueron – but being both much in Liquor they quarelled, and came to blows in the boat. Hoggins by accident fell out of the boat and was drowned – Machmaster not being able to afford him any assistance as he was quite drunk. It's by french Witnesses who were onshore and saw the accident happen that Machmaster is detained by the Judges of the Admiralty – who may decide his Fate unless some intercession is immediately made in his behalf with Monsr Le Duc de Penthievre & Monsr Le Chancelier – these are the particulars of the matter as represented by Captain Robarts at whose desire I have taken the liberty of troubling you with this letter – in expectation of your answer I have the honour to be very respectfully Sir [&c.]

Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 6, 4, APS.

4 May (Sunday)

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Sunday 4th of May 1777
3			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in Company
5			At 5 Am saw a sail to the SW spake her a Duch 50 Gun ship of war for Amsterdam Em- ployd in getting goods out of the <i>Venus</i> on board the <i>Frindship</i> freash gale
			Latt By Obs 49D 17m Longd in 11D 57m
1	SE	West	Lay By freash gale & Cloudey weather at 4 Pm Dispatch the Brig <i>Frindship</i> for Boston at 8
9	SSW		got all out the Brig <i>Venus</i> put 55 prizoners on board & sent them to Britain
12			Moderate breaze of wind and fair weather

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH, MAY 4." <sup>1</sup>

This day came in the *Barbara*, of and for Dublin, from Bourdeaux, Capt. Welch, with wine and brandy, retaken by his Majesty's ship *Foudroyant*; the *Florian*, of and from Charlestown, South Carolina, for Nantz, with rice, indigo, pimento and tobacco, taken by his Majesty's ship *Reasonable*, Capt. Dawel . . . *Ellis* [*Alice*] of and from Charlestown, Capt. Barter [John Porter], for Nantz, loaded with rice and indigo, a prize taken by his Majesty's ship *Foudroyant*.

1. *London Packet*, or *New Lloyd's Evening Post*, May 5 to May 7, 1777.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO ADMIRAL LOUIS CHARLES DU CHAFFAULT, BREST <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

4 May 1777

[Versailles]

Approved by the  
King's hand.

. . . Following the representations you made to me, Sir, I have received the King's orders On the Course of action to be taken by the Captains of His Ships on patrol in the event that an English Ship should Chase a Vessel within their sight. It is His Majesty's intention that, in this case, His Ships hoist their Flag, and engage him with a cannon shot. If the Vessel being Chased shows a French Flag, His Majesty's Ship will head for him and will take him under its protection; and the Captain will declare, as much as is needed, to the Captain of the English Ship, that, since His Majesty's Ship is on patrol in these waters in order to protect His Nation's Trade and to guarantee peace, he can not allow a french vessel to be searched in his sight, and would be opposed to the search.

But if the vessel being chased shows foreign colors, the Captains of

His Majesty's Ships will not alter course, regardless of what Nation the colors may be, and will not meddle in any manner in what might take place between the Ship Chasing and the Vessel being Chased, unless the latter places himself within range to seek the shelter and protection of the King's Flag, in which case the Captains will follow that which is prescribed for them in this respect in their instructions.

In the prohibition of becoming involved in matters which concern Foreign Vessels, one must however make an Exception in the case where the Vessels might be found at a distance of one or two Leagues off the coasts of France. Only in this case must the Captains of His Majesty's Ships steer towards the Vessel Chasing and declare that they can not Permit that there be any violence or insult committed on the Coasts of the Kingdom, and that the freedom of trade which His Majesty wishes to Maintain On His Coasts, for all Nations, requires that they accord protection to the weakest, no matter who it may be: And in case of obstinacy on the part of the English Ship, they will follow that which is set out in their instructions.

Moreover, you are aware, Sir, that in all cases the commanders of His Majesty's Ships ought not to resort to any measures until they are sure that their forces are Sufficient to impose them, and that under no Circumstances are they to compromise the honor of the Flag.

You will have the kindness, Sir, to communicate to the Captains of the Ships that you detach from the King's Fleet, that which His Majesty has ordered me to set forth to you on this topic, and you will continue to recommend to them, furthermore, not to deviate from the literal interpretation of their instructions.

I am having an Extract of this letter sent to Mons. de la Motte-Picquet by way of L'Orient. . . .

1. AN, Marine, B4, 129, 13-14, LC Photocopy.

#### BEAUMARCHAIS TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris, 4th May 1777

. . . A letter of the 6th March written to Havre from Cape Francois informs me that *l'Amphitrite* and *la Seine*, my two first vessels, have arrived without accident at Charlestown in South Carolina, <sup>2</sup> I hasten to send you this news, begging you to rejoice at it for my sake, if the American cause has become so foreign to France that you will no longer rejoice for its sake. I am no longer anxious for my other vessels; these two alone carried extensive munitions.

*La Therese*, formerly called *le Comte de Vergennes* a richly laden vessel, at last set sail on the 26th April, with the best wind, from Mindin, a roadstead at the mouth of the Loire. But, through a succession of adverse circumstances which I incessantly experience, an enormous packet which that vessel was to carry has been delayed two posts at the Paris Post Office, in spite of my precautions and recommendations. I doubt not from this delay, that everything has been opened and copied. It would be no great evil, be-

cause I assure you that the Ministry is in no way compromised in them; but what is a great evil, is that such indiscretion exists in France, and that an important packet should be shamelessly delayed from Monday to Friday, and a vessel obliged to start without its letters, after having waited for them four days, and ten times very nearly seen the wind, which was to bear it away, change. See what this leads to. Those who will receive this vessel are ignorant of what is to be done with the cargo, and the vessel which bears the papers of this first one may be delayed three months, or perish; and the stupid curiosity of the Post Office gentlemen has put in danger valuable goods to the extent of more than a million. If to obviate this abuse whenever I have an important packet I shall dispatch a courier. . . .

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 23-24, LC Photocopy.

2. Beaumarchais' reported information was in error. *L'Amphitrite* arrived at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, but *la Seine* was captured by H.M.S. *Seaford* on April 5. See Journal of H.M.S. *Seaford*, April 5.

### 5 May

#### "EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM WHITEHAVEN, MAY 5"<sup>1</sup>

The *Lonsdale*, Captain Grayson, who sailed from hence the 28th March, bound for Quebec, fell in with a privateer called the *Royal American*, of 16 guns and 125 men, upon the 1st of April in the evening, and beat her off in less than an hour, but had the misfortune to have Mr. Fagan the first mate killed, and Wm. Brown, a seaman wounded. – Cape Clear bore E.N.E. about seventy leagues distant.

Upon the 7th April in the evening, said ship fell in with a brigantine, which Captain Grayson took for another privateer, but by altering her course in the night, lost her. – The next morning at day light, in lat. 49. long. 32., three sail appeared in sight, one a Frenchman, and two privateers; – the *Tyrannicide*, Capt. Harridan, and the *Massachusetts*, Capt. Fisk; – the former got along side the *Lonsdale* at half past seven o'clock, and began to engage her: in two hours she set her top gallant sails and bore away towards her consort, on which, as was afterwards discovered, Richard Pearson, who is an apprentice of Mr. Martin's, and who was carried into Salem in his snow *John*, Capt. Barrass, having entered on board the *Tyrannicide*, called to the Captain, and informed him, "He knew the ship, that she belonged to his owner, and some of her guns were wood to complete the tiers," or words to that effect; upon which Capt. Harridan hauled his wind and run close alongside, and when he found the *Lonsdale* so disabled as that Captain Grayson could not command her, he run under her boltsprit, intending to board her, but durst not do it; during part of which time the *Lonsdale's* spritsail yard was entangled in the privateer's stern, and Capt. Grayson having had his boatswain and gunner killed, a seaman wounded, and everything cut to pieces, thought it in vain to sacrifice brave men's lives; and notwithstanding 24 people in the tops of the privateer kept an incessant fire, he discharged, with his own hand, every blunderbuss and musket, and then allowed his colours to be struck.

The privateers afterwards took a vessel called the *Eagle*, from Dart-

mouth to Newfoundland, on board which vessel Capt. Grayson and such of his people as were not sent in the *Lonsdale* for the Bay of Fundy, were sent home, and the Captain of the privateer gave them their cloaths: – they parted the privateers in long. 22. who were part of a fleet sent out from Massachusetts to intercept the Quebec and Newfoundland trade.

No words can describe the praises that are due to Captain Grayson and his crew, and altho' a great disappointment, yet underwriters, owners, and affreighters, must be satisfied every thing was done that could be expected at the hands of brave men.

Yesterday an account was received here of the *Prince George*, Captain Ponsonby, of this port, and bound for the West Indies, being taken by the *Rising States*, an American privateer of sixteen six pounders, 6 cohorns, and 12 swivels, commanded by one Thompson. Capt. Ponsonby writes, that on the 10th of March, about 70 leagues from Cape Clear, there came on a heavy gale of wind from the westward, which continued fourteen days, when on the 24th of March he fell in with the above vessel, and was obliged to strike to him. They were all taken on board the privateer, except the passengers and Thomas Hill, Henry Robinson, and William M'Cloud, three apprentices. The ships kept company a week between lat. 40, 47. long. 6, 10. in which time the privateer took two more prizes, one a brig from Lisbon to Ireland under convoy of the *Arethusa*, and the other a large sloop from Lisbon to Southampton. The prizes were sent into Port L'Orient, whither the privateer was bound after her cruize: but near Belleisle she fell in with the *Terrible* man of war, who soon took her, and carried her into Spithead. The Commander of the privateer mentioned several others being cruizing in the bay, and many more expected in a short time.

Advice was received here on Saturday morning of the loss of the *Elizabeth*, Cap. Welsh, belonging to this port, which happened on the 28th of March in a violent gale of wind and thick snow-shower. He was bound for Drunton, in Norway, and took a pilot at Christian-Sound, who through mistake, occasioned by the haziness and violence of the weather, run him upon rock amongst the Narrows in the Leith. Before the ship went to pieces part of the cargo was taken out of her, some of the rigging and materials are also saved, as are all the people. A merchant in Drunton, who writes the account, speaks highly in favour of Capt. Welsh, and describes his activity and indefatigable pains in preserving the articles mentioned, after his misfortune, in a manner which must recommend him to those concerned with him in the Vessel.

1. *The General Advertiser. Liverpool*, May 9, 1777.

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM BRISTOL, MAY 5.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Chalkle*, Furse, from Honduras to Bristol, was taken the 2d ult. in lat. 42. long. 43. by the *Massachuset*, and *Tyrannicide* privateers, belonging to the Congress, and got to Kinsale in the brig *Eagle*, Capt. Holloway, of Dartmouth, who also was taken by the said privateers. Capt. Furse writes, that those privateers came out of Salem the 19th of March, in company with

the *Cabot* privateer,<sup>2</sup> and that night they were all chased by the *Milford* frigate; and the officers on board the *Massachuset* privateer told Capt. Furse, they believed she fell a sacrifice to the *Milford*. Those privateers are to go to France before they return; but Capt. Furse believes, they would put into some port of the west of Ireland to water as they had not water sufficient to last them more than 20 days, but provisions enough for six months. The musquets and cutlasses on board the *Massachuset* were all French.

1. *London Chronicle*, May 6 to May 8, 1777.

2. Continental Navy brig *Cabot*.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS RICHARDS, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Yarmouth May 5th 1777

Inclosed send a Copy of a letter to Thos Pitt Esqr Mayor of Yarmouth with Account of the *Prince of Orange* Packet (from Harwich) Mr Phillp Dean Master being taken by an American Privateer last Fryday night about nine O'Clock, with the Mail On board, about three Leagues or thereabouts, of[f] Scowen [Schouwen], from what intelligence I can learn she is a Schooner about 150 Tonns, Mounts Ten Carriage Guns, sixteen Swivels, Fifty Men, and has on board Ammunition for an other Vessel that she may take fit for their purpose, Which please communicate to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Likewise please acquaint their Lordships, that as soon as Capn Parry of His Majesty's Sloop *Alderney* had received the Above mentioned Account, & unmoored, and is gone in quest of her, he has put Ten Men on board the Custom House Cutter who Sails with him, the *Alderney* being short of Complement, has taken the Supernumeries that were to go on board the *Kitty* Tender.

I have wrote to Capn Napier at Leith, to acquaint the Capns of His Majesty's Ships stationed there or thereabouts as the Privateer may go North about for America, which hope their Lordships will approve of and Am Sir [&c.]

Fran<sup>cs</sup> Richards

[On verso] 7 May Own rect & approve of what he has done & let him know their Lps are well satisfied with the alertness shown by Capt Parry in proceed so instantly to sea in quest of the Privateer

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2390.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN MARK MILBANKE, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas Vice Adml Sr James Douglas Commr in Chief of His Majts Ships & Vessels at Portsmouth hath transmitted to Us in his Letter of the 4th Inst One of the same date which he had received from Capt Robinson Commr of His Majts Ship *Worcester* requesting that a Court Martial may be assembled for the Trial of John Williams (3) <sup>2</sup> a Seaman belonging to the said Ship who deserted from her in October 1775 was lately taken in an

American Privatier by His Majestys Ship the *Terrible* & is now in confinement on board the *Worcester*; And We thinking fit to comply with his request do herewith send you Capt Robinson's Letter abovementioned and require & direct you forthwith to assemble a Court Martial & try the said John Williams (3) for such his desertion accordingly. Given &c 5th May 1777.

Sandwich Palmerston H Palliser

To Capt Mark Milbank Commr of His Majs Ship  
*Prs Royal* & Senior Captain &c Portsmouth  
 By &c PS

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 485.

2. Williams was a seaman on board the Massachusetts privateer *Rising States*. The (3) indicates that he was the third John Williams in the crew of H.M.S. *Worcester*.

6 May

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

Admiralty Office 6th May 1777

Having received a letter from Vice Admiral [James] Young, Commander in chief of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels at the leeward Islands, dated at Antigua the 8 March last, <sup>2</sup> giving an account of sundry armed Vessels, without any Commissions, having been fitted out from those Islands to Cruize and make Capture of American Vessels &ca on the High Seas, and of the Steps which he had taken to put a stop to such proceedings, and also of the Actions which had thereupon been brought against him; We send your Lordship herewith, for His Majesty's Information, Copies of the said Letter and it's Inclosures, together with a Copy of the Duplicate of the Vice Admiral's letter of the 12th February on the same Subject, therein referred to, the original of which is not yet come to hand.

We do not take upon us to form any judgement upon the legality of the proceedings abovementioned; But we cannot avoid reminding your Lordship that all private Ships of War, or Ships having Letters of Marque, besides the Commissions issuing from the Admiralty, have always delivered to them a body of Instructions under the Royal Signet and Sign Manual, which we presume are meant to restrain such Ships from committing any Enormities, and to avoid unnecessarily offending foreign States; Whereas, on the contrary, the Ships armed and fitted out in the manner beforementioned without Commissions have no other Instructions than what the Owners themselves think fit to give them; And if we may judge of such Instructions in general by those which have fallen into our hands, they do not only require them to seize American Vessels, but to visit all Ships whether British or belonging to foreign States. The Memorandum at the foot thereof declaring in express terms "the proper Vessels to take as Prises are

All belonging to American Subjects in Rebellion.

Any Vessel having onboard the Property of such Rebels.

Any Vessel having counterfeitt Papers and American Produce onboard.

Any Vessel without Papers, not Droughers, about an Island, with such Produce.

The consequences that may result from these Practices are so obvious, that it is unnecessary for us to enlarge upon them.

We are, therefore, upon the whole, to desire that your Lordship, when you have laid this Matter before the King will signify to Us His Majesty's pleasure what Answer we shall give to Vice Admiral Young, or what Instructions we shall send Him for his Guidance and future Conduct. We are &ca

Sandwich. H. Penton. H. Palliser.

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/259, 172-74.

2. See Vice Admiral Young to Philip Stephens, March 8.

DEPOSITION OF CAPTAIN JAMES THOMPSON, MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER  
*Rising States*<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Depositions of Witnesses had and taken at the House of William Harward bearing the Sign of the Three Tons at Portsmouth in the County of Southhampton the sixth Day of May in the Year of our Lord one Thousand seven Hundred and seventy seven and in the seventeenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and so forth upon the several Interrogatories hereunto annexed by Virtue of His Majesty's Commission issuing out and under the Seal of His High Court of Admiralty of England bearing Date the first Day of June one Thousand seven Hundred and seventy six To the Mayor of Portsmouth for the Time being John Greenway Philip Varlo Samuel Ballard and William Deacon Esquires Before Me John Greenway one of the said Commissioners upon the Oaths of the Witnesses in the Presence of George Binsteed Notary Publick.

James Thompson of Boston in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in North America aged about Twenty seven Years being sworn and examined deposeth as followeth

1 To the first Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he was born at Springfield in the said Province of Massachusetts Bay – That he now lives and has for about fourteen Years past lived when at home at Boston aforesaid – That he always looked on himself as a Subject to the King of Great Britain till about a Year last past During which Time he has esteemed himself a Subject to the Persons stiling themselves the United States of America – and that he has never been admitted a Burgher or Freeman of any City or Town.

2 To the second Interrogatory this Deponent saith That



he was present on board of the Brigantine called the *Rising States* concerning which he is now examined when she was taken and seized and that the said Brigantine had a Commission of War from the Persons stiling themselves the Delegates of the said United States of America in Congress

3 To the Third Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Brigantine *Rising States* was taken and seized in the Bay of Biscay on the fifteenth Day of April last past about two o'Clock in the Afternoon That she was so seized on Account of her being an American Private Ship of War – That the said Brigantine was brought into the Port of Portsmouth – That she sailed under American Continental Colours – That all the Resistance the said Brigantine made at the Time when she was taken was by endeavoring to escape and firing two Guns – and that she was taken by His Majesty's Ship the *Terrible* commanded by Sir Richard Bickerton who fired several Guns at her during the Chace.

4 To the fourth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he this Deponent was Captain or Commander of the said Brigantine *Rising States* when she was taken – That he was appointed to the Command of the said Brigantine by Messrs William Davis Philip Moore Edward Carns and Mercer (who with this Deponent are joint Owners of her) who delivered the Possession of the said Brigantine to him this Deponent at Boston aforesaid – That the said Messrs Davis and Carns live at Boston the said Philip Moore lives at Philadelphia and the said Mercer at New York – That this Deponent's fixed Place of Abode is at Boston – That he is married and his Wife and Family reside with him there.

5 To the fifth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Brigantine *Rising States* is of the Burthen of about two hundred and ten Tons – That the Number of the Mariners (Officers included) on board her when she set sail on her last cruise was sixty one and when she was taken was only thirty nine – That all on board her when she was taken were americans Except two, one of which was a Portuguese and the other this Deponents' Negro Slave – That they all came on board at Boston aforesaid and Cape Cod vizt Thirty at Boston and Thirty one at Cape Cod – And that they were all shipped and hired by this Deponent in the Month of February last.

