

Naval Documents of The American Revolution

Volume 10

**AMERICAN THEATRE: Oct. 1, 1777–Dec. 31, 1777
EUROPEAN THEATRE: Oct. 1, 1777–Dec. 31, 1777**

Part 4 of 5

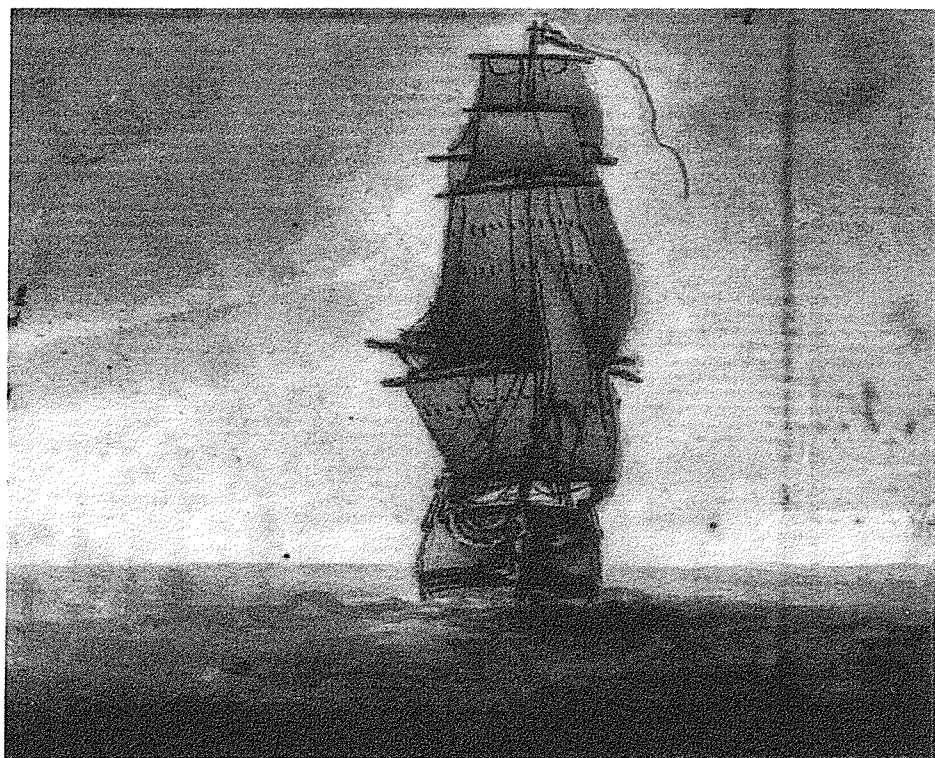
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EUROPEAN THEATER

From October 1, 1777, to December 31, 1777



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SUMMARY

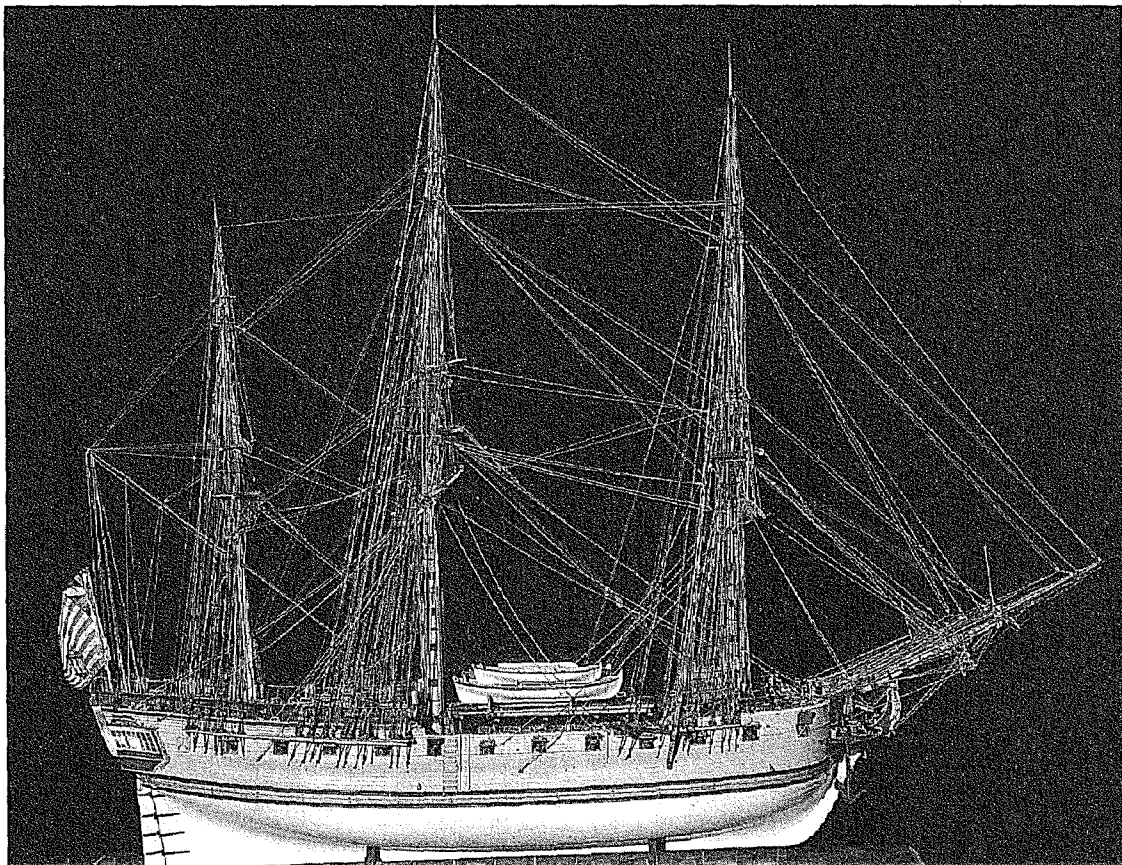
"It is not to be doubted My Lord, that the French will continue to send them every possible clandestine succour, no Remonstrance that can be made will prevent or check to any Degree this fraudulent Practice." Thus, on 17 December, wrote the British ambassador to France of the secret aid being sent from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

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

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

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

American captures of French and Spanish vessels laden with British goods led to a diplomatic crisis in which the Spanish temporarily suspended their clandestine aid to the United States. The American Commissioners defused the crisis by apologizing to the two courts and issuing a circular to commanders of American armed vessels adjuring them to respect neutral shipping.



Continental Navy frigate Raleigh

American revolutionary activity reached as far as the ports of Sweden, where Americans connived at smuggling out gunpowder.

28 September (Sunday)

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE

On B^d the *Raleigh* at Sea Sept^r. 28th.

Latt^d. 49° 35' N° Long^d. 13° 13' W.

Gentⁿ.