6 To the sixth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he was owner of a ninth Part or Share of the said Brigantine *Rising States* but that no other of the Officers or Mariners had any Part Share or Interest in her – That he this Deponent was as aforesaid Captain or Commander of the said Brigantine

tine at the Time she was seized and taken – That he has known her about eight Months At which Time he first saw her at Boston aforesaid and that he has heard she was built at South Carolina.

- 7 To the seventh Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the Name of the said Brigantine is the *Rising States* – That she hath been so called for about eight Months now last past before which she was called the *Annabella*<sup>2</sup> – That he doth not know of any other Name or Names by which she hath been called – That she had not any Passport or Sea Brief on board except her Commission – That the said Brigantine sailed from Cape Cod on a Cruise and had not stopped at any Port before she was taken – And that being a private Ship of War he this Deponent cannot further to this Interrogatory depose.
- 8 To the eighth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Brigantine being a private Ship of War he this Deponent cannot to this Interrogatory depose.
- 9 To the ninth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the aforesaid Messrs Davis Moore Carns and Mercer and this Deponent were the Owners of the said Brig *Rising States* at the Time when she was seized – That he knows they were Owners of the said Brigantine by their being concerned jointly with this Deponent in the Buying of her and fitting her out – That he believes the said Messrs Davis Moore Carns and Mercer are North Americans by Birth and that they esteem themselves Subjects to the said Persons stiling themselves the united States of America – That the said Messrs Davis and Carns reside at Boston aforesaid the said Mr Moore at Philadelphia aforesaid and the said Mr Mercer at New York aforesaid with their respective Wives and Families.
- 16 To the sixteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That none of the Papers or other Writings which were on board the said Brigantine at the Time she took her Departure from Cape Cod were burnt torn thrown overboard destroyed or cancelled concealed or attempted to be concealed.
- 17 To the seventeenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Brigantine was as he has heard taken as Prize about the Month of September last past by six American Privateers – That she was carried into the Port of Boston and in the Court of Vice Admiralty there condemned as Prize of War.
- 18 To the eighteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he hath sustained a Loss by the Seizing and taking the said Brigantine *Rising States* of his Part or Share of her to the Amount or Value of nine hundred Pounds Sterling For

which Damage or any Part thereof he hath not received or been promised any Indemnity or Satisfaction whatsoever.

19 To the nineteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Brigantine was not insured to his Knowledge.

1. PRO, HCA 32/442, 11. This source also contains depositions made by other officers on board *Rising States*, and the Crown's claim to the recapture.

2. See Volumes 5 and 6.

#### DEPOSITION OF CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM<sup>1</sup>

[Copy]

[Dunkerque]

In the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven and on Tuesday the sixth Day of the month of May, there personally appeared before us, officers of the Admiralty of France established for Flanders in Dunkerque, Gustavus Cunningham, a native of Philadelphia aged thirty three years, Captain or master of the vessel named the *Surprise*, assisted by Mr Francis Coffin, agent and interpreter of this Court; which declarant, after taking the oath to tell the truth, told us and declared through the said Interpreter, that having been furnished Commissions, orders, and instructions from the Congress of the thirteen Rebellious Provinces of North America to chase, stop, and take on the high Seas all Ships belonging to His Britannic Majesty or to his subjects flying English Colors; on the evening of the first of this month he went with twelve Seamen into these Roads on board the said Vessel which had papers to depart from this Port under the name of *Peacock*, commanded by John Beach of Dublin, and which he later named the *Surprise*; that conforming to his instructions he got underway from these Roads About nine in the evening to Set Up his Cruise between England and the Coast of Holland; that on the next day, the second of said month, about eight o'clock in the evening he met abreast of the Maas [River] an English Packet Sloop which had departed from Harwich bound for Hellevoetsluys, of which he can remember neither its name nor that of its Captain; that he went Alongside said Packet and Summoned the Captain to surrender to the Congress of America, and at the same time he sent over ten men from his Crew including the aforementioned John Beach, his First Lieutenant, to whom he assigned Command of the prize, who took possession of it; that on the following morning, having met a Dutch Fishing Vessel, he had the Crew and passengers of his prize put on board the said Fishing vessel, returning their clothing, money, Personal articles, and jewelry which they said belonged to them, and then he set sail with his prize for this port; that on the next day, the third, being 15 or 16 Leagues northward of Nieupoort he discovered a Brigantine flying English colors, hailed it and learned that it was the *Joseph*, Captain Robert Kelly, sailing from Poole and Messina loaded with fruit and wine bound for Hamburg; as soon as he summoned it to surrender to the Congress of America, which summons Captain Kelly obeyed, he manned it and put on board one Pitt, Master, whom he made Captain of the Prize with 8 men from his Crew and that having met a



*Gustavus Conyngham*

Fishing boat he put the said Captain Kelly and the members of his Crew on board said boat opposite Nieuport, and he proceeded on course for this Port, into which the Declarant and his two Prizes entered to resupply, on the tide of that Day about three in the afternoon with the help of two Coastal Pilots which these two prizes took on board in these Roads.

Said Declarant also stated that both his prizes as well as his Ship had received considerable losses and Damage upon entering this port from two English Ketches which were going out and collided with them Deliberately; as a result of the jolts they mutually experienced in the collisions, several Leaks appeared which will have to be stopped and will require considerable repairs; for all of which they protest both against the Masters of the English Ketches and against all others whom it may concern for all general losses and damage which His Ship and His two prizes may have Suffered or may Suffer hereafter; reserving all his rights, titles, reasons and actions to give them just weight at times and in places, also to make a broader statement if necessary; of which statements and declarations he requested a copy which we gave him, and that it be verified by the principal members of his Crew, and which document &ca he signed with us and with said Interpreter by whom he was helped. Signed: Gustavus Cunningham, Francis Coffin, Coppens d'Hersin, Coppens and Destouches.

On the same Day and year as above before the aforementioned Officers then appeared John Hall, Master, and Matthew La Cother, Third Lieutenant, on board the ship *Surprise*, who after Swearing to tell the Truth, and after the Reading and Interpretation were done from french to English of the declaration aforesaid of said Captain Cunningham by said Mr Francis Coffin, interpreter of this Court, said and stated through him that it is Honest and Truthful in all its Content, Circumstances, and appendages, and that they are neither related to or associated with said Captn Cunningham; of which statements and declarations they requested a copy which we gave them and they signed with us &ca

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 33-34, LC Photocopy.

#### DEPOSITION OF JOHN BEACH, PRIZE MASTER OF *Prince of Orange* <sup>1</sup>

[Copy]

[Dunkerque]

In the year one thousand seven hundred and Seventy Seven and on Tuesday the sixth day of the month of May, there appeared personally before us, officers of the Admiralty of France established for Flanders in Dunkerque, a Royal bar of Justice, John Beach, a native of Bristol in America, usually residing in Philadelphia, aged Twenty eight years, formerly Master of the Luggie named the *Peacock*, under which name he took his shipping papers and a license from His Highness, My Lord Admiral, on the Twenty ninth of April last, destined for Nordfaro.

Who, having taken an oath to tell the Truth, said and stated through Mr Francis Coffin, an interpreter of this Court, that the said destination was only fictitious; that the Truth is Mr Gustavus Cunningham, furnished with

Commissions, orders and instructions from the Congress of the thirteen united Provinces of North America to chase, stop, and take on the high seas all vessels belonging to His Britannic Majesty or to His Subjects flying his colors, was the Captain of said Vessel named the *Surprise*; that he departed from this Port on the Tide of the first of this month; that he was moored in these roads Until dark, and that Capt'n Cunningham then came alongside in a Shallop with twelve Seamen making up a crew of twenty eight men; that about nine o'clock in the evening they got underway from the Roads to set up Their cruise between England and the Coast of Holland; that on the Next day About eight in the evening they met abreast of the Maas [River] an English Packet boat named the *Prince of Orange*, Capt'n Story, from Harwich bound for Hellevoetsluys, and as soon as they hailed him and summoned him to surrender to the American Congress, that upon the said Capt'n Story having obeyed the summons without firing a shot, the declarant with ten other members of the crew was sent on board the prize and manned It; that on the Following morning they met a Dutch fishing vessel, on board which they placed the crew and passengers of the Prize, returning to them their clothing, personal articles, money, and jewelry which they stated belonged to them; that he then set sail for this Port, entering it to resupply, on the tide of that day about four in the afternoon.

The said Declarant further stated that when His vessel collided at the entrance to this Port with an English Ketch departing from it, and as a result of Violent Jolting several seams Were sprung and his vessel Suffered other damage and losses so that it leaks heavily; such damage and losses will require repairs, for which reason he protests against the master of the said Ketch and all others whom it may concern for all damage and losses which his vessel may have Suffered or may Suffer hereafter, reserving his rights, titles, reasons, and actions to give them just weight at times and in Places; further that he does not know if any merchandize is to be found among the cargo of the said prize; of such statements, declarations, and protests &c the Declarant requested a copy which we gave Him, and that it be verified by two members of His crew, as named below,<sup>2</sup> and he did sign with us and the said Interpreter by whom he was helped.

Signed: John Beach, Francis Coffin, Coppens d'Hersin, Coppens and Destouches

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 32, LC Photocopy.

2. John Campbell and Lucas Tisick.

## 7 May

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL WARREN, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we have received Information that an Irish built Wherry of about 100 Tons, fitted out as a Schooner with 8 Carriage Guns besides Swivels & commanded by one Gustavus Cunningham, late Master of an American Brigantine which has been detained at Newport some time

past, sailed from Dunkirk on the 1st Inst; that, on the next Day, she Piratically took the *Prince of Orange* Packet Boat William Story Master on her passage from Harwich to Helvoetsluys & set her Crew on Shore in Scheveling Bay, that on the 4th Inst in the Morning she also Piratically took the Brig *Joseph* Robert Kelly Master bound from Messina to Hamburgh about 14 Leagues North of Newport & that she was seen the same Afternoon in Company with the abovementioned Packet cruising off the Gutt of Goree with intention as supposed to intercept the *Dolphin* Packet Boat that Station being in fair way for all Vessels bound to Helvoetsluys; You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Sloop you command & proceed in her without a moments loss of time off the Coast of Flanders where you are to Cruize very diligently between Goree & Dunkirk for the Protection of the Trade of His Majts Subjects & to use your best endeavours to take or destroy the said Pirate & to retake the Packet Boat & Brig abovementioned and any other Ships & Vessels belonging to His Majts Subjects which may have been taken by the said Cunningham or those Acting under his orders; governing yourself in the execution of this Service by the best intelligence you may procure & pursuing the said Pirate and his Associates without the abovementioned Limits if you shall find it likely to be attended with success; But if you do not fall in with, or obtain any good Intelligence of them, in the space of Ten Days after your arrival off the Coast of Flanders you are to repair to the Downes & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us by Express an Account of your arrival & proceedings & holding yourself in constant readiness for sailing –

And Whereas we have received further information that an American Brig of about 140 Tons is at Newport laden with Powder & small Arms for North America; that she is painted black & yellow has about 12 Men two of whom are Negroes and is expected to sail upon her Voyage with the first opportunity of Wind under the Colours of the Queen of Hungary, You are hereby further required & directed to look out very diligently for the said Brig & upon falling in with her to seize her & bring her into Port. Given &c 7th May 1777

Capt Warren, *Ceres*, Nore

By &c PS

Sandwich

C Spencer

H Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 488–90.

# PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL CLARK GAYTON <sup>1</sup>

Sir.

[Admiralty Office] 7th May 1777

My Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty having in obedience to his Majesty's Command promoted Sr Peter Parker, to the Rank of Rear Admiral of the Blue; and their Lordships intending that when this Years Campaign in North America is over, he shall proceed from thence to Jamaica to relieve you in the Command of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels on that Station; I

have it in command from their Lordships to acquaint you therewith And am &ca

P S

Vice Adml Gayton, at Jamaica }  
 (By the Packet the same Day) }  
 Duplicate sent the 10 May by the *Lowestoffe*

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 520-21.

*London Chronicle*, TUESDAY, MAY 6 TO THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1777

[London] Wednesday, May 7.

It is confirmed that the *Prince of Orange* packet, Capt. Story, from Harwich to Helvoetsluys, was taken by the *Surprise* privateer, Capt. Cunningham, of four guns and ten swivels, within three leagues of the coast of Holland. It was at night; and the privateer coming close along-side the packet, thought she made bad steerage, and asked her if she was coming on board her, for that they should soon be foul of each other. The privateer immediately laid her along-side and took her. It is imagined she expected a large quantity of foreign coin on board, as the packet which sailed before the *Prince of Orange* had to the amount of 10,000 l. on board. The passengers and crew were civilly treated (among whom was a King's Messenger) their properties were returned them, and they were landed in Holland. The Mate arrived in town on Monday night, who says the packet was a fine new vessel, and that he heard she would be converted into a privateer, she being a remarkable swift sailer.

The *Surprise* had 21 hands on board, who, it is said, were mostly smugglers, and it is thought the vessel never was in America, but was fitted out in France for the above purpose, whither a commission from the Congress had been sent for her.

It is reported that some Merchants have received a considerable loss by the above packet-boat being taken.

In consequence of the above capture, insurance in Holland is risen to six per cent.

Capt. Storie, of the *Prince of Orange* packet, is arrived in town, and has undergone a long examination, not only before the Postmasters General, but also before the Secretary of State, concerning the capture of his vessel, as many people are of opinion that it was not an American privateer, but a pirate, and knowing that the packets generally carried cash, thought to have made a good booty, but luckily there was none on board the *Prince of Orange*.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GOSPORT, May 7." <sup>1</sup>

By this day's post a gentleman of Gosport received a letter from Plymouth, advising him that four prizes were sent into that port by his Majesty's ships *Foudroyant* and *Nonsuch*; two of them retaken ships, and the other two American property, laden with rice and indigo.

The hospital at Forton is quite fitted up, and every necessary contracted



for. The prisoners are to be removed from his Majesty's ship *Terrible*, now at Spithead, to-morrow, to the prison. <sup>2</sup>

1. *London Chronicle*, May 8 to May 10, 1777.

2. Prisoners were from privateer brigantine *Rising States*. They were the first American prisoners in Forton prison, but were not actually transferred until June 14, 1777, Connor's Journal, LC.

### JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Blenheim*, Plymouth Harbor, 1777]

7th [May] removed from the *Queen* to the *Blenheim* of 90 Guns where all the American Prisoners were Collected as She had been repaired for a Guardship, there we met Our Captain & Doctr & Capt Eleazer Johnson Who was taken in the Privateer Brigg *Doltin* [Dalton] Mounting 18 Guns & Swivels Equivalent Who was Captivated on Christmas Eve'g By his Majesties Ship the *Raisnable* of 64 Guns Tho. Fitzpatrick Esqr Comdr <sup>2</sup> His Crew Consisted of 120 M[en] <sup>3</sup>

1. MeHS.

2. See Volume 7.

3. "May 7. Fourth remove, from the *Burford* to the *Blenheim* of 90 guns, Capt. [Broderick] Hartwell. All the time we have been on board the *Burford* (wh. is 82 days) we have been treated with great humanity by Capt. [George] Bowyer and all his officers, none excepted. We were indulged with hammocks to sleep in &c On board this ship we met with Capt. [Francis] Brown's officers and people, and other prisoners to the number of 180. Capt. Southward, of Salem, and two Mr. Chandlers, of Cape Ann, are among the number." "Cutler's Journal," *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXII, 185.

### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND SILAS DEANE TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

The Commissioners from the United States of America desire to represent to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, that they have received intelligence of a Vessel belonging to the States having been taken by the *Culloden*, an English Ship of War, close on the Coast of France; and that the same Ship of War chased another Vessel belonging to the States so near to the French Shore as to be herself in imminent Danger of running aground. —

They have been further informed, that in consequence of Intelligence given by the Mate who lately betray'd an American Ship into the Enemy's Hands, that twenty five Sail of Ships from Virginia laden with Tobacco, might soon be expected upon the French Coast, the Government of Great Britain have ordered an additional Number of Ships of War to cruise there, in order to intercept them; and have given Encouragement to Individuals to fit out small Privateers, which may run in nearer Shore than is safe for large Ships. —

The Capture of those Tobacco Ships will not only be a great Loss to the States, and Detriment to the Commerce of France, but will particularly disenable them to fulfil their Contract with the Farmers General so punctually as is necessary and as they desire. They are therefore the more earnest in wishing that his Majesty may immediately take such Measures as to his

Wisdom shall seem proper, for protecting the Commerce approaching his Coasts.

B. Franklin      Silas Deane

Paris, May 7, 1777 –

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, 193, LC Photocopy.

8 May

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

Gentn

Admty Office, 8th May, 1777.

My Lords Commissrs of the Admty having Ordered Mr Seddon their Solicitor to direct his Agents at Portsmouth and Plymouth, so soon as they shall be respectively informed that the Prisons which by their Lordships order of the 19th of last Month you were directed to prepare for the Reception of the persons therein mentioned shall be in all respects ready, to apply to the Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at those ports for such of the said Persons, As now are in confinement on board any of the said Ships or Vessels or as may hereafter be brought in there, and then to take them before the Principal Civil Magistrate on the Spot at such times, in such numbers at a time, and under such guard as upon consultation with such Commander in Chief to whom correspondent directions have been given, and Civil Magistrates shall be judged most proper, in order to their being examined by such Magistrates, and if they shall see cause, committed to the aforesaid prisons. I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you to give orders to the persons who are appointed Keepers & Agents to the said prisons, to let Mr Seddons said Agents respectively know when the Centinels are appointed, and the Prisons are in every other respect ready for the reception of the persons abovementioned, that application may be made to the Commanders in Chief accordingly, and that the Persons who may be committed by the Civil Magistrates may be received into the said prisons pursuant to the direction for that purpose contained in their Lordships Order abovementioned. I am Gentn [&c.]

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

Commissrs for taking care of }  
Sick & Hurt Seamen }  
[Endorsed] Recd 9 [May]

1. In Letters to Commissioners for taking care of Sick & Hurt Seamen, NMM.

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1777

London.

Four Sloops of war are sent in Quest of the Privateer which took the Harwich Packet, and it is to be hoped will give a good Account of her: The above Packet was to have carried *Fifty Thousand Pounds* in Specie, besides a Quantity of *Diamonds*, over to Holland; but it luckily being a *Jew Holiday* when the Packet sailed, they were not shipped.

9 May

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM HARWICH, May 9." <sup>1</sup>

Last Friday [May 2], toward the Evening, as the *Prince of Orange* was approaching the Coast of Holland, and being about two Leagues distant from the Land, she fell in with a large Lugsail Vessel, who came so near as to hail the Pacquet, and requested to know how the Land bore, and where she was bound to, with many other Questions of the like Nature, in a friendly Way, which were properly answered by the Commander. They for a considerable Time sailed together at a very small Distance, till at length the Master of the Pacquet perceiving the Lugger to draw too near, he desired them to sheer off, otherwise he would fall on board them; to which they answered, it was their Intention to board the Pacquet; and finding she was not in a State of Defence, they ran along-side of and immediately boarded her with 40 Men, who secured all the Hands, and took the Command to themselves. As soon as their Intention was discovered, an Attempt was made to sink the Mail, but without Effect. They took ten of the men belonging to the Pacquet, and put them on board the Lugger, where they were handcuffed during the Night, and left the Master and Steward, with the Passengers, on board the Pacquet, under a strong Guard.

Mr. Lawson, one of his Majesty's Messengers, being on board, and having Dispatches for his Excellency Sir Joseph Yorke, had, in this Confusion, the Presence of Mind to affect an Indisposition from the Fatigue of the Voyage, which drew some Pity from the Enemy, who being told by the Master that he would soon recover if left alone, on which they went upon Deck; in the Interval he destroyed all the Dispatches, and threw them out of the Cabin window quite unsuspected.

Next Morning all the People were set at Liberty, and a Dutch Schoet was hired to land all the Pacquet Men and Passengers, taking with them all their Baggage and Bedding, and at their Departure the Enemy saluted them with three Guns. They landed at Scheviling, and went immediately to the Hague, and acquainted Sir Joseph Yorke with the Circumstance, who dispatched the Master and Steward of the Pacquet to England in a Dutch Vessel; they landed at Southwold on Sunday Night, and arrived here next Morning. James Clements, Esq; Agent for the Pacquets, and the Master, sat out immediately for London; and on Tuesday Morning the rest of the People belonging to the Pacquet arrived here in a Dutch Schoet.

The Description they give of the Enemy is, that they declared themselves Americans; that they have a Commission from the Congress to take every English Vessel they possibly can; that their Vessel is fitted out as a Privateer for that Purpose only; that they have filled her with warlike Stores for extraordinary Uses; and as soon as they had taken the Pacquet; they equipped her with Cannon and every Implement of War, and converted her into a Privateer. They strongly invited the Pacquet-men to enter into their Service, on a Promise of great Encouragement and Preferment, but were resolutely answered in the Negative. The Lugger Privateer

mounted eight Six-pounders and 12 Swivels, and is commanded by a Captain, Lieutenant, Warrant Officers, and Privates, in the whole 55 Men. Her Ensign is 13 red and White Stripes, denoting the Thirteen United Provinces in America. They are stout resolute Men, and have pledged their Faith to each other by solemn Oath not to yield to an equal Force.

Monday a Dutch Schoet arrived Express from Helvoetsluys, by which we learn, that on Sunday last the late *Prince of Orange* Pacquet was lying off Goree Gut, in the Track of all Trade – bound, either to Helvoetsluys, or Rotterdam; she has six Four-pounders and ten Swivels mounted, and 30 men. It is hoped if she is speedily pursued, she will be re-taken.

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, May 13, 1777.

*Pennsylvania Evening Post*, TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1777

London, May 9.

The appearance of the American privateers in the channel has so affected insurance, that scarce any good names can be got to a policy almost at any price.

This morning 40 per cent. insurance was offered on the Dutch mail that sailed on Saturday last from Harwich to Helvoetsluys, no certain advice having yet been received of her arrival.

#### JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS <sup>1</sup>

[H.M.S. *Blenheim*, Plymouth Harbor, 1777]

9th [May] Josias Smith taken by the *Albion* in the *Franklin* [*sic Montgomery*] with Capt Rowe this Day Obtained Liberty to come on board to see His Brother Samll who was Chirurgeon to the *Da[lt]on* <sup>2</sup>

1. MeHS.

2. "May 9. Josiah Smith (Bro to our surgeon) came on board to see him. He was taken by the *Albion* in the ship *Franklin*, Jos. Row, commander, from Newburyport, bound to France, and sent to this port. This day Mr. Smith obtained his liberty from the board, as he was only a passenger with Capt. Row. Capt. Row obtained his own and brother's liberty after he was brought in here, which was on the 18th of March . . . We are not treated so well on board this ship as we were on board the *Burford*, or even any other ship we have been on board. Mr. [Paul] Brustis, the first lieutenant of the *Raisnable*, is second lieutenant here, by which means we are severely treated. He was accessory to our being robbed by the *Raisnable's* company. At sunset we are turned down to the lower gun deck, under a guard of six sentries, and locked down till 8 o'clock in the morning." "Cutler's Journal," *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXII, 185.

#### MONTMORENCY, PRINCE DE ROBECQ, TO VERGENNES <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Dunkerque 9th May 1777

I had the honor of reporting to you yesterday what happened in the port of this town relative to the prizes taken by Cunningham [Conyngham], an American privateer. I am sending you the copy of the judicial and Extra-judicial declarations which that man has made, to which I annex the resume of the Explanations which I have been able to procure relative to another small vessel which is being prepared in this port, and which the

English Commissary who is here, suspects of wishing to carry on Privateering against the Vessels of His Nation. The look-out, who is on the tower of this town, has this moment informed me that the two small vessels of the King of England which were anchored yesterday in sight of this port to examine what was going on, and which at the evening tide, cast anchor in the Fosse du Mardick, had just fired a gun to cause two small vessels which had just left here to lay to, that they launched a small Boat to go and Examine them, that they remained about a quarter of an hour on board, and that they afterwards allowed them to go on their way.

I was about to finish this Letter, Sir, when M. De Villers, Naval Commissary, communicated to me the orders which M. De Sartine has addressed to him, and brought me the courier who handed me the letter which the Minister wrote to M. De Chaulieu, the commandant of this Fortress, who is absent, and which I opened. In consequence of the orders it contained, I gave assistance to the Naval Commissary, who has just arrested the two officers and almost all the crew of the american Privateer, and has placed sentinels, with which I caused him to be furnished, to guard this Privateer and its two prizes which it is impossible to release at present, as they each have a leak, and all the people who Formed the crew have been sent to Sea in a dutch Vessel, which has landed them in holland. There consequently remains not a Single man to resume possession of them, which will oblige M. De Villers to have them guarded, until on the advice which the Court or Lord Stormont will give concerning them in England, someone is sent to whom they may be handed over.

I have the honour to be with sincere and inviolable attachment, Sr [ &c. ]  
 Montmorency P<sup>ce</sup> De Robecq

P.S. I do not know in what form M. [Andrew] Frazer presented the complaint to Lord Stormont, but I have reason to believe that the account which he gave him by the courier whom he sent was a little exaggerated, and that, on this occasion, he overstepped the limits of the commission, the only object of which is the execution of the Treaty of Utrecht. <sup>2</sup>

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 30-31, LC Photocopy.

2. Frazer was the British commissioner appointed under the treaty of Utrecht to see that the French erected no fortresses facing the sea.

10 May

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MAY 8 TO SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1777

[London] Saturday, May 10.

Yesterday government sent word to Lloyd's coffee-house, that they have received intelligence that our armed ships have taken from the rebels one hundred and forty vessels, and twenty-six recaptures since the last accounts; and that the names of the ships so taken, with other particulars, shall be sent to the coffee-house for the information of the merchants as soon as a proper list can be made out.

*The General Advertiser, Liverpool, FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1777*

London, May 10.

Letters arrived yesterday from Paris declare it was asserted in that metropolis, that Dr. Franklin had so far succeeded in his negociation, as to have obtained leave from Administration for several French privateers to act under the authority of the Congress, and make reprisals on the English, and that upwards of sixty vessels were actually fitting out at Brest, Rochelle, Nantz, and other ports for the above purpose. A circumstance, if true, which must inevitably produce an immediate war with France.

We are assured, whatever hostile intentions the French may adopt, they will never be able to carry them into execution by uniting in a marine war with the Americans; as the British navy, from the unremitting attention of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, is in a more respectable state than it has been at any time since the late war.

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[Royal Hospital, Plymouth]

[1777. May] 5. This morning Joseph Hatch, one of our company, died with small-pox. He is the second of our company that has died in these hospitals. <sup>2</sup>

6. I begin to grow bravely, and have a very good appetite for my victuals. I remain very sore, yet not so sore as I was two or three days ago; as my pox ran all together then, when I used to rise up in bed to receive any thing, and stuck to my linen and the sheets, so that it would tear off the scab from the whole length of my back, when I arose.

7. I am very sore yet, but am doing finely, considering that it is with some difficulty that I can get to the table to write; and I have a good appetite to eat. I asked the doctor for mutton, which he granted, so that I now have a pound of bread, half a pound of mutton, and a quart of beer.

8. There are two of our company now in this ward, very sick with the small-pox; but they have faithful care taken of them by the nurses, and the doctor is very kind. He allows them near half a pint of wine, or a small bottle of cordial, almost every day. The nurses, also, have been, and still are, *very kind to me*. When I first came into this ward, I brought a little tea and sugar with me, which I obtained on board the ships, and after it was all expended, the nurses gave me out of their own stores, tea twice a day, or as often as they make it for themselves.

9. Near half the scab has come off my body, and every morning when I get up, there is near a handful of scab left in the sheet, which comes off in the night.

10. I have several biles upon my legs, which cause a great deal of pain.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 36-38.

2. From crew of privateer *Dalton*.

JOHN BARTON & CO. TO LORD STORMONT <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Bordeaux 10 May 1777 –

finding the Prisoners brought in here by the *Lexington* privateer belonging to the American Congress all parted for Great Britain & Ireland, when your Excellency's Condescending Letter of 26th Ultimo came to hand, I would not presume to Acknowledge Receipt of it, or trouble you farther, till Other Matters Occured, that your Excellency should be Informed of. I have now to Acquaint your Excellency that the *Polly* of Philadelphia, Willm Parkinson Commander, Mounting 10 Guns, with a Number of Swivels, is just come to An Anchor in this Harbour. she left Philadelphia about the 20 March, & in Latitude 47 & Longitude 33 fell in with and took the Ship *Falmouth* of Glasgow, Archibd Bogg Masr, loaded with Bale Goods for Quebec. the Americans Value this prize above forty thousand pounds Sterling, and say She mounted More Guns and men than they did – they sent her of[f] Immediately to Boston. we Suppose the *Falmouths* Crew are Prisoners on Board the Privateer. if so, Shall if Necessary Apply for their Liberty, and have them sent to England, as Soon as Possible. this is a difficult matter at present for the Trade to England and Ireland is Entirely Stopped by fleets of American privateers, which Cruize in the Baye, without Interruption, and take or Burn Every Ship belonging to British Subjects – Capn Johnson in the *Lexington* parted yesterday, & is to Join Capn Weeks with a fleet of four privateers of[f] Nantes. his Vessel is Compleatly Re-fitted. he has taken in about fifty Barrils of Gun Powder. the Privateer that Arrived this Morning has Tobacco, Rice & Indigo, to the Value of Sixty Thousand pounds. she declares to be a Merchant Vessell, & as such is Received without difficulty, tho' the Master in his declaration Acknowledges she belongs to Congress. . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 213.

JOSEPH GARDOQUI TO ARTHUR LEE <sup>1</sup>

Copy

Bilboa the 10th of May 1777

The Schooner *Marblehead* Capt Saml Dugard will be dispatched by the 14th instant In her we intend shipping some Salt Duck & tent cloth.

Memorandum of Articles shipped in the *Success* Capt Cabbott Gerrish dispatched the 8th instant.

- 757 harricks of Salt
- 16 Anchors weighing 238 hundd
- 3 Cables from 18½ to 16 Inches
- 3 Hawsers
- 234 Coyles of Cordage all dimensions
- 31 Cases containg
- 2247 pair Strong Shoes

2532 ready made shirts  
 243 $\frac{1}{4}$  doz: Stockings  
 1500 Good Hatts  
 18 large Kettles  
 92 Bales containing  
 2186 good large Blankets  
 28 peices of Shirting  
 2 Small Cases & a Barrel with Jesuits Bark, Rhubarb, Ipecacuan,  
 Tart. Emetic, Mercury Sublimate, Purgers Salts, & Opium  
 Signd Gardoqui

[Endorsed by William Eden] Paris Octr 6th 1777 Mr A. Lee. This was under a separate sealed Cover & directed To "The Honourable The Chairman of the Committee for foreign Correspondence, Philadelphia."

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 253. The copy is in the handwriting of Arthur Lee and was enclosed in his letter of October 6, 1777 to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. It was probably among the dispatches stolen by Joseph Hynson.

11 May (Sunday)

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
 CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Sunday 11th of May 1777
4			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company at 4 AM. saw 13
5	NWBN		sail to the Eastward standing to the west ward
6	SEBE		at 5 we tack stood for the fleet & found them
7	NW		to be 11 learge Ships & 2 Brigts two ships we
			took to be Frigats gave us chaise we tack ship
9	ESE		at 8 they gave over chaise we tack & stood to
10	South		windward of the fleet & found we could do
			nothing with them.
			Latt By Obs 48D 39m N. Longd in 13D
			46m
1	East	NNW	Light winds & pleasant weather
12	Calm		

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

SILAS DEANE TO CONRAD ALEXANDRE GÉRARD <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Paris 11th May 1777

Agreeable to my proposal last Evening I now have the honor of sending You this by Mr [William] Carmichael, impatient to know what is the Fate of Capt Cunningham [Conyngham], I pray you to inform Me by Mr Carmichael if he is, or is not Arrested, and whither any other of the Officers or Crew are Arrested – Also whither the Prizes may be permitted to quit the Port. The Report of Capt Cunninghams not being an American Subject but of Ireland is groundless – he has lived many Years in America, is a Citizen of Philadelphia & has property there as well as a Wife & Children



there Born in America – it is True he was born in Ireland, which is the case of many of the most respectable Inhabitants of that City with whom Capt Cunningham has always been Concerned in Business. What may have occasioned this Report, was his passing for an Irishman sometime since in holland to extricate himself from some Difficulties to which Americans are more immediately liable at the present Time – The Facts then really are, That an American purchased a Vessel in England, took in Warlike Stores at Dunkirk Armed his Vessel at Sea, & having a Commission from the United States made Two prizes, with which he imprudently returned into Dunkirk – I acknowledge he was very much to blame for this last Act, but have no apprehensions that in Consequence he can be treated as a Pirate

I have the honor To be with the most profound respect [&c.]

S Deane

P.S. since writing the Above I recd a Lettr from Bayonne, which is dated May 5th & says A Vessel is Arrived at Bilboa in Twenty four Days from Boston which says that Genl Howe after joining Lord Cornwallis had been obliged to retreat to New York with great Loss, That *l'Amphitrite* was arrived in America, & the People of the United States, Unanimous & in high Spirits –

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Etats Unis, vol. 2, LC Photocopy.

12 May

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK <sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Munday 12th of May 1777
2			Calm fair weather
5		ESE	saw a fleet of 8 sail of Vessels standing to the
7	Calm		westward
9			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
10	NW	WSW	at 9 small breaze gave chaise latter part freash
11			breaze & Cloudey
			Latt By Obs 48D 24m Longd in 13D 31m
1	WNW	SW	freash breaze cloudey weather at 6 bore down
			and spake a snow one mile a starn of the Com-
5	NW		andor he told me they was from Plymouth for
7	ESE		Quebec with troops he gave us one broad side
9	SBW	WBS	of 8 cannon 2 Vollies of small arms – did no
			damage the Frigat gave us chaise we bore way
11	SSW	West	at 8 he gave over chaise

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

*Public Advertiser*, MONDAY, MAY 12, 1777

London.

A Letter from Liverpoole, dated May 7, says, “We have received certain Intelligence from Waterford, of five American Privateers being off Corke and Kinsale: They have taken two Vessels from Waterford, and

one from Dublin, bound to Lisbon, and were waiting for the Newfoundland and West India Convoys."

A Gentleman who is just come from Paris says, that Dr. Franklin is empowered by the Congress to deliver Letters of Marque to any Masters of Ships that apply for them; and that the French Ministry have declared, that all Prizes shall be safe that are carried into their Ports. It is certain, they will always find Purchasers for Ships and Cargoes. He also says, that our Ambassador there is treated with great Coolness, and the Memorials delivered respecting those Ships which have been carried into L'Orient, and other Ports, are paid no regard to.

#### MINUTES OF THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD <sup>1</sup>

[London] Monday 12th May 1777.

Mr James Bachop who was put on board the *Molly* Transport taken by the *Alfred* Privateer on her passage from Louisbourg to New York with a Cargo of Coals under Convoy of the *Flora*, as prize Master, and who with the assistance of the Men put on board with him, and of the Master of the Transport, the only person of the Crew left on board her, brought her into Londonderry in Ireland, and from thence to Plymouth, having attended the Board on his application for a Reward for his behaviour herein, and related to them the particulars thereof, they took his application into consideration, together with the Account from the Master Mr Lusk transmitted by Commr Oury; whereby it appears that the prize Master & his Men had the principal Merit in the recovery of the Ship & her Cargo, and resolved to give him One hundred Guineas as a reward for his behavior. Ordered that a Bill be made out to him for that Sum, abating therefrom Twenty Pounds he received from the Clerk of the Checque at plymouth, to defray his expences to town to attend the Board.

Give a Copy to Mr Davies.

1. PRO, Admiralty 106/2595.

#### "EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PORTSMOUTH, MAY 12." <sup>1</sup>

This morning the boatswain of the *Rising State*[s] American privateer was flogged from ship to ship for deserting from the *Worcester* man of war, and afterwards serving on board the said privateer.<sup>2</sup>

1. *London Chronicle*, May 13 to May 15, 1777.

2. The boatswain was Thomas Cummings, Connor's Journal, LC.

13 May

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO VICE ADMIRAL SIR JAMES DOUGLAS <sup>1</sup>

By &c

Whereas we have ordered Sir Thomas Pye Admiral of the Blue to repair to Portsmouth to relieve you in the Command of His Majestys Ships & Vessels at that Port and Spithead: You are hereby required and directed

when he arrives to strike your Flag and come on Shore leaving with him Attested Copies of all standing and unexecuted Orders which may be in your hands relative to the said Command. Given &c 13th May 1777

To Sir James Douglas  
Vice Adml of the Red &c

Portsmouth

By &c P S

J Buller  
Lisburne  
H Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 511-12.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 13th May 77

Vice Admiral [John] Amherst having in his Letter of the 6th Ultimo, informed my Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty that the Crew of the *Hannah*, an American Merchant Ship, taken by the *Experiment*, and brought to Plymouth, were in safe Custody as Prisoners; and as the Master of the American Merchant Vessel taken by the *Albion*, had been ordered to be set on Shore, and the rest of her Crew ordered on board such of His Majesty's Ship's as were short of Complement, desires to receive their Lordships direction respecting the disposal of the Crew of the *Hannah*, abovementioned; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, to order the Master to be set on shore, and the remainder of the Crew to be entered as part of the Complement of the *Experiment*, or any other Ship in want of them; And to do the like by the Crew of all other American Merchant Vessels that may be taken and brought into Plymouth, which are not fitted out as armed Vessels, but employed for the purpose of Trade only; But the Commanders and Crews of American Privateers, or armed Vessels, are to be sent to a Magistrate to be committed to the Prison appointed for their reception, agreeable to the order you have already received on that Head I am &ca

P S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 534-35.