I have the Honour to Acquaint you that we had a fine passage off the Coast of America—the third Day after Sailing I fell in with and took a small Schooner from New York bound to Hallifax in Ballast except 20 Barrels flour, 275 Spanish mill'd Dollars, 137 Counterf^t. 30 Dollar Bills in imitation of the Bills emitted by Congress May 10th. 1775, and 40–7 Dollar Bills—Masach^s. Sword in hand money making in all 4390 Dollars which I shall commit to the Flames saving a Sample—the Schooner being of Little value we burnt her—Next Day we fell in with a Bermudas Vessel from Hallifax, him I releas'd, after supplying him with provisions which they refus'd to sell him or permit him to carry out of Nova Scotia—Intelligence obtain'd from him determin'd me to proceed to Bermudas to attack a Sloop of War or two that Infested that Island and greatly annoy'd the American Trade to the West Indies—I had a favourable Wind until we got in Latt^d. 36° N° when we met with a violent Gale of Wind at South which oblig'd us to run under our Foresail N.E. for two Days, this Course carried us far back to the northw^d. and Eastw^d.—Finding ourselves thus situated Cap^t Hinman and I agreed to stand to the Eastward in hopes of falling in with the Jamaica Fleet or Stragling West India Ship—next morning at Daylight Sept^r. 2nd. we took a Snow call'd the *Nanny* Cap^t Hooper from St Vincents, part of the Windward Island fleet which had out saild them the Day before; the Cap^tⁿ. & Two Gentlemⁿ. passengers being Old Acquaintance of mine, communicated freely every particular they knew respecting the fleet; we found they were convoy'd by three Sloops of War & a Ship with 22 twelve pounders a very large lofty Ship in form of an Indiaman, the *Camel*, *Druid*, *Weazel* and *Grasshopper* are the names of the Convoy, the last three had 16 Guns each, one of the Sloops they said was to leave them in Latt^d. 39. and return back, which I concluded was gone—After dispatching the Snow for the first safe Port in the United States we made sail in quest of the Fleet and next morning discovered them from the Mast Head—at Sun Set we were near enough to distinguish the Leading Ship, also the number which was 60 Sail, bearing E by N. the Wind being then West, I made a Signal as being one of the Fleet left a stern in the Gale, (for I had possess'd myself of the Signal from the prize)—I hail'd Cap^t Hinman and told him my Intention was to run into the fleet in the morning & attack the Convoy, which I thought we were able to Destroy. I therefore order'd him to keep close under the *Raleigh*'s Stern, until we came along side of the Commodore which Ship we would both attack—unluckily in the night, the Wind Shifted to North, the Fleet then hauld up close to the Wind, which brought us to Leeward in the morning it came on to Blow fresh; at Daylight we saw the Body of the Fleet bearing about N.E. 2 or 3 Leagues Distance, Steer^s E.NE; we made Sail, and the *Raleigh* soon fetcht up to the Fleet under double reef'd Top Sails, the *Alfred* being Tender-

sided could not carry Sail & therefore fell a great Way to Leeward and a Stern—I could not take in any Sail for fear of being Discover'd to be a Strange Ship, we therefore kept our Sails shaking in the Wind, thinking the *Alfred* might come up but to no purpose—Captain Hinman made signal, his Ship was overpres'd with Sail—Seeing no chance of his coming up & fearful of being Discover'd, determin'd me to make Sail & stand into the Fleet and take any chance alone; while we had been laying too most of the Merch^t Ships, had got a head into the Fleet, however I hauld in & pass'd a few of them, hailed them & desired them to go under the Commodore's Stern; by this they took us to be some British Frigate which had join'd the Fleet—I stood on close to the Wind, making for one of the Ship's of War which was to Windward of all the fleet, repeating the Commodore's Signals; Our ports were down and Guns hous'd—we shot up alongside unsuspected within pistol Shott—we up Sails and out Guns, hoisted the Continental Colours & told them to strike to the Thirteen United States or I would sink them, the sudden Surprise threw them into Confusion, and their Sails flew all aback, we instantly complimented them with a Gun for each State (a whole Broadside) plump into their Hull, there was a very great swell which made our Shots uncertain, however they told pretty well, they return'd the Fire, and the Action commenc'd, we kept up a very brisk Fire our Second Broadside was Aim'd at his Rigging, w^{ch} had its desired Effect, our Shot cut away his Top sail Sheets, Top Sail Yards, part of the main Yard Braces Bowlines &c. &c. & at once disabled him, which render'd them incapable of steering the Ship or making Sail toward the Commodore who lay to Leeward; in about a quarter of an hour all hands quitted their Quarters on board the British man of War; we cleared the Decks instantly, not a man was seen nor a Gun fired for Twenty minutes before we left her—She lay like a Log alongside of us entirely at the mercy of our Shot which flew very thick, we fired 12 Broadside, also a constant Fire from the Musquetry—we were alongside 45 Minutes; when we left her, she seem'd to be water Logg'd and in a most shatter'd condition (as you may well conceive)—during this little Skirmage the Officers and men behaved with the greatest Fortitude and Resolution, particularly the green hands—I was very glad of this little Opportunity to try the Men and Guns, both of which exceeded my expectations—

We received but little Damage, one Shot went thro' one side and several stuck in the side, they fired high and shot away some of our Running Rigging their Grape and Musquetry made several holes thro' our Sails—If it could be suppos'd they had any fix'd intention after such a surprize, they try'd to disable us, that the other Ship might come up to their Assistance—I intended to sink the Ship if I could not bring her off & should effectually sunk her in a few minutes more, could we have staid, but to return to the fleet—At the commencement of The firing it threw them all into confusion—a squall between us and the Fleet, prevented them from seeing us at first, when it cleared up one was running one way and one another, some upon a Wind, some before the Wind &c. &c. the Commodore and the other Ships of force tack'd and stood right for us & had not the Wind favour'd him and our drifting to Leeward; he could not have fetch'd us, and I should have certainly sunk the Ship, however I staid by her until he came pretty near, & was in danger of being surrounded, we then made sail and run down to the *Alfred* who was laying about 4 miles to Leeward; when Captⁿ Hinman see me Engag'd, he hauld up his Courses & hoisted Continental Colours; when we got pretty near the *Alfred*, I took in the Top Gall^s Sails and shortened sail to wait for the Commodore, but he soon tack'd and stood into the Fleet

again, it was then about Sun set; we have challeng'd him three Days running since, to come out of his Fleet and Engage us, but he declines accepting the Challenge, they keep close together, himself and the other Arm'd Ships a little a Stern of the Fleet, fine weather favours them, we await a Storm to Seperate the Fleet & then if any Advantage Offers, we Intend to make the best of it, but it will not do to venture amongst the fleet as they are now prepar'd; neither can we trust to the *Alfred's* sailing—had she got into the Fleet that Day, she is so tender-sided she could not have fit her Guns, she is in my Opinion a very unfit Ship for a Ship of War; had she been a stiff Ship and saild equal to the *Raleigh*, we should in all probability have destroy'd the Convoy and dispers'd the whole Fleet, badly mann'd as we are, which you must remember is the Case, we have 180 Men chiefly green Hands I cannot trust to working the Ship, were I now to go into the Fleet, if any Ship will Attack, where we have room, we are able to defend or destroy, but noth^e further, I should have cut off several of the merchant Men, but must have by that means been discover'd & thereby lost our Chance at the Kings Ships & I am determind never to war against the Merch^{ts} where I have an Opportunity of warring against the King—I should have preferred sinking that Ship to the Richest Capture in the Fleet—my Officers are invariably of the same sentiments which adds much to my happiness—

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

Coppy

Tho^s. Thompson

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

1. Lt. Peter Shores.

October

STATEMENT BY CHARLES PEREZ REGARDING *JASON*

[Portsmouth, England] 8^{bre} 1777

Exposé des faits qui prouvent l'illegitimité de la prise faite par les Anglois du Navire le *Jason* expédiés par les S^{rs}. Clozel freres negocians à la Mar-

tinique par S^t Pierre Miquelon sous le Commandement du S^r Jⁿ. Baptiste Cabarrus et sous la gestion du S^t Perez jeune ainsi que les mauvais traitemens exercés Sur tout l'Equipage.

Ce Navire le *Jason* partit de la Martinique le 6. Janv^{er} de la presente année chargé de sel, Rum, toileries &c^a. Sans munitions et d'autres armes que 4. petits Canons pour l'usage des signaux dont on a besoin ordinairement. Il éprouva les tems les plus orageux et les plus contraires qui l'éloigna de sa route. on S'aperçut ensuite d'une voye d'eau considerable qui exigea le travail a la Pompe de tout l'equipage sans distinction. L'eau fraiche même vint à manquer par un accident qui fit couler les 6. pieces qui restoient. L'equipage prêt à Succomber conjura le capitaine de courir Sur la 1^{ere}. Terre quelconque. Il en fut dressé procès verbale duement signé et on Cingla vers la Virginie Comme la terre la plus prochaine pret d'y arriver le Navire fut rencontré et arrêté par la fregate angloise La *Brune* de 36. Canons¹ Capitaine fergassone qui le conduisit à Newyorck. ou étant les officiers du Navire presenterent un Memoire à l'amiral Howe pour le prier de leur permettre de Se radoubier et de faire de nouvelles provisions pour Se rendre à leur destination. Cet amiral S'y refusa en Alleguant les ordres du Roy Son Maitre d'arrêter tous les Navires qui Se trouveroient Sur les Cotes du Continent de l'amerique, quelque motif qui pût les y conduire. Il ajouta que cependant les officiers du d. Navire pouvoient faire valoir leurs droits pardevant l'amirauté qui seroit bientôt établie à Newyorck Laquelle Seule pouvoit decider de leur affaire, Ils offrirent de lui faire abandon du d. Navire, Sauf à le reclamer à Londres. L'amiral Howe S'y refusa encore. En attendant l'établissement de cette Amirauté il luer fit fournir l'argent necessaire pour leur subsistance et celle de 19 matelots que composoient l'equipage. Il fit mettre des gardiens à bord pour empêcher qu'il n'en fut rien distruit. Deux mois S'ecoulerent dans cette attente après lesquels Sur une plainte particuliere d'un des gardiens contre le Cap^{ne}. et les Matelots, on vint prendre ces derniers et on les mit à bord d'un Navire Servant de prison de guerre.² Les officiers du *Jason* ayant voulu reclamer contre cette violence furent eux mêmes arrêtés et conduits à la même prison, ne laissant dans le Navire que le 2^e. Capitaine. C'est là que confondus dans le fond de Cale avec 400. prisonniers Americains on leur fit Souffrir toutes Sortes de mauvais traitemens, fixés a 8. onces de biscuits plein de vers et a 3. onces de viande salée ou de lard cru. Ils ont vu un grand nombre d'hommes perir de faim, d'autres accablés de maladies Sans aucune espece de Secours dans la plus rigoureuse saison.

Après 3. mois passés dans une Situation aussi affreuse on ordonna aux S^{rs}. Cabarrus, Perés et Bluchon S'embarquer Sur un Vaisseau faisant voile pour Londres où il y avoit d'autres françois qui étoient depuis long tems dans les prisons de New Yorck.

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

Le S^r Cabarrus après un mois et demi de prison a obtenu Sa liberté par la protection du Monseigneur le Comte de Vergennes, et dans le nombre de 14 françois tant officiers que marchands qui Sont detenus dans le Vaisseau de guerre a Portsmouth

est le S^r Charle Perez gereur de la cargaison du d. navire Le *Jason*. Il Supplie très humblement Monseigneur de vouloir bien autoriser M. Le Marquis de Noailles À faire les démarches à la Cour de Londres pour en obtenir Sa liberté Comme S. Ex^{ce}. a eu le bonté de le faire pour le S^r Cabarrus qui etoit embarqué dans le même Navire.

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

[Translation]

[Portsmouth, England] October 1777

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

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

After 3 months spent in so frightful a situation, Cabarrus, Perez, and Bluchon were ordered to go on board a vessel, sailing for London, on which there were other Frenchmen who had spent a long time in New York prisons.

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

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

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

D, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fols. 261–62. Marginal annotation: "Ce Bâtiment est à la Nouvelle York, ainsi que le S^r Jⁿ Baptiste Cabarrus—le S^r Perez est revenu en france—"; "1777—8^{bre}." "This ship is at New York, along with Sieur Jean Baptiste Cabarrus; Sieur Perez has returned to France."

1. 3 Feb. 1777. NDAR 8:1054.

2. *Prince of Wales* prison ship. NDAR 9: 302.

October 1

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

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

Lloyd's Evening Post, and British Chronicle (London), 13–15 Oct. 1777.

LIEUTENANT-GÉNÉRAL COMTE DUCHAFFAULT TO CAPITAINE DE VAISSEAU
LA MOTTE-PICQUET

[Extract]

[Brest, 1 Oct. 1777]

instruction particuliere donnée a monsieur de la motte piquet Commandant la division en Croisiere

Sa majesté Recommande a m^e de la motte piquet de Continuer a avoir les mesmes égards vis avis les petits Batiments de guerre quil pourroit Remontrer Sous pavillon anglois, mais de les observer d'asses prés pour que n'ayant aucune esperanse de faire des prises a nos Costes, ils les abandonnent.

En Consequence—Si m^e de la motte piquet Rencontre un petit Batiment de guerre d'anglois á la Coste de france, il luy Signifiera de Se éloigner et il detachera un vaisseau ou une fregate pour le Suivre de très prés jusqu'a lequil ne Soit a vingt lieües de la Coste de france. . . .

Signé duchaffault.

Cette instruction est un extrait des lettres de monsieur de Sartines du 30 7^{bre}. et du 1^{er}. 8^{bre}. 1777

[Translation]

[Brest, 1 Oct. 1777]

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

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

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

Signed Duchaffault

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

Copy, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 129, fol. 88. The portion not printed here gives instructions on fleet exercises, on remaining at sea, and on required reports.

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

[Gironde] du mercredi 1^{er} octobre

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

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Tuesday, 1 October

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

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 285.

October 2

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

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

London Chronicle, 2-4 Oct. 1777.

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

[1777 October] 2 Thursday. AM Cloudy & Rain PM Fair Saw a Sail & Stood for her.—At ½ past 11 gave 3 Bow-Chaces upon which She brought too & we took her. She was a Snow from Newfoundland with near 3000 Quintals of Fish called *Eastly* Capt^t.¹

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

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

October 3

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

Circular.

Whitehall 3^d. October 1777.

To all the Governors of the West India Islands.

Secret and Confidential

I think it proper to acquaint you that the Court of France intend to augment their Military Force in the West India Islands by the Addition of the Second Battalions of those Regiments, the first of which are already there; The strongest Assur-

ances have been given that this Measure is purely defensive, and is taken with no other view than the Security of their own Possessions; and, to evince their Sincerity, they have appointed only Frigates to convoy the Embarkation.