*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1777

London.

The Cutters being certainly the most useful Vessels for Channel Service, the Lords of the Admiralty have ordered several of them to be immediately commissioned, to cruize for the little American Privateers that now infest our Coasts; and there is not the least Doubt but they will soon give a good Account of those Pirates, as they have every Advantage in light Winds, can row with Oars, keep the Sea, and carry Sail in bad Weather, are good Sailors, draw but little Water, and can pursue their Enemy in Shore in Shoal-water, &c.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM HARWICH, MAY 13." <sup>1</sup>

This morning arrived from Dunkirk, Cha. Sands, master of one of our fishing smacks, who acquaints me, that on Friday evening Cunningham

and the crew belonging to the privateer were taken up and put into Dunkirk prison.

I can assert this as a fact, as the master says he went past the prison on Saturday morning, and saw them at the prison gate; so I hope we shall soon have the news of the *Prince of Orange* packet-boat being restored.

1. *London Chronicle*, May 13 to May 15, 1777.

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Paris May 13th 1777 –

this night will doe me that honour I have at last with some certainty discovered the intended voyage of Nicholson, Weakes, & Johnson, they have all sail'd from Nantes, and mean if Possiable to intercept some of your transports with foreign troops, but in what Place or latitude cannot say, this plan has been laid long while, & the original one was, that Capt Conyngham who brought the Packet into Dunkirk some days since, should have interup'd the transports when they were crossing the channel for England as they had no Convoy for protection of same, but the plan was laid aside, as they could not purchase a Vessell of sufficient force, – a Mr [William] Hodge has been the acting Person on this occasion, he fitted out Capt Conyngham[s] Vessell, & he tells me he has got another of much larger force, therefore it behoves you to be very Carefull and keep a constant watch on him, I don't immagine she will sail from Dunkirk but 'twill be from some of the Neighbouring Ports – this Affair has made a great noise here, & I believe you may depend on haveing the same delivered up, – [William] Carmichael was with Murepas at Varseilles on Sunday last, but from what he tells me, they are much displeased at Capt Conynghams carrying the prizes into Dunkirk, they say if he had brought them into Havre or any other Port, it would not have been taken notice of here, however as matters stand, if Lord Stormont makes a formal demand the same will be return'd, unless they should be so wanton as to burn them which have heard hinted here, but cannot immagine 'twill be done –

For God sake be carefull of your Packets which pass from Dover to Calais, as their is a Plan laid of intercepting them – this I have heard hinted, and doubt not but the attempt will be made, therefore the Officers of Packets ought to have strict orders to sink the mail immediately on the approach of any vessell that carries the Appearance of a Rebel privateer. I only mean to give my advice, & with the greatest submission say, it ought to be adopted, but must submit it to your better Judgment . . . the Same Vessell brings an Account of the keel of 74 Gun ship being laid in New England and orders for several more, to be put on the Stocks immedeately . . .

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 158.

14 May

JOURNAL OF H. M. SLOOP *Dispatch*, CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER MASON <sup>1</sup>

May 1777

Start No 72°53' Distance 573 Leagues

[Wednesday] 14th at 4 Tack'd at 1½ past Joind Company with the Commadore made our Signal to Speak us spoke Him <sup>2</sup> order'd us to Chace 2 Sail in the NE made Sail out 1st Reef Top Sails set Studding Sails at 10 Shortend Sail spoke the *Nicholas* a Dutch Ship from Surinam made Sail after the other it was a Brigg from Charles Town So Carolina bound to Bourdeaux laden with Rice call'd the *Friendship* Jno Ducey Master took out [illegible] Men & sent a Midshipman & 5 Men in Lieu with six Swords six Pistols & two Catouch Boxes.  
 Modte and Cloudy Wr  
 at 6 made Sail parted Company with the Prize <sup>3</sup>

1. PRO, Admiralty 51/253.

2. Captain Richard Onslow, of H. M. S. *St. Albans*, who had sailed from England April 15 in charge of a convoy for New York.3. *Friendship* was sent into Cork, arriving on June 4, 1777. A dispatch from there reported her "laden with Rice, Indigo, and Tobacco, and is valued at 10,000 l. Sterling," *Public Advertiser*, London, June 23, 1777.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CAPT. MARTIN, OF THE SLOOP  
*William and Barbara*, OF PERTH, DATED PERTH,  
 MAY 14, TO A FRIEND IN EDINBURGH." <sup>1</sup>

Upon my return from St. Lucar [Spain], with a cargo of wine and salt, bound for Perth, I fell in with an American privateer upon the 15th of April, called the *Freedom*, belonging to the Massachusetts Bay (the Captain's name was John Clowston, who told me he was born in the Orkneys), about 15 leagues off Chilly [Scilly], who soon robbed me of my ship and cargo, as also every thing else belonging to me and my ship's company, except what cloaths were upon our backs. The privateer that same day, took and burnt another ship, belonging to Cork, bound to Bourdeaux; as also another upon the 17th, loaded with salt and flour, bound to Newfoundland, which he sent to America after my ship; and that same day put the other two masters and me, and all our ships companies, on board a Dutch ship, which carried us to Amsterdam. The privateer mounted 12 carriage guns and 14 swivels, and had on board 115 men when she left America.

[Printer's postscript] What makes Capt. Martin's fate the more lamentable is the ship being almost his own property, and his first voyage.

1. *London Packet*, or *New Lloyd's Evening Post*, May 19 to May 21, 1777.PHILIP STEPHENS TO MR. SIERRA, SECRETARY TO THE RUSSIA COMPANY <sup>1</sup>

Sir

[Admiralty Office] 14th May 1777

Having communicated to my Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty your Letter of this date, signifying the desire of the Russia Company, that their

Lordships will please to appoint four Sloops to cruize on the Stations therein mentioned, for their protection of their homeward bound Trade; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that they have ordered his Majesty's Ships and Sloops named on the other side hereof, to proceed to Sea, and cruize upon Stations against their Names expressed, for the above purpose I am &c

P S

Guns

32	<i>Arethusa</i> , Captn Marshall	{ Between the West End of the Dogger Bank and Jutts reef for six weeks –
Sloop –	<i>Alderney</i> , Captn Parry	{ Between Yarmouth Sands & the Coast of Holland for one Month –
Sloop –	<i>Hazard</i> , Captn Orrok	{ Between the Naze of Norway & the Coast of Jutland stretching occasionally 20 Leagues to the Westward, for six Weeks –

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 538–39.

#### PHILIP STEPHENS TO SIR STANIER PORTEN <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Admty Office 14 May 1777

Captain [John] Bray, Regulating Captain at Deal, having in his Letter of yesterday's date, acquainted my Lords Commissrs of the Admiralty that an account had been received from Dunkirk that the Master and Crew of the Rebel Privatier were put into Prison the 10th Instant, and that the Vessels taken by her were to be immediately given up; I am commanded by their Lordships to signify the same to you for Lord Weymouth's information. I am Sr

Ph<sup>p</sup> Stephens

1. PRO, State Papers, 42/50. Sir Stanier Porten was an under Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

#### GEORGE III TO LORD NORTH <sup>1</sup>

Lord North –

The preparing for the business of the House of Commons this day will naturally prevent Your coming here; I therefore think it right to apprise You that the Post Office have received notice from the Agent at Dover, that news is come by a letter from Captain [Andrew] Frazer at Dunkirk that Cunningham the Commander of the Pyratical Vessel that seized the *Prince of Orange* Packet boat, is thrown into Prison and the said Pacquet boat and the other Prizes ordered by the Court of France to be restored; this is so strong a proof that the Court of Versailles mean to keep appearances, that I think the news deserves a place in the Speech You will make.

St James's May 14th 1777.

m  
—<sup>58</sup>pt. m.

1. Fortescue, ed., *Correspondence of George III*, III, 446.



Lord North

*Public Advertiser*, WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1777

London.

A Letter from Dover, dated May 12, says, "This Morning Capt. Kelly sailed from hence for Calais, and from thence will proceed to Paris, in order, by Means of our Ambassador there, to procure the Release of his Ship, the *Joseph*, taken by Cunningham, and carried into Dunkirk. The Event of this will shew whether the French intend, or not, to give Encouragement to the Americans to carry in their Prizes into their Ports."

Many Letters received by Friday's Post from Dunkirk give authentic Advice, that more than one Privateer have sailed from that Port, and returned with some of our Ships which they had taken. If this Conduct is countenanced by the Court of Versailles, an immediate War between France and this Country will be the inevitable Consequence.

On Account of the Number of Captures of Vessels from Portugal, Insurance has risen greatly, consequently Wines will increase in Price, and what generally happens in the Country, treble the Advance will be laid on.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Most Secret No 88

My Lord

Paris May 14th 1777

Yesterday Morning I had the Honour of Your Lordships Letter No 34, with its several inclosures, relative to a Business, which is now upon the point of being terminated, and I hope to Your entire Satisfaction. Before I went to M de Vergennes (who received us Yesterday at his House in Town) I was informed that the Promise, He, and M de Maurepas made me, had been punctually fulfilled. The Moment I came into Him, he asked me with a Smile, if I had received Letters from Dunkirk, and without waiting for an Answer, said, that the Courier was returned, that part of the Orders he carried were executed already, as the Pirate Captain, and his Crew were in actual Custody, and that the Packet, and the Brig, should be immediately delivered, but that a proper Person must be appointed by us, to receive them. He proposed to me, that I should write to Mr Frazer, to desire Him, de s'entendre avec le Commandant de Dunkerque, with regard to the delivery of these Vessels. I readily agreed to this, and have accordingly written the inclosed Letter to Mr Frazer. M de Vergennes Said, that it was a satisfaction to them, to find, that there was not a single frenchman on board the Pirate . . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 203-07.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Most Confidential

Paris May 14, 1777

The Success of My application with regard to the Dunkirk Pirate has been highly displeasing to Franklin and Deane. They made strong Remonstrances but were given to understand that there are some things too glaring



to be winked at, and that this was a Point in which they could not be supported

Franklin is certainly going to Spain by order of the Congress who have expresly allotted him that Department. . . .

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 215-16.

15 May

*Public Advertiser*, THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1777

London.

The Capture of the *Orange Packet* is a complete Refutation of what we have been so often told concerning the reduced State of the Americans. They have hitherto kept us in sufficient Play on their *own* Coasts, and now, in their Turn, they even venture to assail *ours*. Old *Twitcher*<sup>1</sup> may blush *for once* at having suffered such an *Insult* so near our very Doors, after such *repeated* but *impudent* Boasts about the Number and Readiness of his Ships. But his Fleets seems to be literally *Fleets of Observation* only.

The Imprisonment and Detention of the Crew of the *Surprize* Privateer at Dunkirk, is so far from being true, that we are assured by Letters received from thence Yesterday, that the greatest Encouragement is given not only there, but all over France, to the fitting out Privateers against the English; that no less than Thirty are now equipping in different Ports of that Kingdom, and that they want only a sufficient Number of American Captains to send them all out. These Letters add, that Dr. Franklin is permitted to grant Letters of Marque to every Ship that is commanded by a Native of his own Continent. As to the Crews, they are suffered to be composed of French, Scotch, Irish, English, or any that will enter; but among them are said to be a Number of our best Seamen, who enter readily, allured by the Prospect of getting a great Deal of Prize Money.

1. Lord Sandwich.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO SILAS DEANE<sup>1</sup>

Dr Sir

St Auzieur May 15th 1777 -

Capt Wickes & my Self are Yet Waitg here with great impatience for the Arrival of the *Lexington*, Capt Johnson from Burdo [Bordeaux], we had determined on Wednesday last to go to Sea without him; for he informed us on his Arrival there from Nants, that he wou'd Sail from that Place last Sunday was a Week, & hearg nothing further from him Obliged us to beleave he was taken, or that some Accident had happened him, but on our going to Painbeaf on Thursday last, we were Informed by A Gentn there, who had Just recd a letter from his friend at Burdo, that Capt Johnson was Still there, but was to leave it on Saturday last, so that we are induced to wait a few Days longer, in wch time I hope he will make his appearance for I long to be doing - I am now all fitted & ready for Sea, only Wantg Some Officers, I want A Master & a Boatswain very Much, my Boatswain run away from me 4 Days agoe, I have had no Master for the Vessell Yet, but am in hopes of

gettg the Prize Master of one of the *Riseing State's* Prizes; he gave me A Promise Provided he can get the Prize Sold in time for us,<sup>2</sup> Mr [Seth] Clark has been on Shore this Ten Days Past with A bad hand & arm, wch he by Some Means or other got Poised, Shall take him on board again in a Day or two, we have on board Twenty eight in Number, 14 of which are French Men, & the greatest Part of them of little Value. I am in hopes of Pickg up a few more Americans before I Sail, we have had four French Men run from us, with my Boatswain, makes five run away, I am afraid to make use of any Disipline here, for fear of the rest leaving me, therefore am Obliged to hold my hand as yet. I now Suffer no boat to come along Side, but Capt Wickes's, & keep my own Inn, all Weathers, I have only my Second Lieutt & one Mate I can trust too, & nither of them was ever in A Vessel of War before, Dr Sir Shou'd have Wrote You oftner but have had A deal to do, & much Confined, for this little Vessell has takg as much fittg, as any Ship that wou'd Carry no more Guns – Shall write You again on my leavg this; there Arrived here 4 Days agoe A Sloop from Virginia loaded with Tobacco, had about 26 Days Passage, have not Seen the Capt but hear nothing New Pray my Complts to Doctr Franklin and Billey; Doctr Bancroft &c and am Dr Sir [&c.]

Sam Nicholson

To the Honble Silas Deane Esqr A Paris.

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. Arthur Dillaway prize master on board the brig *Fleece*. He did sign on as sailing master with Captain Nicholson, and entered the *Dolphin*, May 24, 1777, Papers of John Paul Jones, 6572, LC.

## 16 May

### JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*, CAPTAIN JOHN FISK<sup>1</sup>

H	Courses	Winds	Remks on Friday 16th of May 1777
3			freash gales
8			<i>Tyrannicide</i> in company
9	ENE	North	Saw a ship to the northward standing to the
10	EBN		southward gave chaise at 11 saw a Learge dutch
11	E1½N		ship standing to the westward we come up with
12			the chaise but little fresh gale
			Latt By Obs 46D 00m Long in 10D 22m
1	EBS	North	Freash gales & pleasant weather we come up
			with the chaise fast at 3 PM. saw 3. sail to the
			windward our chaise hoists french Colours one
			of the ships brought our chaise too & hoisted
5	WSW		English Colours I took her to be a 74 gun
6	WSW		English ship of war & bore away she gave us
			chaise we made all sail from her she made all
			sail after us & came up fast at 9 we hald our
			wind to the westward Capt Harridon Bore

10 WBN

away at 10 saw 3. flashes we supposed to be guns  
from the ship at Capt Harridon we lost sight of  
the ship & Capt Harridon

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN HARVEY, R.N.,  
AND CAPTAIN E. V. YATES, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas Information has been received that there is reason to believe that an English Cutter of about 140. Tons which was fitting on the 13th inst at Dunkirk as an arm'd Vessel, is intended to be employed under a Commission from the Congress as a Privatier, being esteem'd one of the best sailing Vessels which has ever been constructed, You are hereby required & directed to proceed without a Moments loss of time in the Sloop you command & cruize off Dunkirk, where you are very diligently to look out for the said Cutter & in case she should put to Sea to use your best endeavours to take or destroy her, as well as any other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America which may fall in your way.

You are to continue upon the above Station for the space of ten days after your arrival upon it, in case you do not fall in with the said Vessel sooner & then return to the Downes & remain there until you receive further Order; sending us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c. the 16th of May 1777.

Captn Harvey *Speedwell*

" Yates, *Ranger*

By &c. P.S.

J Buller

Lisburne

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 516-17.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN RICHARD R. BLIGH, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &c.

Whereas We have received Information from the Merchants, Importers of Linnen from Ireland & Owners of the Linnen Ships representing that several of their Ships are now ready to sail with very rich Cargoes on board, particularly from Newry but are stopt by their Orders on account of the danger they apprehend them to be in from the Rebel Cruizers which infest the Coast of Ireland, & therefore requesting that convoy may be appointed to see the said Linnen Ships in safety to England, And whereas we have ordered Lieut Major who commands his Majts Cutter the *Esther* to proceed immediately to Belfast & Newry, & having collected such of the said Linnen Ships & other Trade which may be at those Ports ready to sail and desirous of accompanying him to take them under his Convoy & proceed with them to Dublin, where he is to put himself under your command and follow your Orders for his further proceedings.

You are therefore hereby required & directed to proceed in the Sloop

you command without a Moments loss of time to Dublin, & so soon as the said Cutter arrives, to take her under your command, and the Linnen Ships & other Trade she shall have brought with her under your convoy, as also all other Linnen Ships & Trade bound to England ready to sail & whose Masters are desirous of accompanying you, & then putting to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind & Weather make the best of your way with them (consistent with their security) into the English Channel or as far as your way & theirs may lie together, & having seen them in safety to the Eastward of the Lizard leave them to prosecute the remainder of their Voyage and then return with the Sloop & Cutter to Dublin & continue to convoy the Linnen Ships and Trade from thence to England, in like manner from time to time as they shall be assembled for that purpose, until you receive further Order; sending Us by all convenient opportunities accounts of your proceedings.

You are, during your continuance upon the above Service, to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America which may fall in your way, or which you may be able to come up with in your Passage, without exposing the Trade under your Convoy to danger, by leaving them to pursue such Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels. Given &c. the 16th May 1777.

Captn Bligh – *Wasp* – Waterford  
B &c.  
P.S.

J Buller  
Lisburne  
H Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 518-20.

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MAY 15 TO SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1777

[London] Friday, May 16.

The *Sally*, Jones, from London to Quebec; the *Fanny*, Bell, from Whitehaven to New York; the *Trial*, Brown; the *Teresa*, Rackwell, of Exon, from Newfoundland, with soldiers, for New York; the *Swift*, Clark, of Topsham; and the *Phoenix*, Davis, of Tinmouth, are all taken by the *Tyrannicide* and *Massachusetts* privateers, and sent to Salem, except the *Trial*, in which the prisoners are arrived at Dartmouth.

The *Trepessey*, Combes, the *Friendship*, Wellicott, and the *Venus*, Brown, all for Newfoundland, were taken the 22d of April in lat. 49. 6. long. 13. 30. by the *Tyrannicide* and the *Massachusetts* privateers.

The *Duke of Leinster*, North, from Dublin to Jamaica, is taken by the Rebels, and is carried into Salem.

Wednesday orders were given for all the packet-boats that carry over the Dutch mails to take on board guns and men, of the same force as they did the last war.

*London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, WEDNESDAY, MAY 14 TO  
FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1777

London, Friday, May 16, Postscript.

Orders have been sent from the Admiralty to Portsmouth, for two ships (a frigate and a sloop) to cruize between Cape Clear and the Old Head of Kinsale, in search of the American privateers which have infested that coast.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM PENZANCE, MAY 16." <sup>1</sup>

Two of our fishermen, who came on shore yesterday, say, that about seven leagues off, at sea, they were on board of an American privateer of fourteen carriage guns, and about eighty men. She was called the *Revenge*, and they said they had taken five prizes since they had been out from Salem, to which place they belonged: 'tis supposed they were waiting for the coaster's coming and going round the Land's End, some of which are worth a good deal of money.

1. *London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, May 19 to May 21, 1777.

17 May

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO CHARLES PIERRE GONET, LORIENT <sup>1</sup>

Versailles 17. May 1777.

The King has been informed, Sir, that, several Ships are fitting out in His Ports which are to be laden, half with Provisions, half with munitions of war; that these Ships are to have Americans on board as passengers, who will take Command at Sea, and are empowered, with american Commissions, to make prizes of the Subjects of the King of england when they are encountered. As the intention of His Majesty is not to authorize this sort of project, you will do well to make all necessary investigations, but with suitable caution, so as to be accurately informed of all operations of this type which could be planned in all the Ports which are under the jurisdiction of your Department. You will be careful to instruct me in the most minute detail in all which can have some bearing on the affairs of new England. I recommend to you the greatest vigilance and the greatest exactness In this matter.

You will be most mindful to give me notice of the arrival of any American Vessels, of news which they will have brought in, of the nature of their cargo, of the size of their crews, etc. In addition, I request that you acquaint me most precisely, and in advance, of all vessels fitting out intended, either directly or indirectly, for North America; and not to leave me unaware of anything which will come to your attention On these matters for which it is so important that I be acquainted.

I am, Sir, your very humble and very obedient Servant.

de Sartine

1. APL, 1E\*78, 99.

18 May (Sunday)

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

at Versailles 18 May 1777.

Just, Sir, as you sent over to me the memorandum which had been delivered to you by My Lord Stormont, I happened to receive from the Governors of Martinique and Guadeloupe letters copies of which I forward to you herewith. You will find in the letter of Mons. D'Arbaud to the Governor of St. Christopher satisfactory explanations to the first accusation made by Mons. the Ambassador of England concerning the Snow the *Apollo* of which the memorandum declares that the sale had been made publicly at Fort Royal, as also that of her cargo of negroes; the second charge could not possibly be defended according to the letter of Mons. D'Argout of March 2nd last, and all of his previous correspondence. It is in consequence of these same letters, which you could show if you think it proper to Mons. the Ambassador of England, that the Governors of our Islands maintain a conduct conforming exactly with those principles of neutrality which have been prescribed for them. You know the orders which I transmitted to them regarding the approaching troubles between England and her Colonies, and although The King commanded me to reiterate them in the most precise and strict terms, the most energetic watchfulness can not moreover prevent during the night and in remote anchorages the unloading of prize cargoes taken by the Americans, as it was never possible to prevent the export of our sugar to Foreigners so burdensome to the national commerce. I have the honor to be &c

de Sartine

[Marginal note] Reply to the complaints of Mons. Stormont on the Subject of a capture made off Martinique by an American Privateer under Spanish colors of an English Snow with Her cargo of Slaves.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 110, LC Photocopy.

19 May

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM DEAL, MAY 19."<sup>1</sup>

This morning a Dane made a signal for a boat from hence, when two went to her, and brought on shore here twenty-five seamen who had been put on board the Dane by an American privateer in the Bay; they were the crew of two prizes, one of them a store ship, bound to Quebeck, and the other a vessel bound to the West Indies; they give an account of the privateer's having taken 11 prizes, and that the Captain said he would return to Boston as soon as he had made up his dozen. She is called the *Tyrannicide*.

1. *London Packet*, or *New Lloyd's Evening Post*, May 19 to May 21, 1777.

RAIMONDO NICCOLI TO HIS GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris, 19 May 1777

. . . I am assured that the Ministry has sent orders to the Prince de Robecq, Govnr of French Flanders, to force the restitution of the three captured ships and especially of the Packet boat to their English Owners on the basis of the complaint made that despite the privateer having a commission from Congress, he alone [Conyngham] was an American, and all the others Irish. It is added that since the complaint made by the British Ambassador proved false, and that two thirds were Americans, this Ministry reversed its original orders.

It is also said that abreast of Bordeaux an American privateer captured, without any combat, an English merchant ship which had 30 men aboard and a gun or two. That the privateer had only ten small guns, two of which were of wood for deception; that having returned to Bordeaux and found it difficult to sell their prize, they thereupon set sail to take it to America, after imprisoning in their own ship and in the other the captain, officers and a majority of the seamen. This information should be confirmed, in spite of its probability.

1. Secretary of Foreign Affairs Papers, ASF.

20 May

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN MATTHEW MOORE, R.N. <sup>1</sup>

By &amp;c.

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & cruize between Ushant & Cape Clear for the protection of the Trade &c. (same as the preceeding Order.)

Given &c. the 20. May 1777. –

Captn Moore, *Exeter*, Spithead

By &c.

J Buller

Lisburne

H. Palliser

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 522–23.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

Sir/

Admty Office 20th May 1777

I am commanded by my Lords Commissrs of the Admty to send you the enclos'd Copy of a Letter from Mr Archd Stevenson of Amsterdam dated the 12th Inst containing Intelligence of a Vessel fitting out at that place for an American Privateer, and to desire you will lay the same before Lord Suffolk for his Lordships Information. I am &c

P. S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/554, 557.

GEORGE JACKSON TO WAKEFIELD, PRATT, & MYERS, LONDON <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen,

Admiralty-Office, May 20 [1777].

Having laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the Memorial of the Merchants Importers of Linen from Ireland, desiring that they will give protection to the linen ships bound from Newry to England, and that the convoy may likewise call at Dublin for such ships as may be there, I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that they have ordered his Majesty's cutter the *Esther* to proceed immediately to Belfast and Newry, to convoy the trade to England from those ports to Dublin, where the *Wasp* sloop is ordered to be in readiness to convoy, in conjunction with the said cutter, such trade, and any other, which may be there bound to England, and ready to sail, which they are to see safe into the English Channel, to the eastward of the Lizard, and then to return to Dublin, and to continue to convoy the linen ships in like manner, till further orders. I am also to inform you, that another sloop, and two more cutters, are appointed to cruize, till further orders, between the Land's-End and the coast of Ireland, in the track of the trade passing that way, for their greater security and protection. I am, Gentlemen [&c.]

George Jackson, D.S.

1. *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, May 23, 1777. In reprinting the above letter in the *Remembrancer* (V, 143-44), John Almon, the editor, added: "in no former war, not even in any of the wars with France and Spain, the linen vessels from Ireland were ever convoyed."

*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MAY 20, 1777

London.

Much to the Disappointment of the Secretary and Clerks of the Admiralty, few Letters of Marque have been applied for, notwithstanding the Merchants were in such a Hurry to have the Bill passed.

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, MAY 17 TO TUESDAY, MAY 20, 1777

[London] Tuesday, May 20.

Last night arrived in the river, off Fresh Wharf, London Bridge, an American prize, taken by one of his Majesty's ships, laden with cotton and indigo, &c. being the richest capture taken from them.

SILAS DEANE TO JOHN HANCOCK <sup>1</sup>

Sir –

Paris 20th May 1777

The Bearer Capt Hynson has been some time in Paris, & now goes out with a Ship, under his Charge with Stores, for the United States, as he is a Subject of the United States I need not be so particular in recommending him to Your patronage; but must in duty to my Country say, I believe he will render them good Service in their Navy being a good Seaman, & of a cool, sedate, and Steady Temper of mind – I wish he may arrive safe, & in



Season, with the important Cargo committed to his Charge, & am with the most perfect respect for Your Excellency and the hone Congress Your Excellencys [&c.]

Silas Deane

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 472. This letter never reached Hancock. Hynson, who commanded *Pacifique*, carried it with him when he defected some months later.

21 May

DIARY OF JOHN BRAGG, WHITEHAVEN, ENGLAND <sup>1</sup>

5th Mo: 21st 1777 in the Evening, arrived at Whithaven a three Masted Ship with 500 odd Hogsheads of Tobacco from James River in Virginia intended for France, but being Navigated by Brittish & American Seamen, a plott was framed & the Vessel brought in here without bloodshed or any material opposition <sup>2</sup> Tobacco has of late been sold at 22 or more a pound by the Hogshead together at this Town. <sup>3</sup>

1. WPL.

2. *Mercer*, Captain William Dowse. The *Public Advertiser*, London, May 30, 1777, gives an account of the seizure:

She sailed from Hampton, in Virginia, April 15, with 18 People on board, 16 of whom were English, Scotch and Irish; but on the 4th instant, Jonathan Sharp having the Command of the Watch, thought it a favourable Opportunity to seize the Vessel, the Captain and Chief Mate being then in Bed; accordingly he went down into the Cabin and seized three Pistols, (the only Fire-Arms they had on board) also a Cutlass, an Iron Poker, Shovel, and all offensive Weapons in the Cabin, and armed himself and two others with the Pistols, having loaded them with four Balls each; after which they called up the Chief Mate, seized him, and acquainted him with their Intentions of carrying the Vessel to some English Port; to which he replied, 'By Heavens, this is what I expected,' and declared that he would assist them to the utmost of his Power. Next Morning they acquainted the Captain with their Resolution, and he finding the Vessel's Course altered, said, 'I hope you'll use me well, my Lads.' On the 9th instant, they made the Land off Tillin-Head, in Ireland, and on Wednesday [May 21] arrived safe at Whitehaven, where an Affidavit has been made of the above Transaction, and the Cargo secured, for his Majesty's Use, by the Collector of that Port. Most of the Sailors had been Prisoners with the Provincials, and previous to their being engaged entered into the above Combination.

3. Bragg later noted in his diary that this tobacco sold for more than £31,000.

*Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 1777

London, January 20, 21.

Advice has been received by the *Dartmouth*, Capt. Graves, who is arrived in the river from Seville, that several American privateers are cruising within a few leagues of Seville; and that it is very dangerous for any ships sailing to that port without a strong convoy, as some of the privateers mount from ten to 18 guns, besides swivels.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

No 92 Confidential

My Lord

Paris 21 May 1777.

I have got some secret Information, which, though it is not as particular and circumstantial as I could wish, may deserve some Attention.

There are two French Ships fitting out either at Marseilles or Toulon, I believe at Marseilles. They are to be purchased or at least freighted by Mr Deane – are to be laden with different Sorts of Goods for the Use of the Rebels, are to mount, one 18 Guns the other only 12 or 14, though she will be pierced for twenty. The largest of the two Vessels will be about 400 Tons, the other about 340. They will be manned with French Sailors, carry French Colours, and clear out for some of the West India Islands, but their real Destination, is New England, with a Liberty however to make any Safe Port in North America. They will carry double Commissions, an ostensible, and a secret one; that is, My Lord, there will be on board each Ship a French Captain, and one with a Commission from the Congress. [Joseph] Hynson is, I know, to be one of these Captains, and is to have the Direction of the Expedition, the other will, I believe, be a Frenchman by Birth, but in the Service of the Congress, and bearing their Commission.<sup>2</sup> There will be twelve Brass Mortars put on board Hynson's Vessel, which is the largest of the two. He is to receive his Instructions from Deane to morrow, and will set out immediately for Marseilles: but as the Ships have not yet begun to take in their Lading, it will be some Weeks before they can be ready to put to Sea, so that there will be Time enough to send Orders to the Commander of our Fleet in the Mediterranean to stop them as they pass the Streights, if that Measure should be thought adviseable. Hynson may perhaps endeavour to disguise himself, but he has such strong Marks of an English Tar, that he must easily be discovered. That Discovery once made, would lead to every other, and unravel the whole Iniquitous Project, as he, if once taken, may, I think, be easily induced or compelled to tell all he knows.

It is clearly my Duty to do every Thing I can, to discover these insidious Projects, and give Your Lordship the best Information in my Power with Regard to them – the Use to be made of these Discoveries, His Majesty's Wisdom will determine.

I am with the greatest Truth and Respect My Lord [&c.]

Stormont

The *Mercury* is certainly got safe to North America, but I know M. de Sartines has said within these few Days, that there is no certain Account of the arrival of the *Amphitrite*. S

[Endorsed] Copy sent to Lord Sandwich.

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 261–62.

2. Pierre Landais to command the smaller ship *L'Heureux*, Hynson, *Pacifique*.

JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NAVY BRIG *Massachusetts*,  
CAPTAIN JOHN FISK<sup>1</sup>

H Courses Winds  
3

Remks on Wednesday 21st of May 1777  
freash breaze at 3 Am saw the land Barring  
NNE. 3 Leagues, spake with Severall french  
Vesels at 6 took a Pilote on board of[f] Bell Isle  
at 10 took a river Pilote on board freash gales &  
pleasant weather we are Entring the River Loir

found at Entry of the River the Ship *Reprisel*, Capt Weeks Brig *Lexinton* Capt Johnson Sloop [*Dolphin*] Capt Nickinson [Nicholson]

Long In 3D 2m –

At 3 PM came to Ankor in the River Loir at a town called Painbeuf in Six fathom water where we found the Brig *Freedom* Capt Jno Clouston, bound out to sea –

Lay at Painbeuf untill the 9 of June then we were Ready to proceed to sea

1. John Fisk Journal, AAS.

#### CAPTAIN JOHN FISK TO SAMUEL PHILLIPS SAVAGE <sup>1</sup>

Sir

This by Capt Clouston will inform you of my arrival here this day but I have not the pleasure to acquaint you that the *Tyrannicide* is here with me, but am sorry to acquaint you that on the seventeenth Instant at Nine in the Morning we gave chase to a Ship standing to the Eastward and came up fast at three got within two miles of the Ship, then saw three Sail in the N.E. bearing down to us one of said Sail brought our chase too & hoisted English Colours. I bore away and made Sail from them the Ship gave me chase Capt Haraden bore away also. the Ship came up with us fast at Nine at Night I hauld my Wind Capt Haraden bore away before the Wind at half after nine lost sight of Capt Haraden and soon after lost sight of the Ship at ten saw three flashes of Guns which I suppose the Ship fired at Capt Haraden and I am afraid the Ship took him as I have not heard nor seen any thing of him since, the reason of my coming in here so soon was want of Water & Wood I have Eighty nine hands in Number on board my Vessell we have taken eight prizes since we left Salem two of which we gave to the prisoners the other six we sent for Boston I shall comply with my Orders & Am Sir [&c.]

Nantz May 21st 1777

Jn<sup>o</sup> Fisk

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 216, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

22 May

#### PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

My Lord/

Admiralty Office 22d May 1777

My Lords Commissrs of the Admty having receiv'd a Petition signed by the Persons named in the Margin, <sup>2</sup> representing that they were late Officers and part owners of Vessels belonging to America, taken by His Majestys Cruizers and are now Prisoners on board the *Queen*, that during their late Confinement on board the *Nonsuch* & *Torbay*, they were indulged with a separation aft by themselves from among the rest of their fellow Prisoners, But since their Confinement on board the *Queen*, they have been

confined indiscriminately altogether being 70 in number, within the small space therein mentioned, which from the closeness, smoke and heat of the place has caused the small Pox to break out among them and threatens a general Infection if they are continued in that situation, and therefore praying for Relief; I am commanded by their Lordships to send you the said Petition herewith and to signify their directions to you, to enquire into what is therein represented, and state the case of the Petitioners & report to their Lordships your opinion what may be proper to be done therein: And with your report you will please to return the said Petition to, &c.

P S

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/555, 1.

2. Anthony Shoemaker, Lathan Rankin, Phineas Smith and George Southward.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS, ADMIRALTY, TO CAPTAIN JOHN MACBRIDE, R.N.<sup>1</sup>

By &amp;c.

Whereas the Ships named on the other side hereof, bound to the West Indies, are now on their way from the River Thames to Plymouth, and are intended to proceed under convoy of the Ship you command to the Island of Madeira; You are hereby required and directed to take the said Ships under your convoy, and putting to Sea with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather, make the best of your way (consistent with their security), with them to the said Island; Where you are to leave them to prosecute their Voyage, and then return to Plymouth Sound for further Order; making Cape Finisterre in your way, and diligently looking out for, and endeavouring to take or destroy, any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America which may be found in those parts.

But, in case the *Laing* Captn Wilson, one of the said Ships, which is laden with Arms should arrive at Plymouth before the others, or any of them, you are to wait only 48 hours after her arrival, and then taking the said Ship, and such of the others as may have joined you under your convoy, proceed with them as above directed. Given &c the 22d of May 1777.

Captn Macbride – *Bienfaisant* – Plymouth

By &amp;c.

P:S:

Sandwich

J. Buller

H. Palliser

Ships NamesMasters Names

<i>Laing</i> .....	Wilson	—	Jamaica
<i>St Mary Planter</i> .....	Gill	—	Do
<i>Elizabeth</i> .....	Hughes	—	Do
<i>Antigua Planter</i> .....	Johnson	—	Grenada
<i>Peggy</i> .....	Hardy	—	Antigua
<i>Resolution</i> .....	Welch,	—	Do

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/102, 528-29.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO VERGENNES<sup>1</sup>

Versailles 22nd May 1777.

Explanation on the subject of the sale at L'Orient of 5 English prizes brought into that port by the American privateer *Reprisal*

I had written, Sir, to the officers of the Admiralty at Vannes, as you desired, in order that they might report to me what took place regarding the English vessels the *Polly & Nancy*, the *Betty*, the *Hibernian*, the *Generous Friends* and the *Swallow Packet*,

all captured by the American Privateer the *Reprisal*, which were taken to L'Orient in the month of February last, and which, it was stated, had been sold in the jurisdiction of the said Admiralty to several Merchants, it being added that the cargoes of these Vessels, transhipped immediately to French vessels, had been sent to different ports; While reproaching these officers for these sales, made notwithstanding the orders which had been given them, I commanded them to let me know the means which had been made use of to get the sales authorized. These officers reported to me the investigations which they had made, and the result was that, upon an examination of the Register of Declarations of ownership of Vessels made in their court, paying attention principally to those entries in which the seller or the buyer was a foreigner and to those where they observed that the tonnage of the captured Vessels agreed most with that of the Vessels declared, they found that on the 1st March last Pieter Van der Kaulen of Rotterdam declared having sold his Vessel *la Fortune* of about 180 tons burden then at L'Orient to M. Brusand there present, who declared he accepted the said sale and that the said Vessel was going to be named *la Diligente*; that on the 4th of the same month M. Jean Aimé Viaud, a Merchant of Noirmoutier, declared himself the sole owner of the Snow *la Charlotte* of about 90 tons and of the Brigantine *l'Harmonie* of about 150 then both at L'Orient, ready to set sail for the said Island of Noirmoutier; And finally that on the 5th Messrs Bérard Frères & Co., merchants at L'Orient, declared through an attorney, having bought from M. Vanlip of Flemish nationality the brigantine *le Victorieux* of about 110 tons burden and the Snow *la Margueritte* of about 120; These Admiralty officers added, that, when the declarations were made in their Court at the beginning of March, they had not the slightest suspicion of their unfaithfulness, and that neither could their Registrar at Port Louis suspect when he cleared some of them, that they were from among the captured vessels. I should like to be able to give you more ample explanation, but this is all I have been able to obtain, and, if there has been fraud in these sales, it appears very difficult to discover it, unless more precise information be given, upon which further investigations could be made.