The arrival therefore of these Troops, under such Circumstances, ought not to alarm the Islands under your Government, or to give Occasion for any extraordinary preparation for their¹ defence; but at the same time it is not fit we should rely so entirely upon the professions that have been made, as not to be upon our guard, and to take every necessary precaution against a surprize. you will therefore keep a watchful Eye upon what passes in both the French and Spanish Islands in your Neighbourhood, and if you perceive any Movement which carries a hostile appearance, you will give the earliest Notice of it to the Governors of His Majesty's other Islands, and the Commander of His Majesty's Ships upon your Station, whose Squadron will be immediately reinforced by the addition of several Ships of the Line should any Ships above the Rate of Frigates accompany or follow the French Forces into those Seas. I am &c^a.

Geo: Germain

LB, UKLPR, C.O. 5/78, 173. Addressed in the margin: "Lord Macartney/Gov^r Dalling/[Gov^r Burt./[Gov^r] Morris/[Gov^r] Shirley./Hon^{ble}: Gov^r Hay."

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

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

London.

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

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

"Most of our running rigging being cut by her shot, we could not make sail after her, for some time. But as soon as we had got to rights, we again gave chase, on which the enemy got out all his oars, as there was but little wind. About half past meridian, being again within gun-shot, we renewed our attack, on which they shortened sail, and began to engage us a-fresh—which continued with very hot firing on both sides till half past three—when they again made all the sail they could; but there being a fresh breeze we kept along side, both continuing a smart fire. At half past five the



Captain John Bazely, R.N.

Captain of the privateer hailed us, and desired us not to fire any more, as he would surrender; but his people were afraid to go aloft to strike the colours. Lieut. Bazely ordered him to bring to, hoist out his boat, and come on board, which he did, and delivered up his sword and congress commission.—We then got all the prisoners out of her, except eight, five of whom were dangerously wounded.

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

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

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

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

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

“The *Alert* had only 10 four pounders and 8 swivels.

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

Geo. Friend.”

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

Druid at Spithead, October 3rd 1777.

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

Your Lordship may perhaps wish to be more fully informed of the rebel force and of circumstances relative to the action than comes within the compass of a public letter: this, my Lord, is my motive for addressing your Lordship in a private letter. On Thursday in the afternoon, about half after four, a ship in a very heavy squall

of wind and rain carrying a crowd of sail steering directly for us appeared to me (it being my watch upon deck) of force,¹ which I acquainted Captain Carteret, who ordered me to see the ship clear for action and hoist the private signal to the *Camel* for a strange sail's being in sight. The irregularity and inattention of the merchant vessels occasioned the men of war to be at so great a distance from each other as they were: the *Camel*, commanded by the Honble Captain Finch, leading the fleet about five miles from us, had made the signal for the fleet to go under his stern, which we repeated, and kept to windward obliging that part of the convoy to obey the signal, and the *Weasel*, Captain Hope, on the same service ahead and to leeward out of our sight; we having but little sail out, the rebel privateer was up with us by five o'clock, hoisted his colours, hailed us, and desired we would strike to the honour of the Congress colours, at the same time gave us a broadside, most of which was fired upon our quarter and between wind and water. I could plainly perceive her force to be 30 guns on her main deck, 6 on her quarterdeck, and 4 on her forecastle. Her marines seem to be a great number and very regularly drawn up on the quarterdeck; but after discharging their pieces, I observed they retired to a round-house abaft to load. The decks and tops appeared very full of men, and for the first two or three broadsides they were very brisk and regular, but found them slack in the middle part and latter much more so; their cohorns from their tops did much damage to our rigging. I take her to be a new ship and had a very warlike appearance. The bars of iron and langridge shot they fired shattered our rigging in such a manner that rendered most of the sails useless, so that they had every advantage over us they could wish; but as their spleen was mostly aimed at the quarterdeck, it gave me an opportunity of managing the ship with the headsails and frustrate their design (as I suppose) of raking us—she at that time got the wind abaft, ceased firing, sheered off, hauled down her colours, and made sail, at which time I saw the *Camel* about 2 or 3 miles [off] giving chase; and about half-past seven the *Weasel*, Captain Hope, hailed us and gave chase also. After the action was over I saw another rebel privateer² laying to with her colours hoisted bearing S.S.W. 6 or 7 miles. Have since been informed she mounted about 20 guns and was in that situation the whole time we engaged, but immediately the ship we engaged sheered off she made sail and joined her.

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

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

I think I have given your Lordship as full an account as I am capable of recollecting; and if your Lordship should think through the course of this service I shall

appear to merit any claim for preferment, I rest upon that known candour your Lordship has ever shown since your presiding at the head of the first maritime power in the world. I have the honour to be [&c.]³

Jn^o. Bouchier

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38), 1: 251–53.

1. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Captain Thomas Thompson. See NDAR 9: 877–78 for *Druid*'s journal accounts of the engagement.

2. Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Captain Elisha Hinman.

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

"DEFECTS OF HIS MAJESTY'S SLOOP *DRUID*. JOHN BOURCHIER ESQ^r. COMMANDER"

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

The Main Mast wounded in three places.

Foremast wounded.

Main Yard	}	Shot through.
Jibb Boom		

Bowspreet—	}	Wounded
Mizzen Masthead		

Driver Boom.	}	Shot to pieces.
Spritsail Yard		
Miz ⁿ : Top G ^d Yard		
Arm Chests &c ^a :		

Standing Rigg ^g : except	}	Entirely Shot through.
2 of the Miz ⁿ : Shrouds		
Backstay's.		
Fore & Main Jeers		
Trusses		
Brace Pendants		
Runn ^g : Rigging		

Shot between Wind & Water	Eight N ^o :
Through the Side—	Three
Trough the Quarter—	Five
Double-head in the Cabbin.	One

John Bouchier

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

[*Druid* at Spithead, 3 Oct. 1777]

(Viz^t)

M ^r John Willson	Master
John Cambran	Seaman
George Baker	} Marines
Simon Salisbury	
Law ^{ce} : Macely	
Henry Hulliott.	Boy

Died of their Wounds. since Action.

Peter Carteret Esq ^r	Commander	
George Smith.	Invalid	} 5 Sept ^r 77.
George White.	Marine	
Pat ^k : Lawry.	Seaman—	19 Sept ^r 77.
Jn ^o : Fennigan	D ^o .	21 —

Wounded—

M ^r John Wiggan	Mas ^{rs} . M ^{te} :
M ^r Ja ^s . Nicholson.	Lieu ^t : Marines
Jn ^o : Plumbley	} Seamen
James Connel	
James Stanton	} Seamen
Dan ^l : Butler	
Pet ^r : Chapman	
John Scully	
Rich ^d : Austin	
Will ^m : Wallbrook	
Cha ^s : Robertson	
James Thomas	
Tho ^s : Connolly	} Seamen
Tho ^s : Hood	
M ^r : Nicholas Poulson	Surg ^{ns} . Mate
Tho ^s : Dunn	} Marines
James Miller.	
Tho ^s : Allbutt	
James Murray	
Ro ^t : Osborn	} Boy
Sam ^l : Ketson—	

John Bouchier

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU CHEVALIER BERNARD DE MARIGNY
TO LIEUTENANT-GÉNÉRAL COMTE DUCHAFFAULT

Mon general

j'ai parrcourũ dans la Sortie que je viens de faire les parages du So. au No. d'ouessant á la distance de 18 á 20 lieũes ainsi que vous me l'avais ordonné; je n'ai vũ dans cette croisiere que deux batiments que m'ayant parũ etre de guerre et en croisiere: dimanche 28. á 4 heures du soir j'étais á 15. lieũes dans l'ouest d'ouessant lorsque je rencontraí le premier; je le rangeri d'assés prés pour lire son nom qui est le *hawke* corvete de 12 canons,¹ lorsqu'il s'était apperçũ que j'avais changé de route pour le reconnoitre il avait mis en panne et arbori son pavillon et sa flamme, j'arborai les miens et après l'avoir depassi je repris ma route, il changea ses amures pret la bordée du ouest, les vents etaient au Sud.

meredy 2^e. de ce mois á deux heures du matin etant environ á 18 lieũes dans le No 14 O d'ouessant je vis le Second qui courait le bord opposi á celui que je tenais; après l'avoir depassi je virai de bord et il en fit probablement de même dans l'intention réciproque de nous reconnoitre, l'instant d'après nous nous retrouvames encore á bord contraire, je me decidai alors á continuer le mien pendant quelque tems pour voir sa manoeuvre; la premiere d'avoir viri sur moi, me faisait assés connaitre qu'il etait croiseur et je m'attendais á la lui voir repeter ce qu'il ne tarda pas á executer:

ayant fait mettre chacun á son poste, je diminũai de voile et nous nous trouvasms á portée de la voix, il me parla anglais et je lui repondis en français ce qui ne nous permettait pas de nous entendre, la mer etait grosse et le vent assés frais, il me parut se decider á me conserver jusqu'un jour, et de mon côté je me tins á la même voilure; lorsque le jour se fit je mis pavillon et flamme française il arbora pavillon hollandais, nous etions á portée de fusil par le travers l'un de l'autre, et cette proximite ne me permettait pas de croire que ce fut réellement un v^{au}. hollandais, malgré cela je manoeuvrai pour aller lui passer á poupe dans l'intention de lui dire que puisqu'il etait hollandais j'insistais qu'il rendit au pavillon du roi de France mon maitre le Salut qu'il lui devait: il amena le 1^r pavillon et arbora celui anglais et la flamme alors je revins au vent et nous nous trouvasms encore par le travers l'un de l'autre fort prés, il tira un coup de canon á boulet qui passa en avant de moi, je lui en fis tirer un qui lui passa au moins aussi prés; Sur le champ il mit en panne et son canot á mer, je mis en panne de mon côté:

L'officier qui me vint á bord me dit qu'il venait me complimenter de la part de son capitaine et me demander le nom du batiment que je commandais; je le reçus assés mal et lui dis que je le priais de dire á son capitaine que le pavillon et la flamme que je portais avaient assés dũ lui faire connaitre que j'étais une fregate du roi de France, que j'étais fort etonni et Scandalisi qu'il eut osi faire tirer sur moi un coup de canon á boulet, que peu s'en sin etait fallũ que je Luis eus repondũ par toute ma volée, et que la reflection seule que la Sotise d'un particulier ne devait pas etre cause peut etre du trouble et de la mesintelligence q'un evenement pareil pourrait occasionner entre deux nations que etaient en pais m'avait arreté: il me dit que c'était Leur usage á quoi j' lui repondas qu'il etait mauvais, que je rendrais certainement compte á la cour de France et que je n'imaginai pas qu'il fut approuvi de la sienne; m'ayant repeté que c'était la maniere d'assurer son pavillon je lui dis quois l'assurait en faisant tirer du coté opposi á celui ou etait le batiment quand il n'était pas d'une nation avec laquelle

on etait à guerre, il voulut encore excuser son capitaine en me disant que les insurgents se masquent tous les jours sous la couleur etraneaste et qu'ils en avaient pris un, il n'y avait pas long tems, qui avait mis pavillon et flamme blanche; cette conversation un peu longue et chauffée lui avait fait avoir recours pour interprete à un homme de son canot qui parlait et entendait fort bien la français, je repetai à ce même homme tout ce qui j'avais dit à son officier et le chargeai particulierement de le rendre à son capitaine, cet homme me demanda le nom de la fregate, je me fis donner dabord le nom de son vaisseau par ecrit qui est l'*egmond* commandé par capitaine elphinston, le même qui à commandé une division chés les russes dans leur guerre avec les turcs;² alors je lui dis que la fregate se nommait la *Sensible* commandée par le ch^r de marigny qui (Si jamais la guerre se renouvelait entre la France et l'angleterre) serait enchanté de rencontrer le capitaine elphinston.

cet homme interprete ou soi disant me dit qu'ils etaient quarante batiments de guerre tant grands que petits en croisiere depuis le cap clare jusqu'a ouessant, et me demanda Si nous avions beaucoup de batiments de guerre en croisiere dans le golphe, je lui repondis que nous pouvions en avoir 50. m'ayant alors dit que il n'y avait pas longtems q'il s'etait trouvé à toulon ou il avait vû beaucoup de batiments armés, je lui dis que je ne comptais pas les vaisseaux que nous avions dans la mediteranee car alors le nombre pourrait etre de 80. nous nous donnames ansi gasconade pour gasconade, le canot s'en retourna je fis servir et dirigeai ma route et ma voiture pour me rapprocher d'ouessant, le vaisseau anglais me suivit pendant quelque tems, et il n'y eut d'avantage de marche bien marquë si de part ni d'autre cependant s'il y eut quelque difference ce fut plutot en ma faveur, ce batement est percé 13 et 14; à peu de batterie, n'a point de canon à son dernier sabord de l'arriere à sa seconde batterie, avait six canons sur son gaillard d'arriere du coté qu'il me presentait et deux sur son gaillard d'avant:

après avoir continuë à faire route quelque tems ensemble je vis deux batiments dont je crus reconnaitre l'un pour etre la premiere corvete le *hawke* dont j'ai fait mention et que j'avais rencontré dimanche 28. 7^{bre}. alors l'*egmond* manoeuvrer pour le joindre et je les vis se parler l'un et l'autre.

je n'ai eû aucune autre connaissance de batiments de guerre dans le reste de ma croisiere, j'ai eprouvé d'assés mauvais tems et des mers très dures par lesquelles la fregate la *sensible* à infiniment fatigué par ses hauts, ses soutes de l'avant etaient remplies d'eau, beaucoup de coutums ont evaisé toutes leur etoupe particulierement celles sous les porte haubans, toutes les coutums des goutieres ont absolument besoin d'etre recouvües:

à Brest ce 3. 8^{bre}. 1777.

Le ch^r Bernard de marigny

[Translation]

My General:

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

mine, and after having passed him, I returned to my course. He changed his tack and set course for the west, the winds being from the south.

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

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

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

manded by the Chev. de Marigny who (if ever war was renewed between France and England) would be charmed to meet Captain Elphinston again.

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

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

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

Brest, this 3rd of October 1777

Chev. Bernard de Marigny

L, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 129, fol. 91–92. Enclosed in Duchaffault to Sartine, 3 Oct. 1777, below.