I have the honor to be with very sincere and perfect attachment, Sir,  
[&c.]

de Sartine

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 120-21, LC Photocopy.

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Paris 22d May 1777 –

I have before me your esteemed favours of 9th & 16th Current, the Contents of which have noted & shall endeavour to answer the same, In the first place you desire to know how I remain here without exciting suspicion; I have made use of this finesse, which I think it not a bad one, when they ask me why I do not go out to America or follow some kind of business I tell them I am waiting for letters from America, when I shall be the more able to determine what course to pursue; with this they are perfectly satisfy'd and you may rest assured I have a share of their Confidence, and not the least suspected by any Person on the American side whatever may be the Conjecture on the other; you also desire to know how the Dunkirk affair was received here I can assure you they were not prepared for the same, & they now say it was not the intended plan to have carried the Vessells into that Port, – you may also depend that the Vessells will be given up if a formal demand is made for the same, which I make no doubt will be done by your Court . . .

John Atkins affair has been talked over very often but do not perceive that Deane had any hand in that affair, 'tis true John Called on him, but from what Deane say's, he laugh'd at the impossibility of it, he Deane not thinking the Same could have been executed, tho' at same time have heard him & Carmichael say he was a fine fellow & wished it had been executed. – <sup>2</sup>

Two 74 Gun Ships are gone out to desire the English Ships that are Cruizing on the French Coast to depart Immediately, but was this day informed that 4 more had been added to the Number, with possitive Orders to protect all the American Vessels on their Coast, and Conduct them into port, this I had from Mr [James] Moylan, who had it from a Monsieur Poulze, one of the Farmer Generals – this is the man that Moylan is settling the Tobacco affair with he tells me they are more determined than before, & have desired him to wait their pleasure; I imagine 'twill be some time in August next; – if the plan is adopted, they mean to send out goods to the Amount of Two & twenty Million of livers, for which they mean to take Tobacco in return – This Monsieur Poulze told Moylan that the putting the Crew of Conynghams Vessell into Prison was only a temporary affair, and no more than a Cloak for their other Actions & that they would be released in a very short time; but hope you'll put a stop to that; the French are very much against a War with England at present (indeed its their interest) and would Suffer almost anything sooner than break with you –

Capt Hynson & a Captn Lundy a frenchman, (who speaks English) <sup>3</sup> sets off tomorrow for Marseillie, at which place two Vessells are preparing for them, the one Mounts 18–6 pounders & the other 16–6 pounders – Hynson will have the Ship of the greater force, – & I am told she will be the most Valuable Vessell that has gone from this Country since the Commencement of those disputes, he has 50 Men already engaged, but intends taking

more; the greatest part frenchmen, if not all – amongst the many Articles he will Carry out, is 12 brass Morters Compleat

[Letter incomplete]

1. Stevens, ed., *Facsimiles*, No. 696.
2. The incendiary, John the Painter.
3. Pierre Landais.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD BACHE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Passy near Paris, May 22. 1777.

Our Privateers & Cruisers in the Channel have rais'd the Insurance in London. One of my Friends here lately paid 10 P Cent between Dover & Calais. Capt. Conyngham imprudently returning into Dunkirk with two Prizes, was apprehended with his People at the Request of the Court of England, and put into Prison, on pretence of Piracy, but having a Commission from Congress, they are discharged. The Prizes however being reclaimed, will be delivered up, the fitting out at Dunkirk being contrary to Treaties, which must be observed till War is declared. . . .

1. Benjamin Franklin Collection, YUL.

23 May

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM WATERFORD, MAY 23." <sup>1</sup>

We have advices here from Sligo, Bally-shannon, and Killybeggs, that three stout privateers were seen last week about eight leagues west and by north from the island called Rosses, off the coast of Donegal, to pick up the ships bound from Greenock or Glasgow, to America or the West Indies. A fisherman of Westport, in the county of Mayo, saw them on Wednesday last in the afternoon; they wanted to have spoke with him, but the poor fellow said he supposed they wanted his fish, and not thinking they would pay him for it, the wind being right on shore, he pushed for it, and left them. These pirates have so alarmed the weak and timorous, that in many places of the coast they are afraid they will land, and carry off their effects.

1. *London Chronicle*, June 3 to June 5, 1777.

SILAS DEANE TO GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

. . . as one Campaign can never be sufficient to reduce the Continent, A Naval War, will be more than ever, push'd against Us. Heaven has succeeded Our Adventures, on that Element beyond my most sanguine Expectations, I was early & have ever been of the Opinion that under God Our Salvation must finally come from vigorous & bold operations at Sea, & by carrying the War to their Commerce, & Factories in distant Quarters of the Globe . . .

Paris Rue Royale place de Louis XV  
May 23d 1777

1. Jonathan Trumbull Papers, vol. 6, 119a–119c, ConnSL.

CAPTAIN LAMBERT WICKES TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

On board the *Reprisal* 23d May 1777

As you have now Joined me agreeable to the Request of the Honorable Commissioners at Paris, I Now desire you would not part or Separate on any consideration from the Squadron, if in your power to prevent it Unless we should be Chased by a Vessel of Superior Force & it should be Necessary so to do for our own preservation, in that case you must make use of your own direction & do every thing in your power to avoid being taken – If any Accident should happen that obliges us to part before the Expiration of this Cruize, you may continue your Cruize through the Irish Channel or to the North West of Ireland, as you may Judge Safest and best, untill you Arrive off the Isles Orkney, and there Cruize 5 or 6 Days for the Fleet to Come up & Join you. If they do not appear in that time, You may make the best of your Way back for Bilboa or St Sebastian & there Refit as fast as possible for Another Cruize, informing the Honourable Commissioners of your Safe Arrival and the Success of your Cruize, with all the Material information that you get on this Cruize, but if you should Part from the Squadron and take such a Number of Prizes, as may Render it Necessary to Return in to Port, in that Case, you may run directly into Bilboa or St Sebastians with your Prizes or into any other Spanish or French Port, that is most Convenient, informing the Honble Commissioners as Above Directed on your Arrival;

You must take all the Prisoners out of every Prize & Man her with your Own People, sending a Certificate with the Commanding Officer, on board the Prize, of the Lattitude & Longitude you took her in, which must not be Produced only in Case of Neccessity. The Prize Master must not Report or Enter her as Prize, but as An American Vessel from a port that will be most likely to gain Credit according to the Cargo, she may have on board, to the Address of one or either of Merchants whose Names are hereafter mentioned; be Very Attentive to your Signals, and if you should be taken, you must take Care to destroy them, and not let the Captures [captors] get possession of them, as it may be of great prejudice to the Rest of the Squadron. Take care to have all the Prisoners properly Secured to prevent their Riseing & taking your Vessel, & if you meet a Dutch, French, Dean, Sweed, or Spanish Vessel when you have a Number of Prisoners on board, I think it would do well to put them on board any of those Vessels, giving as much provision and Water as will serve them into Port. If any of your Prizes should be chased, or in danger, they may Run into the first or most Convenient Port they Can Reach in France or Spain, prefering Bilboa, St Sebastians L'Orient or Nantz. If they go to Spain, they must go to the Address of Messrs Gordique & Sons, At Bilboa or St Sebastians, At L'Orient to Mr Gourlade & they must hoist an English Jack at the Main top-Gallant Mast head & Run into Port Louis, and there wait the Orders of Mr Gourlade, whom they must apply to, & At Nantz, they must apply to Thomas Morris Esqr. At any other Port in France or Spain they must Write by Post, to the



Honble Commissioners at Parris, or to Thomas Morris Esqr at Nantz for Advice, whom to Apply to, and Value on to Sell the Vessel & Cargo,

If you take a Prize that you think worth Sending to America, you may dispatch her for Some of the Northern Ports in the Massechusets States, address'd to the Continental Agent at Any Port she may Arrive at – when a Prize is Sold & the Prize Master and People is discharged, they must make the best of their Way for Nantz or Elsewhere, as they may be ordered to Join their respective Vessel, or in Case of their not Arriving they may Serve on board any other Continental Vessel they Can find, untill they Join their own Vessel or Arrive in America, on their Arrival in any Port in France or Spain, they must Apply to the Commanding Officer of Such Port for Protection of their Persons and Property as Subjects to the United States of America from [&c.]

Lamb<sup>t</sup> Wickes

To Samuel Nicholson Esqr  
Commander of the Sloop *Dolphin*

1. Papers CC (Memorials Addressed to Congress, 1775–88), 41, VII, 150–53, NA. Similar orders were given the same day to Captain Henry Johnson of the *Lexington*, PRO, Colonial Office, 5/7, 99.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLOUSTON TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR <sup>1</sup>

Painbouef May the 23d 1777

Gentlemen

I have the Pleasure of Informing yours Honours By Capt Fisk of the *Massachusetts*

That on the first Instant I Arived safe in this Port after Taking twelve Sail of Englis Vessels Seven of which I Dispachd for Boston<sup>2</sup> Burnt three gave one smal Brigg to our Prisners<sup>3</sup> and one Retaken by the *Futereonge* [*Foudroyant*] which Chast us fore Glasses and finding she Could not Cume up with us she gave Chase to our Prize and tooock hur in our sight – I have Cleand & Refited my Vessel and Taken in forty Tons of War like Stores and have bin wating for a wind to go out this fore days – Capt Fisk being Short of Provisions I have Supplied him with foreteen Barels of Park and Eleven of Beef and have got a Suffisantse for my Vessel Left I Remain Gentlemen [&c.]

John Clouston

1. Mass. Arch., vol. 152, 220, Board of War Letters, 1776–1777.

2. Two of these, the sloop *William and Barbara* taken April 15 and brigantine *Two Betsys* taken April 23, were retaken; the sloop, on May 29, by H.M. Sloop *Albany*, and the brigantine, on June 5, by H.M.S. *Mermaid*, N. S. Arch., vol. 495, Vice Admiralty Register, vol. 5, 1769–1777. Three of the prizes – brigs *Penelope*, *Britannia* and *Phoebe*, arrived safely at Boston, *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, June 5 and July 10, 1777.

3. *Dispatch* arrived at Cork April 28 with nineteen of Clouston's prisoners.

24 May

*London Chronicle*, THURSDAY, MAY 22 TO SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1777

[London] Saturday, May 24.

The *Mary*, Capt. Harrison, from Africa to the West Indies, with a num-

ber of slaves on board, is taken by the Provincials, and sent to some port in America.

The *Ann*, Capt. Reed, from the Clyde, is safe arrived at New York, after having an engagement with an American privateer, in which the latter was very much damaged, and lost two men, and had three greatly wounded.

The *Baltimore* provincial privateer, of 16 guns, is put into Bourdeaux, in a very leaky condition, which it is imagined she has received in some engagement with one of his Majesty's cruising frigates.

By a letter received yesterday from Hamburgh, there is advice, that an American privateer was cruising at the mouth of the Elbe.

25 May (Sunday)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET  
CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Honble Gentlemen

Paris May 25. 1777.

Agreeable to what we mentioned in ours of March 14 & April the 9th (a third Copy of which we send herewith) Mr Lee tarry'd here some weeks after his Return from Spain. No News arriving (tho' we received Letters from you) of any Commissioner being actually appointed for Prussia, and the Necessity of a good Understanding with that Court in order to obtain speedily a Port in the Northern Seas appearing more & more every Day on various Occasions, he concluded with our Approbation to set out for Berlin, which he did about a Week since, & we have Reason to hope good Effects from that Journey. The Points principally in View are (besides the Acknowledgement of American Independency) an open Port for German Commerce, and the Permission of fitting out arm'd Vessels to annoy the Enemy's Northern Trade, and of bringing in & selling our Prizes. If these Points can be obtain'd we are assured we might soon have a formidable Squadron there, and accumulate Seamen to a great Amount.

The want of such a free Port appears in the late Instance of Capt Connyngams Arrest at Dunkirk with the Prizes he brought in. For tho' the Fitting out may be cover'd and conceal'd by various Pretences, so as at least to be wink'd at by Government here, because those Pretences afford a good Excuse for not preventing it, yet the bringing in of Prizes by a Vessell so fitted out, is so notorious an Act & so contrary to Treaties, that if suffered it must occasion an immediate War. Conyngham will however, thro' Favour, be discharged with his Vessell as we are given to understand, but we must put up with the Loss of the Prizes, which being reclaim'd will be restor'd. This is an occasion of Triumph to our Enemies, which we must suffer them to enjoy for the present, assured as we are by the most substantial Proofs of the Friendship of this Court & of Spain which we are persuaded will soon manifest itself to all the World. The latter has already remitted to us a large Sum of Money as you will see by Mr Lee's Letters; and continues to send Cargoes of Supplies of which you have herewith sundry Accounts. Many of these Transactions are by some Means or other known

in England, which does not resent them at present, but the Opinion of an approaching War gains ground every Day.

We are preparing the Accoutrements you ordered for the Horse. They will take Time. Had there been such in the Magazines here we might have possibly borrow'd on Condition of Replacing them. Pistols (450 pair) are already sent, the whole Number will be forwarded as fast as they can be got ready. Col Forrester an experienced Officer of Horse, has given us a Specimen of compleat Accoutrements which have been found best; the Saddle is of a singular Contrivance, very cheap and easily made or repair'd, and the Buff Belts are so broad, as that crossing on the Breast, they are good Armour against the Point of a Sword or a Pistol Bullet. We propose to have as many sets made with these Saddles as may serve to mount a Squadron; but shall omit Saddles for the Rest, as they will take up too much Room in the Vessells, and can soon be made with you. Coll Forester is highly recommended to us and we believe will go over.

Cloathing for 10,000 Men is now in Hand making for us by Contract, and other proposed Contracts are under Consideration for the Rest of the 80,000 Men ordered. We hope to have them with you before next Winter, or that if all cannot be got, the Cloth we have sent and are sending will make up the Deficiency.

The large Brass Cannon are not to be had here. We have been treating with a Swedish Merchant about them, but find too many Difficulties in getting them from that Country; so that finally understanding you have some Founders with you & that we can have others to go from hence, we conclude to send two artists in that way, with the Metal to cast the Number wanted, omitting only the Field Pieces, of which we suppose you have by this Time a Number sufficient. Some large Iron Cannon are offered us Cheap from Holland, of which we think to send a Quantity, for tho' too heavy for the Army they may be of Use for the Navy, Gallies, Gondola's &c . . .

Our Treaty of Commerce is not yet proceeded on, the Plan of this Court appearing to be not to have any Transaction with us that implies an acknowledgment of American Independancy, while their Peace continues with England. To make us more easy with this they tell us we enjoy all the Advantages already which we propose to obtain by such a Treaty, and that we may depend on continuing to receive every Indulgence in our Trade that is allow'd to the most favour'd Nation. Feeling ourselves assisted in other Respects cordially and essentially, we are the more readily induced to let them take their own Time & to avoid making ourselves troublesome by an unseasonable importunity. The Interest of France & Spain however in securing our Friendship and Commerce seems daily more and more generally understood here, & we have no doubt of finally obtaining the Establishment of that Commerce with all the Formalities necessary.

We submit it to your Consideration whether it might not be well to employ some of your Frigates in bringing your produce hither, ordering them, after refreshing and refitting, to make a Cruize in the Northern Seas upon

the Baltic & Hamborough Trade, send their prizes home North about, then return to France and take in a Loading of Stores for America.

The Marquis de Fayette, a young Nobleman of great Family Connections here, & great Wealth, is gone to America in a Ship of his own, accompanied by some Officers of Distinction, in order to serve in our Armies. He is exceedingly beloved, and every bodys good wishes attend him. We cannot but hope he may meet with such a Reception as will make the Country & his expedition agreeable to him. Those who censure it as imprudent in him do never the less applaud his Spirit; and we are satisfyd that the Civilities and respect that may be shown him will be serviceable to our Affairs here, as pleasing not only to his powerfull relations & to the Court, but to the whole French Nation. He has left a beautifull young Wife big with Child, and for her sake particularly we hope that his Bravery and ardent Desire to distinguish himself will be a little restrain'd by the General's prudence; so as not to permit his being hazarded much but on some important occasion.

We are, very respectfully Gentlemen [&c.]

B Franklin      Silas Deane

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 51-56, NA.

26 May

*London Chronicle*, SATURDAY, MAY 24 TO TUESDAY, MAY 27, 1777

Admiralty Office, May 26.

Captain Jervis, of his Majesty's Ship the *Foudroyant*, in a letter received this day, gives an account of his having taken on the 19th inst. the schooner *Finch* [*sic Lynch*], John Adams, master, which had sailed that morning from Nantz, bound to Boston, with arms and cloathing for the use of the rebel army; and by a letter also received this day from the Hon. Capt. Leveson Gower of the *Valiant*, it appears that on the 14th instant he had taken a New England vessel, but last from Charlestown, laden with rice and indigo, bound to Nantz: The former is since arrived at Plymouth, the latter at Portsmouth.<sup>1</sup>

1. In the *Public Advertiser*, London, May 27, 1777, a letter from Portsmouth dated May 25 reads:

Yesterday was brought in here by an Officer belonging to the *Valiant* Man of War, a Brig called the *Effingham*, Capt. Drew, from Charlestown for Nantz, with Rice, Tobacco, and Indigo: She was taken about eight Leagues S.W. of Scilly by the *Valiant*, who was in Chace of a Privateer when the *Effingham* left her.

*London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, FRIDAY, MAY 23 TO MONDAY, MAY 26, 1777

London [May 26].

Extract of a letter from on board the *Clarendon* Letter of Marque, dated at sea.