1. British letter of marque snow *Hawke*, Samuel Gribble.

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

LIEUTENANT-GÉNÉRAL COMTE DUCHAFFAULT TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Monseigneur

jaie lhonneur de vous rendre compte que la freguate la *sensible* comandé par mr. le chev. de marini à trouvé un vax de guaire anglois en croisiere sur ouessant qui a ausé tirer a boulet sur le pavillon du roi; il est bien humiliant pour nous davoir des va^u. en rade et dettre insulté à noltre porte et cela parceque nous somme touiour les plus faible; vous trouverais ci joint le detail que ma donné cet officier qui a mis toute la fermeté que ces petits moiens lui ont permi demployer vous en iugeraie, lexcuse est pir que loffence, pour moi le sang me boire dans les venues, ie naie par etté acoutumé a recevoir dinsulte sans en tirer vengeance, permette monseigneur que ie vous reitaire ma demande daller vaquer a mes affaire, lorque la guaire sera déclaréé faiette moi lhonneur de memployer utilement ie scauraie faire respecter le pavillon du roy, et alors ie nauraie aucune inquietude, je suis [&c.]

duchaffault

a brest ce 3 8^{bre}. 1777.

[Translation]

My Lord

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

Brest this 3 Oct. 1777

L, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 129, fol. 90. Notations: "Brest M. Duchaffault 3 8^{bre} 1777," and "R Le 24"; "Brest, Duchaffault 3 Oct. 1777," and "Replied the 24th." Enclosed de Marigny to Duchaffault, 3 Oct. 1777, above.

COMTE DE VERGENNES TO MARQUIS D'OSSUN

[Extract]

a Versailles le 3. 8^{bre}. 1777

... je debatterai comme de raison L'Etat qui est annexé a la Suite de leur memoire¹ et qui me paroît prodigieusement enflé; Lart^e des 8 vaisseaux de Ligne quils voudroient se procurér en Europe est une chimere que nous ne pouvons et ne devons pas admettre et sil y avoit possibilité a l'effectuér et que nous Eunions Les moyens d'y fournir, nous nous assurerions de Ces memes vaisseaux pour Augmenter notre marine. . . .

[Translation]

Versailles 3rd. October 1777.

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

Df, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1711. The full letter concerns reasons why France and Spain should continue aid to the Americans.

1. Enclosure to American Commissioners in France to Vergennes and Conde de Aranda, 30 Sept. 1777, in *NDAR* 9: 675-77.

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO SILAS DEANE

Sylas Deane Esq^r

Corona 3rd October 1777

Sir

I wrote you from Ferroll the 17th Ult^o. to which pray refer, I saild from thence the 20th, d^o (being orderd by the Governer so to do) & on the 25th fell in with a ship who shew'd us portugeese colours on Asking her name & that of the Captⁿ was told the S^t John Evangelist Captⁿ. Nich^s. Kelly bound from Dublin to opporto, to which last mentiond mentiond place he said the Vessell belong'd we then desird he wou'd bring his

papers on board, which he did, amongst which was none relative to her being portuguese property, than old pass granted in the year 1774 with the Name of the Vessell for which it was originally granted, eras'd out & that of the *S^t John Evangelist* put in, on asking the Captⁿ why it was thus eras'd, said he could not tell that it was sent him f^m oporto to Dublin & that his Vessell was sold the Voyage before in oporto, on being ask'd where he was born, & where his Eng: colours were, said he was Born in oporto & that his Vessell being portuguese property had no occasion for Eng: colours & that there was none on board, all which we knew to be false, Some of our people being Intimately acquainted w^h him, knew him to be born in Wexford in the Kingdom of Ireland, that his Vessell was call'd the *Brothers* & the property of Pat^k McGuire & Sons of Dublin, one of his people (a Spaniard) told us that that the Eng. Colours were hid in the Ballast & on our Searching found them there, he also told us, that when we chas'd them & Captⁿ Kelly find^g, he cou'd not get clear had Burn'd all his Eng: Papers, this Captⁿ Kelly did not deny but said they were papers of no use to him—

His light bill declares him to be a British ship & the Logg of his former Voyage is Kept under the Name of the *Brothers*, notwithstanding what Kelly had said of her being then sold in porto & her Name alterd to the *S^t Jⁿ^a Evangelist*, on asking how all this cou'd happen he said that the whole was a mistake, In short, from his Veague ans^{rs}. & many other Circumstances it appeard to me that his Colours & passport were meerly fictitious ¹ & that his Vessell was not sold in oporto but did really belong to Dublin, on which we put on board a prizmaster & sent her in here, where I fear we won't be able to dispose of her to any Reasonable advantage, if so, mr. Lagoanere will send her to some port in France (under french papers) where a Better & more ready Sale may be had. We are not permitted to Stay in the ports of Spain longer than to Supply ourselves with provisions &c I am not fond of trusting too much to them will therefore Sail hence in a day or two & make about a months Cruise in which time I hope to pick up one or two prizes, which is the most I cou'd man, Shal then put in here take in necessarys & proceed directly home, mean time woud be happy to hear from you, shou'd you please to give me any orders, direct to me at mess^{rs} Lagoaner & C^{os}. Corona, my reason for puting in here was to see what could be done with this [prize] that It might govern me in Simelar Cases—She was in ballast & burthen about 200 Tons

G, Conyngham

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "To The Hon^{ble}. Sylas Deane Esq^r/Paris." Docketed: "Capt. Cunningham 3rd Oct^r 1777."

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

October 4

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MILFORD, OCT. 4."

"The *Worcester* schooner, a tender to the *Boreas* man of war, sailed with the fleet from Jamaica. In lat. 34. 10. she was ordered to chase a sloop, which she came up with and took. This ship proved to be the *Adventure*, from Martinico for Virginia,

laden with rum and sugar. The *Worcester*, which lost the convoy, and saw no more of them on her passage, is now with her prize, safely arrived in this port."

London Chronicle, 9–11 Oct. 1777.

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

Sir,

Camel at Spithead 4th October 1777

I beg, you will acquaint my Lords Comm^{rs}. of the Admiralty, that on the 5th. of September, the Fleet under Convoy of His Majesty's Ship under my command, was attack'd by two Rebel Privateers.¹ We had shortened Sail, the preceding Evening, for the Sternmost Ships & Vessells to come up with us, & carried that Night a very easy Sail, which gave an opportunity, to about thirty of our Convoy, to run a considerable distance a Head of us. I fir'd some Shott at them to bring them too, which they not attending to, I made the Signal, for the *Weazle*, to make Sail a Head, and collect the Convoy; which occasioned her to be near five mile a Head of me. The *Druid* at the same time hauling to the Northward, to make the Weathermost Ships, Bear down, might be about the same distance upon our Weather quarter. It blew, so fresh then; that we were under our close Reef'd Fore & Main Topsails, without any other Sail sett. In the afternoon we had some heavy Squalls, accompanied with so thick Weather (during the Squalls) that we could not perceive any thing at a greater distance, than a Mile. In the heighth of one of these Squalls, we heard the report of many Guns, where the *Druid* was stationed. Concluding it to be an Engagement we immediately Wore, & stood after the reports, with the Ship prepar'd for action, having previously made the Signal for the Merchant Ships &c to lye by. As the Squall soon Blew over, we perceiv'd His Majestys Sloop *Druid*, engag'd with a very large Rebel Frigate, who, (upon perceiving us, Wore, & stood from her, to join another Rebel Ship which lay to Leeward. We continued in Chace of them, till past 7, when, we were within random Shott of the two, who by that time had join'd, & were crouding all the Sail they possibly could from us. As it was then dark & we had lost sight of the Convoy; I judg'd it imprudent to stand after them any longer, & Wore, to join the Fleet. At ½ past 8 we join'd the *Weazel*, who inform'd me that the Fleet, had all, Bro^t too, to answer the Signal that I had made; that the *Druid* had received considerable damage, & untill she got assistance, was not in a situation to proceed with the Convoy. I therefore, Bro^t too: and continued, Laying too, untill 4 a Clock, the next Evening.