Two days after we got clear of the channel, we saw a sail making

towards us, which we supposed to be an American privateer, and we were right, for when within gun-shot, she fired a gun and hoisted American colours; we hoisted ours, and returned her our broadside, when a general engagement began. As I was but a passenger, I was ordered to attend the surgeon, but there was little occasion for him, as we had but one man wounded, though our contest lasted upwards of three hours; but then it must be remembered that we hauled off twice to repair our rigging, which suffered very much. When night came on, the privateer left us, finding we were a full match for her, and indeed we were not sorry for it, as we had quite enough. The next day in the afternoon a small privateer of about ten guns bore down upon us, but on our paying her a compliment of our broadside, she turned tail and left us.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET  
CORRESPONDENCE <sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen

Paris May 26th 1777 –

The Navy of the United States increasing in the Number of its ships, & Force, it is of the utmost importance to direct the Cruises of the Shippes of War which belong either to the States or individuals so, as to annoy, & alarm the Enemy the most effectually, and at the same time to encourage Our brave Officers, & Seamen by the Value of the prizes. The West India Trade was so much intercepted the last Season, That besides endangering the Credit, of every West India house in England and absolutely ruining many, it greatly helped towards sinking the revenues of Great Brittain, which it was confidently asserted the other Day, in the House of Commons, & was not contradicted by the Minister, had sunk the last year one Million below the usual incomes. This Trade, cannot be attacked the coming Season to equal advantage, as it will not be by any degree so large, & will be armed, & under Convoy, but as the Commerce, of Great Brittain, is very extensive, good Policy dictates that We attack it, in more than one Sea, & on different Coasts. The Navy of G Brittain is not sufficiently Numerous to infest the whole Coast of North America & at the Same Time Guard their Own, much less protect and convoy their trade in different Seas. We have not the least doubt but That Two or Three of the Continental Frigates sent into the German Ocean with some lesser swift Sailing Cruizers, might intercept and seize great part of the Baltic, & Northern Trade, could they be in those Seas sometime in August at farthest, and the Prizes will consist of Articles of the utmost Consequence to the States. One Frigate would be Sufficient to destroy the whole of the Greenland whale Fishery & take the Hudson's bay Ships returning. In a Word they are unsuspecting, & unguarded on that Quarter, and the alarm such an Expedition would give, must raise the insurance in England at least Twenty p Ct since Capt Cunningham's [Conyng- ham] adventure occasioned 10 p Ct to be given on the Passage Boats from Dover to Calais. Capt Cunningham having been put in Prison, & the prizes restored, they are again lull'd into security – The whole western Coast of

England, & Scotland, & indeed almost the whole of Ireland, is at this Moment, unguarded, either by Shippes of Warr or Troops, except a few Sloops or Cutters to watch Smugglers. We submit to the Congress, the following plan, to send three Frigates loaded with Tobacco, for Nantes, or Bordeaux and that they be manned & Commanded in the best possible manner – That on their arrival in either of the above Rivers, they make but little appearance of Strength, & endeavor to pass for Common Cruisers, while they were refitting, which should be in different Ports, near each other, intelligence might be had of the position of the British Fleet, & of the Circumstances of the different Towns on the Sea Coast, & of the Merchant Ships in them, in Consequence of which a blow might be struck, that would alarm, & shake Great Brittain, & its Credit to The Center – The Thought may appear bold, & extravagant, yet we have seen as extraordinary events within These Two years past, as that of Carrying the War, to our Enemies doors – As it appears extravagant, it will be, in consequence, unexpected by them, and the more easily executed – The Burning, or Plundering Liverpool, or Glasgow would do Us more essential Service than a Million of Treasure & much blood spent on the Continent. It would raise Our reputation to the highest pitch, & lessen in the same degree, that of Our Enemies – We are confident it is practicable & with very little danger, but Times may alter, by the Time of the Arrival of the Frigates, yet in that Case their Cruise on this Coast bids fairer to be more profitable than on any other and They may at least carry back in safety, many of the Stores wanted which is a most Capital Object should the other be laid aside. Every days experience confirms to Us, what is printed and indeed by Nature itself, the Necessity of rendering America independant, in every sense of the Word. The present glorious tho' trying contest will do more to render this independance fixed, & certain, if Circumstances are seasonally improved, than would otherways have been effected in an Age. The Manufacturing of any one Necessary Article among Ourselves is like breaking one link of the Chains which have heretofore bound two worlds together, & which Our Artfull Enemies had under the mask of Freindship been long winding round, & round Us, & binding fast. Thus as founderies for Cannon, Iron as well as Brass, are erecting; if they are at once erected large enough to cast of any Size, We may in future, be easy on that important Article, & independant on the Caprice, or interest of Our pretended Freinds for a Supply; and to forward This We shall take the Liberty, of sending over some of the most skilful Founders we can meet with. The Jealousy which reigns among the Maritime Powers in Europe with their Narrow, weak & contemptible System of Politics prevents our being able to procure Ships of War – To remedy which, you have with you Timber, Iron & Workmen, and We must send You over Sail Cloth & Cordage as fast as We can – The importance of having a Considerable Naval force is too obvious to need our saying more, Than, That we conceive no apparent difficulty, or obstruction ought to deter Us from pushing it forward, To the utmost of Our power.

We have sent You by a former Conveyance a plan of a Frigate on a New

Construction, & Now send You the Duplicate which we submit to the Judgment of Those better skill'd than we pretend to be in Naval Affairs; but imagine that on Our Coast, & perhaps anywhere, Ships constructed in some such manner may be as formidable, as those of 74 Guns, & it is certain they will cost Us less. The Vessel building in Amsterdam is on this plan, which we hope will be in Season for Service this Fall or Autumn.

We are with the utmost respect, Gentlemen [&c.]

B Franklin      Silas Deane

1. Papers CC (Letters from the Joint Commissioners for Negotiating Treaties with France and Great Britain, 1777-84), 85, 57-64, NA.

RAIMONDO NICCOLI TO HIS GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

Paris, 26 May 1777

. . . It is said that the American privateer, the *Surprise*, which by Government order was stopped in Dunkirk, was given its freedom to depart, but leaving behind its prizes, which were returned to their owners. It is alleged that at the request of the British Minister the vessel was detained there for a day or so, especially because this vessel had earlier departed from that port as a merchant vessel, and had at some distance armed as a raider, which is contrary to the laws of neutrality. In determining to arrest her it seems among other things that the Government wished to learn the facts rather than conduct a formal trial of the privateer . . .

1. Secretary of Foreign Affairs Papers, ASF.

27 May

CAPTAIN JAMES WORTH, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Liverpool. 27th May. 1777 -

Please to Acquaint their Lordships, this Morning was brought into this Port, a Bermudas Built Sloop, Named, the *Active*, John Osborne late Master belonging to Charles Town South Carolina, Mounted with Six Carriage Guns, Two of Six Pounders, Two of Four, Two of three, four Swivels, and Mann'd with Fifteen Men, whereof five are Spanish, and Two Dutch, she was bound to Nantes or any Port in France, her Cargo Consists of Two Hundred and Eight whole and fifty Two half Barrels of Rice, Ten Hogsheads of Tobacco, and Fifteen Casks of Indico, she sailed from Charles Town the 21st of April and on the 2d May Following in the Latitude of 36°: 32' No and Longitude 51°:41' W, Joseph Ring 2d Mate assisted with three other English Men, and the two Dutch Men, rose and took Possession of the Sloop, the late Master John Osborne and Joseph Price Chief Mate were Set on Shoar by a Pilot boat they met off Kingsale.<sup>2</sup>

Joseph Ring informs me three Briggs and a large ship Sailed on the same day they did, Bound for France, he also says they had a Commission on board from the Congress and Several Letters for Different People, which he gave

into the hands of Mr Benjamin Heywood a Merchant in this Town, who says he has sent them away but to whome I Know not.

I beg leave to add I shall Use my Endeavour to Prevent the Cargo from being Plunder'd – and am Sir [&c.]

Ja<sup>s</sup> Worth

Philip Stephens Esqr On His Majesty's Service

[Endorsed] 31 May direct him to send the Crew of this Vessel except the 2d Mate & the 5 Seamen who assisted him in taking possession of her, by the first Tender to Plymo to be disposed of as Ld Shuldham shall direct

Acqt L Shuldham herewith & let him know they are to be sent to Mill prison having been taken in an Armed Vessel with a Comn from the Congress

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/2672. 5, 23.

2. Kinsale, Ireland.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM <sup>1</sup>

My Lord

[Admiralty Office] 27th May 1777.

I am so commanded by my Lords Commissrs of the Admty to send inclosed a Copy of a Paper of Intelligence which they have received, shewing the State of American Privateers with their cruising destinations; And to signify their Lordships direction that you cause Copies of the said Paper, to be delivered to the Captains of such of His Majesty's Ships as are now under orders, or may be soon ordered, to cruize on the Stations therein mentioned. I am &ca

P S:

P:S. You will direct the Captain abovementioned to communicate the above Intelligence to any of the cruizers they may meet with

Vice Adml Lord Shuldham }  
Plymouth

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/555, 18. An identical order went the same day to Admiral Sir Thomas Pye, commanding the ships at Portsmouth.

WILLIAM KNOX TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Whitehall 27th May 1777.

Lord George Germain having received Information that Pye, Rich & Wilkinson, Merchants at Amsterdam, are fitting out a Brigantine of about 200 Tons Burthen – Browne Master, to mount 10 Carriage Guns, and to be loaded with Arms & Ammunition for the Rebels in North America; His Lordship has directed me to acquaint you therewith for the Information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; and His Lordship has directed me to add, that the Person who gave this Information is ready to appear and give Evidence against the said Brigantine, in case she shall be made Prize of by any of the King's Ships. I am &ca

W<sup>m</sup> Knox

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/126, Part 3, 815.



*Public Advertiser*, TUESDAY, MAY 27, 1777

London.

Mr. Stephens, Secretary of the Admiralty, has wrote a Letter, dated May 24, to Mr. Souisa, Secretary to the Russia Company, informing him, that a Privateer of 16 Guns and 150 Men, was cruising off the Mouth of the Elbe; but that some Cruisers were sent in Search of her.

They write from Madeira, that a Rebel Privateer, called the *Little John*, is taken after a severe Conflict by an English Sloop of War of inferior Force, and carried into that Port to repair her Damage before she can be sent to England. The Commander of the Privateer, who was formerly an Officer in the English Navy, ran five of his Men threw [through] during the Action, whom he could not keep to their Quarters.

The *John*, M'Cartin, from Liverpoole, who is arrived at St. Vincent's, had an Engagement with the *Rattle Snake* Privateer of sixteen Guns, which she beat off. The *Rattle Snake* received a dangerous Shot in her Bow.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS <sup>1</sup>

[Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777]

27th [May] Capt [Francis] Brown Our Lieuts Sailing Mastr My self Mr [Isaac] George & the Gunr & two of the People sent on Shore to Be Sent to Prison; we were Escorted to the Fountain Tavern there to be Examined before a Justice of the peace & Capt Brown After Passing the First Examination had the good fortune to make his Escape; the rest after Examination Were all (Except one who was a Dutchman whome they sent back to the [Blenheim] again, & Mr Smith who was very Sickly him they return'd [to our ship] in Order to go to the Hospital without Examination) the rest of us were Committed to Old Mill Prison upon Suspicion of High Treason, a Shocking place & I was the first who Entr'd the gates.

1. MeHS.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS PARRY, R.N., TO PHILIP STEPHENS <sup>1</sup>

Sir

*Lynx*. Nore. May 27th 1777.

I beg you will acquaint their Lordships, that on Saturday the 24th instant, I receiv'd a letter inclosing two subpeana's for me to appear at the Court of Common Pleas by Attorney on Monday the 26th inst to shew cause why I seized a ship in North Carolina, and for damages the Master sustain'd on account of said seizure;

The Circumstances were these; on the tenth of Feby 1776 the ship *America* came into the river of Cape Fear in North Carolina, where I lay with the *Cruizer*, I went on board to search her and found three puncheons of Rum (from the West Indies) without Certificate, upon which I detained her, taking the register, by which it appear'd Mr Gammel of Glasgow, and Mr Ritche of North Carolina where the owners, her Cargoe was 6000 bushells of salt, from the situation of affairs I could not try her, neither could I send her to any part not in Rebellion, having no men, or officers to spare;

In the May following, Governor Martin, of the said Province Appointed a Court of Admiralty by which Court the said ship *America* was condemn'd for a breach of an act of the sixteenth of George the third prohibiting any trade to the Colonies in Rebellion;<sup>2</sup> after which for want of men could not send the vessell away and she became leaky and when an order came to evacuate the port, I was under the necessity of burning her to prevent her falling into the hands of the Rebels;

it was so late on saturday when I reced the subpeana's that I could not apply to their Lordships, neither could I presume to detain the *Lynx* when ready, I therefore employ'd Mr Barclay Attorney, No 1 Garden Court, Temple to appear for me; I must therefore beg their Lordships will be pleas'd to order their Sollicitor to take up the matter, as ev'ry step I took was for his Majestys Service, and my being cast must be inevitable ruin to me in ev'ry line of life; I am Sir [&c.]

Fra<sup>s</sup> Parry

1. PRO, Admiralty 1/3680.

2. See Volumes 4 and 5.

BENJAMIN MOREL, DUNKERQUE MERCHANT, TO SILAS DEANE <sup>1</sup>

Esteemed Sir

Dunkirk the 27 May 1777.

It is with great Concern we inform you that by an order from Court both the prizes have been delivered up yesterday; the Brigg to Mr Stival, & the packett boat to Mr Frazer. we formed an opposition but unsuccessfully. the Judge wu'd not but give them up. Cap Cunningham with his Crew is still in Goal, & lives in hopes that Soon his liberty shall be given. I went to See him last night & left him with Cap Beach pretty hearty but some of the Crew had lost their Spirits, which rather vexes the Capt. He hopes that the Congress shall give them some gratification for never, says he, shall he find such a determined Crew for the wellfare of their own Country. your Inclosed for Capt G. C. was remitted should he want any thing, we Shall provide him with it.

we have been told that there is particular orders given to mind what they are about with the Cutter.<sup>2</sup> we apprehend that they will not allow her to Sail from the Harbour unless they are Certain where she is bound for. G. C. was to be questionned to day in order to know who bought her, who was the owner, & who furnishes with Cash. we advised him to answer, that she had been bought for account of a Stranger, by whose order she was fitted out & that he had received 1500 l on account to pay all Expences. the name of the Stranger he did not Know. we think proper to give you this advise that you might take some precaution if you think it necessary. what will in future happen you Shall equally be informed of. depend for ever upon your faithful friend

Benj<sup>n</sup> Morela

please to burn the present after proper use is made of it –

1. Silas Deane Papers, ConnHS.

2. *Peacock*, renamed *Surprize*.

# PLAN DE LA RADE DE DUNKERQUE

Levé par Ordre du ROI en 1776

Sous le Ministère de M. DE SARTINE, Confesseur d'Etat,  
Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat  
au Département de la Marine.

PAR M. DE LA COULDRÉ DE LA BRETONNIÈRE

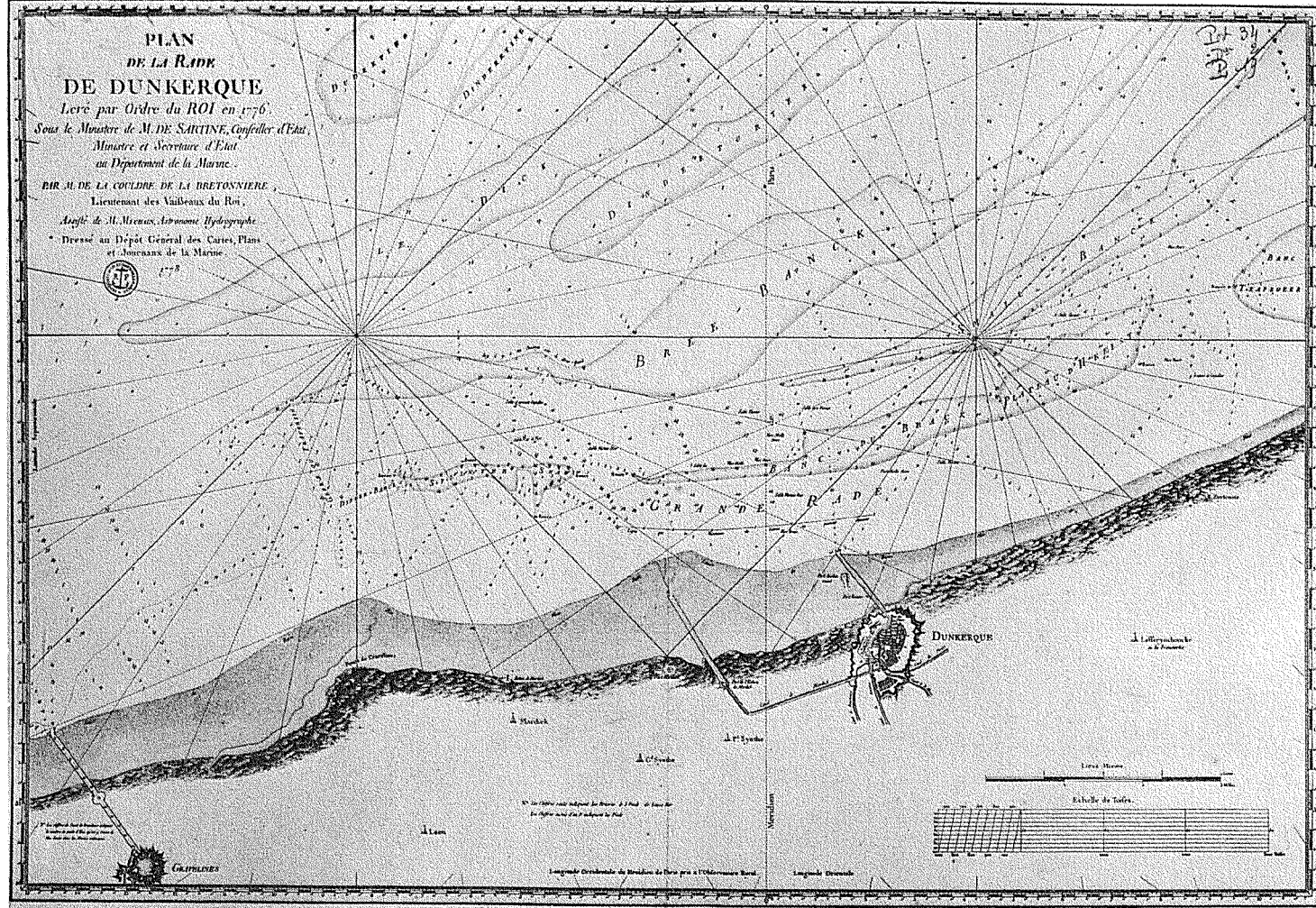
Lieutenant des Vaisseaux du Roi,

Aspirant de M. Micaux, Astronome, Hydrographe

Dressé au Dépôt Général des Cartes, Plans  
et Joujoux de la Marine.



1778



28 May

JOHN DOBSON TO HENRY GARNETT <sup>1</sup>

Sir,

Chamber of Commerce, Liverpool, May 28.

By various Accounts from the different Persons and Places, undoubted Intelligence has been received here of some illegal and dangerous Practices carried on by the French in the West-Indies.

A Vessel belonging to this Place with Slaves, Canewood, and Ivory, has been carried into St. Lucia by a French Sloop of ten Guns and fifty Men, said to be owned by Mr. Bigers, a Merchant in Martinico. The Sloop had only one Englishman on board, who was honoured with the Stile of Captain, but the actual Commander and his Officers were French, and the Crew all French, or other Foreigners.

The *Venus*, Capt. Sharpe, of and from Whitehaven for Granada, was taken after a gallant Defence of three Hours, by a Privateer belonging to Martinico, manned with French, Portuguese, and Spaniards, having only an American for Master. Many others are fitting out on this Plan, both at Martinico and Guadaloupe. The Congress Agents have blank Commissions, which they fill up there, and are very liberal of them. These Proceedings appear to us so very ruinous to the Trade of Great Britain, that it has been determined to bring this Business before Parliament by Petition. We shall esteem ourselves happy if honoured with the Concurrence of the Merchants of Bristol in our intended Application. I have the Honour to be, &c. &c.

John Dobson, President.

To Henry Garnett, Esq; Master of the Merchants-Hall, Bristol.

1. *Public Advertiser*, London, June 10, 1777.PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN <sup>1</sup>

Gentn

[Admiralty Office] 28th May 1777

I am commanded by my Lords Commissrs of the Admty to signify their directions to you to let them know what number of Prisoners have been received into the Prison at Forton near Portsmouth and Mill Prison near Plymouth, in consequence of their Lordships order of the 19th of last month; And to report once a month for the future the numbers in each of those Prisons. I am &c.

P. S.

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/555, 25.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

Confidential

My Lord

Paris May 28th 1777

I have received the following secret Information, with regard to the two french Ships, now fitting out at Marseilles, which are to be laden with Stores, and various other Articles, for the use of the Rebels. In order to prevent these ships being Stopt, or visited, by us, before they come upon the

Coast of America, there are to be Naval officers on board, bearing the french Kings Commission, and in case they are hailed by us, they will Pass for french Ships of War. I cannot absolutely answer, for the truth of this Information, but am much inclined to give it Credit. How insidious this Project is, and how contrary to all Friendship, all Good Faith, It is needless to say. Whether we should wink at the Execution, and trust entirely to the Vigilance of our Cruizers, on the Coast of America, (which Vigilance, so many french Vessels have escaped,) or declare to the Court of france, in very polite, but very explicit Terms, that we have reason to suspect such a Project, and cannot permit the Execution of it, be the Consequences what they may, His Majesty's Wisdom must alone determine. Hynson is still here, He has not yet got his Instructions, but expects them every Day. He thinks there is some Rub, or difficulty, but either does not know, or will not tell, where it lies. Beaumarchais, who has as much of the Secret Confidence, of the french Minister, as ever He had, is intrusted with the Conduct of this Project, sees Deane almost every Day, and is very frequent in his Visits, to Versailles. So is Carmichael, He has had it intimated to Him, that it is wished He should remain here, and He has accordingly given up, or at least postponed, his Intended Journey, to Sweden. I am with the greatest, Truth, and Respect, My Lord [&c.]

Stormont.

[Endorsed] Paris 28 May 1777 Lord Stormont (Confidential) R 1st June by Express from Dover

1. PRO, State Papers, 78/302, 293-94.

# MUSTER ROLL OF THE CONTINENTAL BRIG *Lexington* <sup>1</sup>

Brig *Lexington*

May 1777

Number of	Time of Entry	Mens Names	Quality	Dead D Dischd Run	Where Born
1	77 Feby 5	Henry Johnson Esqr	Commder		Boston
2		Elijah Bowen	1 Lieut		Middlen } N E }
3	77 Feby 10	David Welch	2 do		Ireland
4	" " 12	Jeremiah Holden	Master		Pennsya
5	" " 10	Nathan Dorsey	Surgeon		Maryld
6	" " 18	John Thompson	Gunner		Ireland
7		Thomas Lyne	BtSwain		England
8	77 Feby 12	John Chester	Carpr		do
9		James Connelly	Lieut Mars		Ireland
10	76 July 27	Richard Dale	1 Mate		Virginia
11	77 Feby 24	Henry Lawrence	2 Do		Denmark
12	76 Marh 17	Mathew Clear	Actg 3 Do		England
13	77 Feby 21	James Dick	M S Man		Ireland
14	77 May 10	Rapheles Geraue	do		France
15	" " 14	John Rousaux	do		do
16	76 Sept 2	John Hopes	Clerk		Ireland
17	77 Feby 10	Clement Smith	Surgn Mate		Maryland
18	" " "	James Jackson	Armr		Ireland
19	76 May 22	James Shields	Btswn Mate		Pennsya

Number of	Time of		Mens Names	Quality	Dead D Dischd Run	Where Born
	Entry					
20	76 May	21	Mathew Brannon	do yeoman		Ireland
21	77 Feby	28	John Wiggins	Steward		England
22	" "	12	Mathw Lewis	Carpr Mate		do
23	76 Apl	3	Samuel Hubble	QrMaster		Egg Harbr
24	" July	29	Edward Hart	do		England
25	" Marh	18	George Greggs	do		Portugal
26	" May	13	John Barry	Serjant		Ireland
27	" "	15	Samuel Williams	Cook		England
28	" "	20	Aaron Quigley	Able		West Jersey
29	" "	20	John Davis	do		England
30	" "	22	John Stewart	do		Scotland
31	76 Octr	20	Thomas Coleston	Ordy		Ireland
32	77 Feby	26	Joseph Coleston	do		do
33			Ph McGlaughlan	do		do
34			Thomas Marlin	do		do
35	77 Feby	15	John Row	Landsmn		do
36	" "	15	Thomas Bradley	do		do
37	76 Octr	19	William Ryley	do		do
38	" May	16	Henry Beckly	Boy		Philada
39	" Sepr	16	William Keith	do		do
40	" Octr	12	Daniel Feagan	do		do
41	" "	16	George Morrison	do		Scotland
42	" "	12	Andrew Groce	do		Philada
43	" June	5	John Harvey	do		do
44	" Octr	10	David Clark	do		do
45	" "	16	Francis Coleburn	do		do
46	77 Feby	24	Jacob Crawford	do		do
47	" "	21	Nicholas Caldwell	Wardroom Std		Ireland
48	" Apl	15	Frederick Louis	Cabin do		Germany
49	" "	8	James Dane	Able		Dunkerque
50	" "	16	John Bart	Landsman		France
51	" "	28	Alexander Russell	Able		do
52	" "	5	Luke Madeler	Ordy		do
53	" May	11	John Rouso	do		do
54	" "	12	Augustin Guichard	QrMaster		do
55	" "	15	Mathew Raison	Able		do
56	" "	7	Peter Merle	Landsman		do
57	77 May	11	John Voisusan	Landsman		France
58	" "	6	Francis Bruneau	Able		do
59	" "	6	John Froy	do		do
60	" "	8	Peter Castel	do		do
61	" "	8	Peter Diome	do		do
62	" "	7	John Dusave	do		do
63	" "	3	Jacque Dime	do	DD 28 May	do
64	" "	6	John Paris	do		do
65	" "	6	Peter Pelleren	Landsman		do
66	" "	8	Guillaume Lagehrie	Able		do
67	" "	7	Charles Bovear	Boy		do
68	" "	12	John Sancier	Landsman		do
69	" "	6	Anthony Raye	do		do
70	" "	7	Elie La Grange	do		do
71	" "	5	Charles Legue	Ordy		do
72	" "	8	Bernard Fumade	Able		do
73	" "	15	John Roy	do		do
74	" "	3	Anthony Vassel	Landsmn		do
75	" "	8	Joseph Bona	do		do
76	" "	6	Visant Sabaden	do		do
77	" "	8	John Rostant	do		do
78	" "	12	John Porquier	do		do
79	" "	7	John Lareval	do	DD 28 May	do
80	" "	10	Anthony Ferrara			do
81	" "	2	John Bobbis	Landsmn		do

82	77 May	2	Jacque le Bayonne	do	R	7 May	do
83	" Apl	27	Francis Daman	do	D	2 do	do
84	" May	8	John Carr	Lieut Mars	DD	2 do	do
85	" "	8	George Thayer	Mate			do of the <i>Cabot</i>

Actually on board the 28th of May 1777

1 Commander  
 2 Lieutenants  
 1 Master  
 2 dittos Mates  
 1 Surgeon  
 1 do Mate  
 1 Gunner  
 1 Boatswain  
 1 Boatswains Mate  
 1 Boatswains Yeoman  
 1 Acting Masters Mate  
 1 Carpenter  
 1 Carpenters Mate  
 1 Lieutenant of Marines  
 3 Midshipmen  
 1 Captains Clark  
 1 Armourer  
 1 Steward  
 1 Master at Arms  
 4 Quarter Masters  
 1 Cook  
 1 Cabin Steward  
 1 Wardroom do  
 15 Able Sea Men  
 7 Ordinary do  
 17 Landsmen  
 1 Mate Belonging to the *Cabot*  
 10 Boys  


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 80 Total on Board

1. Franklin Papers, vol. 2, 11, HSP.

29 May

CLARK & MILLIGAN TO WILLIAM KNOX <sup>1</sup>

Sir

Nicholas Lane [London] 29th May 1777

We are favoured with your Letter of the 27th Instant, and we have now to request that you will be pleased to communicate to The Right Honble Lord George Germain the sincere thanks of Ourselves & the Other Merchants concern'd in the West Florida Trade for the information which by His Lordships Order you have given us of Admiral Gayton having appointed a Convoy for Our homeward bound Ships from Pensacola, but as there was not any Man of War or Armed Vessell arrived at Pensacola for that purpose on the 10th March, and as Our two Ships, the *St Andrew* & *Marian*, were then nearly loaded with Cargoes of Deerskins chiefly, to the Amount of £20,000 Sterlg by each, Our Correspondents advise us that they shall be under the necessity of dispatching these two Ships by the 20th of March at

latest in order to avoid the fatal consequences of Worm damage in their Cargoes, so that we have the greatest reason to be apprehensive that the Convoy will not only be too late for Our Vessels, but likewise for all or most of the Vessells with Deerskins & Furr from the Mississipi, for should the *Lord Amherst* Armed Ship be the Vessell appointed for that service as she was not arrived at Pensacola the 10th March, she cannot well be ready to sail for England before the 15th or 20th of April, which as we have already said will be much too near the Approach of Summer for the Deerskin Ships to waite at Pensacola, as they will hereby hazard a far greater value by damage in the Cargoes from Worms than can be saved in the premiums of Insurance from Convoy – We are [&c.]

Clark & Milligan

1. PRO, Colonial Office, 5/155, 63.

30 May

*The General Advertiser. Liverpool.* FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1777

Liverpool, May 30.

The following is a particular account of the capture of an American vessel, brought into Whitehaven on Wednesday the twenty-first instant.

The *Mercer*, at that time commanded by Nathaniel Dowse, left Cape Henry the 14th of April last, having on board 490 hogsheads of Tobacco, the property of the Continental Congress, 16 hogsheads belonging to the Owners, a quantity of fustick, flour, and some other articles, with which Capt. Dowse was ordered to proceed on his Voyage to Bourdeaux in France – They were in all eighteen persons on board, sixteen of which were English, Scotch or Irish (four of them belonged to Whitehaven, two to Workington, and one to Harrington) who had been prisoners in America.

Such a Superiority in Number soon suggested the Thought of taking the Charge of the Vessel from Capt. Dowse; the Scheme was readily concerted, and on the 5th of May, inst. at 10 P.M. being then in Lat. 46 10 Long. 15 53. while the Capt. was in Bed, they seized his Papers, altered their Course from E. by S. to NE by N and declared Whitehaven the Port of their Destination, where they arrived (as before mentioned) amidst the joyful Acclamations of numbers.

An Express was immediately sent off to London, the Officers of the Customs took the vessel into their possession, and next morning the English Flag was hoisted above the Thirteen Stripes of the Colonies.

Capt. Nicholas de Moulpied of the *Betty* of Guernsey is come passenger in the above Vessel; his ship was taken by the Americans the 12th of August, 1776 and carried into Dartmouth.

Capt. Dowse is 63 years of Age, had four fine Houses destroyed at Charlestown, near Boston, and the Remainder of his Property (except Bunker's Hill, which belonged to him) was in this Ship.



31 May

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM, PLYMOUTH <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

My Lord./

[Admiralty Office] 31st May 1777.

I have communicated to my Lords Commissrs of the Admty your Letter of the 27th Instant . . . transmitting a List of seven Rebel Prisoners who are on board the *Blenheim*, and who desire to be permitted to enter to serve on board that Ship; And in return I am commanded to acquaint your Lordship that those who were taken in the *Charming Sally*, if she was only a trading Vessel, <sup>2</sup> may be entered as part of the Complement of such of His Majesty's Ships as you shall appoint, but the others being taken in Privateers, or armed Vessels, must be sent to Mill Prison.

P.S:

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/555, 37-38.

2. *Charming Sally* was a privateer, not a "trading Vessel."PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM <sup>1</sup>

My Lord./

[Admiralty Office] 31st May 1777.

Having communicated to my Lords Commissrs of the Admty, your Letter of the 27th Instant, enclosing one which you received from Capt: Jervis of the *Foudroyant*, accompanied by a List of American Prisoners who are on board that Ship; I am commanded to acquaint your Lordship that the Prisoners who belonged to the Rebel Privateer *Freedom* are to be sent to Mill Prison, & that such of the others as are fit for the Kings Service, are to be entered on board such Ship as you shall judge proper, & the remainder to be set at Liberty, I am &ca

P.S:

1. PRO, Admiralty 2/555, 38-39.

*Public Advertiser*, SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1777

London.

A Letter from Milford, dated May 23, says, "This Evening a Snow Privateer of twelve Guns and full of Men, came in here, and let go her Annchor in Dale Road. The King's Boat, and several others went off to her, but they would not suffer them to come on board her, and next Morning she sailed again. She was quite clean, painted black, and white Bottom, and is supposed to be the same seen off Lundy last Week."

JOURNAL OF CHARLES HERBERT <sup>1</sup>

[Royal Hospital, Plymouth]

[1777. May] 25. To-day I was upon full allowance, and drew a pound of beef, a pound of bread, a pound of potatoes, and three pints of beer.

26. This morning about seven o'clock, died James Jutson, an old man, prisoner from the *Queen*,<sup>2</sup> taken with Captain [Francis] Brown in the privateer sloop *Charming Sally*.

27. To-day we were forebidden the liberty of going up stairs to speak to our sick shipmates.

28. Yesterday, seven of Captain Brown's crew were sent to prison, from the ship, and Captain Brown made his escape from the "Fountain Tavern," in Plymouth Dock, where they were sent to be tried. Also, to-day took my tenth portion of physic.

29. To-day twelve of us were discharged from the hospital, but the boat did not come for us. We hear that the *Bellisle* has arrived in the Sound, has the yellow fever on board, and has been laid under quarantine, in the Sound, some time.

30. As we were discharged yesterday, and the boat did not come for us, to-day we were put upon what they call cazzelteer, and only draw half a pound of bread and a quart of milk. A prisoner in the middle story, last night, being very sick with the small-pox, got out of his bed, threw up the window and jumped out. He fell head first, about twenty feet, upon the hard ground, bruising himself sadly.

31. It is now seven weeks since I came on shore, and six weeks to-day since I was brought here with small-pox.

1. Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, 41-42.

2. H.M.S. *Queen*.

#### VERGENNES TO THE MARQUIS DE NOAILLES<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

No 31.

at Versailles 31st May 1777.

I have received, Sir, dispatch No 42, which you did me the honour of writing the 23rd of this month.

We are not astonished, Sir, at the diversity of opinions respecting our conduct with regard to Mr Cunningham; each one judges it according to his personal feelings, or according to how the facts are reported, and I see that they are reported very inexactly: I am going to transmit them to you as they are stated in the official reports on which His Majesty has given his decision.

An English cutter came into the port of Dunkirk; it cleared there with goods for Nord Faro. A man named Beach was its captain, and it was in his name that the Admiralty permit was granted. Having reached the roadstead, a man named Cunningham, who had secretly collected some sailors, and who it is said, was furnished with a Commission by Congress, got on board this vessel, must have taken Command of it, and, under cover of the American flag which he substituted for the English one, ventured to make the captures which he was stupid enough to bring into Dunkirk. Nothing, assuredly, Sir, is more contrary to the rules of the sea, and to the accepted usage amongst all Nations, and even if the case had not been provided for in the Treaty of Utrecht, the King's justice would nonetheless

have urged His Majesty to give entire Satisfaction in this matter to the Court of London: indeed, a neutral nation cannot and ought not to allow armaments in her country, much less those which have such a special Stamp of irregularity. There is a great distinction to be drawn between Simply admitting, in case of need and for the moment, a Privateer with her prize, and permitting that same Privateer to lie, so to speak, in ambush in a neutral port: The latter case is precisely that of Mr Cunningham; it is, therefore, manifest that he could not be regarded as a Mere Commander of the Privateer, that he has infringed the laws of the sea, and that he has consequently deserved the treatment which he has experienced, whatever may have been the commission with which he was furnished by Congress.

The King owed it to himself to act with severity on this occasion, and it matters little to His Majesty whether His determination has or has not excited the gratitude of the English. His Majesty, in acting as he has done, had no other aim than that of giving to the Court of London a public proof of His justice, of His fidelity in observing treaties, and a striking example of the consideration which nations mutually owe one another. This, Sir, is what we have to answer to the English observers who criticize our conduct.

I must observe, Sir, that although England did not adopt the Articles of the Treaty of Navigation and Commerce made at Utrecht, which were favorable to us, Louis XIV and the late King nonetheless recognized the Validity of the Treaty, which they themselves Undertook to Carry out in all other respects. I think you must make this remark to support you Against the false arguments which are used in England.

It is certain, Sir, that it is a novelty to see French vessels laden with English goods in the Thames; this sort of revolution proves as you say, on the one hand, the scarcity of sailors in England, and on the other, the apprehensions of English merchants: it is to be hoped that our sailors will have the good sense to profit by the circumstance.

I consider very exaggerated, Sir, the list of the English troops in America which has been communicated to you. According to all the news received, General Howe has experienced during last year and this winter, losses which the fresh drafts have not been able to replace. For the rest, Sir, whatever may be the strength of the English army, it appears that the Americans are in a position to face them, since they have not yet been able, in spite of their efforts, to spread out beyond New York. Moreover, Sir, I think it will not be long before we receive news of the opening of the campaign, and of the attempts of the royalists to re-enter the Jerseys.

The King has approved, Sir, the Note which you sent to Lord Weymouth on the subject of Captain Le Brun,<sup>2</sup> and His Majesty hopes that this step will produce the effect which he has the right to expect from it.

1. AMAE, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol. 523, 185-86, LC Photocopy.

2. Protesting seizure and search of French brigantine *l'Aimable Dorothee*, Captain Jean Baptiste Le Brun, by H.M.S. *Monarch*.