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

[As the *Druids* action, cannot derive any additional credit, from my description of it, I shall refer their Lordships to the accounts, sent to me by Lieu^t Bouchier the only surviving Officer.² Whose exemplary behaviour & noble conduct, during the whole Action, was what alone could enable him, to beat off, so superior a force. I beg leave, likewise to observe to their Lordships that his activity did not cease there, for the Ships Company observing their Officer, to exert himself with so much Spirit, behav'd with such uncommon alertness, that they got the Ship new Rigg'd, & the Top Gallant Yards across, by 4 a Clock that Evening

Their Lordships will perceive (by M^r Bouchiers Account)³ the damages she sustain'd; that there was not any part of her Sails, or Rigging serviceable & her lower Masts, required being almost totally stripp'd, to enable the Carpenters to fish them.

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

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

W C Finch

L, UKLPR, Adm. 1/1790/3/12, 101-2. Addressed: "On His Majestys Service/to Philip Stephens, Esq^r." Docketed: "Cap^t Finchs Letter." Notations: "6 Oct Copy to M^r Long except what is between the crotchets"; "R 5."

1. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Captain Thomas Thompson, and Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Captain Elisha Hinman.

2. See Lt. John Bouchier, R.N., to the Earl of Sandwich, 2 Oct., note 3, above.

3. "Defects of His Majesty's Sloop *Druid*. John Bouchier Esq^r Commander," 3 Oct., above.

4. "A List of Men Killed on board His Majesty's Sloop *Druid* the 4th September 1777. in Action with a Rebel Privateer," 3 Oct., above.

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

Sir

Camel at Spithead 4th October 1777

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

W. C. Finch

L, UKLPR, ADM 1/1790/3/13; DLC transcript. Addressed at foot of page: "To Philip Stephens Esq^r." Endorsed: "6 Octo S^r Thom Pye to take the proper measures for having them committed to Forton Prison." The prisoners were committed to Forton Prison on 13 Oct. 1777. Forton Prison List, *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 30 (1879): 36–39.

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

VENTURA GOMEZ DE LA TORRE AND BARRENA TO
WILLIAM SPURRIER

Copy
Sir,

Bilbao 4th. Oct^r. 1777.

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

Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena.

D^r. Sir,

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

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 253. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "M^r. William Spurrier." Docketed: "Copy of a Letter from/Ventura Gomez de la Torre/& Barrena, to M^r. William/Spurrier, dated Bilbao/4 Oc^r. 1777."

1. See Edward Symonds to William Spurrier, 4 Oct. 1777, below.

EDWARD SYMONDS TO WILLIAM SPURRIER

Copy

Sir

Bilboa October 4th 1777

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

Edw^d. Symonds

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204. Docketed: "Copy of a Letter from/Edw^d. Symonds to M^r/Will^m. Spurrier Merc^r/in London, dated/Bilboa 4th. Oct^r 1777."

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

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

Mess^{rs} Lefras & Le Mesurier

Sirs

Bilbao 4 Oct^r 1777

In our last 1 Ins^t we had the pleasure to advise you we had rec^d. a few lines from Capt Gorroquer advising us he was at the foot of Bilbao Barr waiting for the next Tide to come in, in consequence of which we expected to see him up that very day, but we were greatly allarmd to be informd that that very night the american Privateer calld The *Hawke*, Capt. Jeremiah Hibbert had Saild from Santander that very morning [and] comitted the Outrage of seizing & taking your Schooner *Adventure* in the very place where

she was riding at anchor with the Pilot of the Barr on board & under the Sanction of our forts & brought in immediately. no Sooner did we receive this Intelligence that we flew to the Comissary of Marine to represent the Insult that had been comitt'd against his Majesty's fort & Territory by the American Privateer and as it was late at night & that we could not make our representations in writeing, we did it this morning, offering to prove the facts & insisting that the Privateer should be punish'd & condemn'd to pay all damages, in virtue of which the Comissary orderd that we should prove the facts, & p[rovd] as we have, that under our Security the Ship & Cargoe should be deliver'd to us, which we intend unloading with the first fair weather. the post being just on parting, only allows us time to refer you to our next, assuring you we will look & exert ourselves in this point with the Same assiduity as if our own remain most Truly [&c.]

Ventura Gomez de la Torre, & Barrena

Copy, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 230–31. Addressed: "To/Mess^{rs} Lefras & Le Mesurier/In London." Docketed: "M—Ventura Gomez de la Torre/& Barrena/Oct^r 4—Bilbao/20—Recd Here/In Mess^{rs} Lefras & Le Mesurier/21 Oct^r 1777." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 21 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 228.

DECLARATION OF MANUEL DEL ZERRO RUBIO

Ex^{mo}. Señor

Señor

Dⁿ Manuel de el Cerro Rubio vecino de la Ciudad de la Coruña Reyno de Galicia, con el mayor respecto que deve representa à V. Ex^a. que àbiendo Cargado èn la Bahia de èste Puerto de barios Jeneros procedentes de Ynglaterra è yntroducidos èn España Lexitimam^{te}, pagado èn la Aduana de Està misma Ciudad los Derechos correspondientes à su salida, y formado èl devido rexistro èn una Embarcazion suya propia nombrada *San Nicolas* y *San Pedro Felmo*, de que Nombrò por Capitan y Maestre Dⁿ. Fran^{co}. Xavier Garcia Ruiz, y lo dirixio con los despachos y documentos Correspondientes, y con Catorze Hombres à las Hislas de Barlobento y Puertos à que hiba destinado segun su rregistro, parece que àbiendo llegado à àbistar èn el dia 8. de Mayo la Ysla del Sombrero sobre las de Barlobento, la quese àlla desierta, le à cometio una Balandra Ynglesa Armada èn Corso y procedente de los Yngleses Europeos Establecidos èn la Ysla de sⁿ. Christobal,¹ la qual sin Embargo de las protestas que èl Dⁿ. Fran^{co}. Xabier le à ècho, le àrestò y Conduxo à la Ysla Nombrada de la Anguila, despues de àber le rreconocido toda su cargazon, èn donde le rrecoxio por fuerza todos los Papeles y abrio èl rexistro,² Ócurrieron èl Capitan, Piloto, y Contra maestre del Gobernador de la misma Ysla de la Anguila, quien cerciorado de ser Español, de la Lixitimidad se sus Papeles, y biaxe, y deno àber procedido confraude àlguno le hizo de bolber todo, y le dio testimonio para su seguro y libertad, bien que la restitution de viberes, y cargamento fue con muchissima falta de barios èfectos quese le àbian robado, en los reconocimientos y Extorciones èchas por la Jente de la Balandra, àdbirtio èl Capitan àntes de àcerse à la vela que èn el Puerto se àllaba ôtra Balandra compañera de la que le àvia àpresado, y tambien Armada èn Corso, ynsignuo lo à el Gobernador, y le àsegurò èste podia Emprender su biaxe sin rrecelo, como lo à ècho, y en el mismo dia àdbirtio saliò de àquel Puerto Esta segunda Balandra,³ le dio Caza, le àpresò, y conduxo despues de quatro diàs à la Ysla de San Christobal, y Puerto de Basseterre, èn donde despues de 22. dias de dilacion no òbstante de àber

presentado èl Capitan todos sus Documentos, y el testimonio de su àvsolutoria èn la Ysla de la Anguila, se declarò todo àunque ynxustamente por buena presa, bien quenose dio testimonio de èllo à el Capitan ni pudo conseguirlo por mas solicitudes que sobre èllo à ècho, commo rresulta de los àutos que àformado èl Gobernador y Capitan General de San Juan Bap^{ta} de Puerto rico, à donde se conduxo èl Capitan y Tripulacion, con la necesidad, y estrechez quese puede rreconocer de èste àc-ahècimiento, y de cuyos àutos ès la Copia àdxunta:

Considera El Suplicante fue èste un àtentado ynxusto de èstas dos Valandras àr-
madas èn corzo, Executado contra las Leyes de la Guerra, y la Paz, èn que se con-
serba esta Monarquia con la de la Gran Bretaña, y sebe Expuesto à una quiebra àv-
soluta de su casa y comercio, como no dexara de rreconocerlo la àlta penetracion
de V. Ex^a. y por lo mismo:

Rendidamente suplica à V. Ex^a. se sirva poner uno y otro èn la consideracion de
Su Magestad, àfin de que se digñe èn proteccion de sus Basallos de pasar los ôficios
conducentes para que èn la Corte de Londres se den las probidencias mas àctibas y
promptas, sobre que se rrestituya à el suplicante su Embarcazion, con toda la carga,
yntereses, Daños, y perxuicios que se le àn ôcasionado, con lo demas que la Justifi-
cacion de V.E. àlle por combeniente, merced que èspera rrecibir de la poderosa pro-
teccion de V. Ex^a. Coruña Octubre 4. de 1777.

Manuel de el Zerro Rubio

[Translation]

Your Excellency

Sir,

Don Manuel de Cerro Rubio, resident of the city of La Corunna, in the king-
dom of Galicia, with the greatest respect, represents to your excellency that having
loaded in the bay of this port various goods of English origin, legitimately introduced
into Spain, having paid in the customs house of the same city the proper duties for
their departure, and having entered into the registry a ship of his own property named
San Nicolas y San Pedro Felmo, of which Don Francisco Xavier Garcia Ruiz was captain
and master, and directed it, with the dispatches and appropriate documents, and
with 40 men, to the Windward Islands and ports to which it was intended according
to its registry, it appears that on the 8th day of May having arrived within sight of the
uninhabited island of Sombrero, above the Windward islands, his ship was assaulted
by an English sloop fitted out for war and sent out by the European Englishmen es-
tablished on the island of St. Christopher,¹ which, despite the protests that Don Fran-
cisco Xavier made, siezed it and took it to the island named Anguilla, where they ex-
amined all his cargo, and forcefully seized all the papers, and opened the registry.²
The captain, first mate, and boatswain went to see the governor of the same island
of Anguilla, to whom they affirmed their being Spanish, the legitimacy of their pa-
pers and voyage, and their not having acted with any deception. The governor had
everything returned to the captain and gave him a written protection for his secu-
rity and freedom, although the restitution of provisions and cargo was very deficient
of several items which had been pilfered during the examinations and extortions
made by the sloop's people. The captain noted before making sail that there was in
the port another sloop,³ a companion to that which had captured him, and also fit-
ted out for war. The captain ingratiated himself with the governor and secured the
power to undertake his voyage without suspicion, which he then did. On the same

day he sailed, the captain witnessed the second sloop leave port, give him chase, sieze him, and take him after four days to the island of St. Christopher, and the port of Basseterre. There, after 22 days of delay, notwithstanding the captain's having presented all his documents, including the proof of his acquital in the island of Anguilla, all was unjustly declared a good prize, although the captain gave no testimony nor was he able to do it through additional entreaties he made about it in consequence of the decrees issued by the governor and captain general of San Juan Bap^{ta}. of Puerto Rico—where the captain and crew were taken under what necessity and austerity can be imagined from this incident—and of whose decrees the copy is inclosed.

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

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

Manuel del Zerro Rubio

DS, SpVAS, Estado, legajo 7021.

1. The privateer's captain was James Dunevan and its owner was a Mr. Strol, an innkeeper of St. Christopher. Conde de Floridablanca to the Marqués de Almodovar, 23 Nov. 1778, *ibid*.

2. According to Floridablanca, the captors inveigled a seaman to declare falsely that the *San Nicolas y San Pedro Felmo* had been in Philadelphia. *Ibid*.

3. In the margin: "*Lively*, su comand^{te} Joseph Smith."

October 5 (Sunday)

ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir,

Sandwich at Spithead 5th Oct^r 1777.

His Majesty's Ship and Sloop named in the Margin¹ having brought home the Number of Rebel Prisoners (taken in the *Oliver Cromwell* American Privateer) expressed against their Names, I have ordered them to be sent onboard His Majesty's Ship the *Princess Amelia* for Security, and beg to know their Lordships Pleasure with respect to their Disposal.

Inclosed is the State and Condition of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels under my Command.² I am [&c.]

Tho^s. Pye

L, UklPR, Adm. 1/955, 267. Addressed at foot of letter: "Philip Stephens Esq^r" The intent of Stephens's notation on the verso, "6 Oct^r consent & let him know he is to cause proper measures to be taken for committing all of them to Forton prison," was embodied in Stephens to Pye, 6 Oct. 1777, UklPR, Adm. 2/556, 97–98.

1. *Camel*, with 5 prisoners, and *Druid*, with 7.

2. Not printed.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

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

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

VICE ADMIRAL BARON SHULDHAM TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir

Blenheim, in Hamoze 5th. Octo^r. 1777.

I am to acknowledge the receipt of two Letters from you of the 2^d. Instant, acquainting me that their Lordships have given Captain Hartwell of the *Blenheim* fourteen days further Leave of Absence from his Duty on his private Affairs; and signifying their Lordships direction to me, to enquire whether any of the Prisoners taken in the *Lexington* Rebel Privatier, and brought into Plymouth by the *Alert* Cutter, are French Men; and if they are, how many; Also to enquire and let their Lordships know how many French Men were on board her at the beginning of the Action with the *Alert*;¹ in answer to which, I am to acquaint you that upon enquiry from the Clerk and examination of the *Alert's* Books, as well as the confession of the Captain of the Privatier, I find there were Twenty one French Men on board the latter at the beginning of the Action, two of whom were kill'd in it, and that the remaining nineteen are committed to Mill Prison; a List of the Names of whom accompanies this.² I am [&c.]

Shuldham

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

1. For the second letter, Stephens to Shuldham, 2 Oct. 1777, see UkLPR, Adm. 2/555, 380–81. See also NDAR 9: 673.

2. See the following document.

"A LIST OF FRENCH MEN TAKEN IN THE *LEXINGTON* REBEL PRIVATIER BY
HIS MAJESTY'S CUTTER *ALERT* THE 19th. SEP^r. 1777."

Raphael Gereau	W ^m . Lagashire	Peter Richard
Augustus Guichard	Charles Febry	——— Raphier
John Roseau	John Vansan	Augustine Noelle
Luke Madiller	John Dufoe	John Bubbis
Joseph Bonna	John Roustant	19 John Parris
John Dequené	Antonio Versailles	
Charles Mauduit	Charles Legou	

D, UkLPR, Adm. 1/806, 376. Enclosed in Shuldham to Stephens, 5 Oct. 1777, above.

JOURNAL OF CONTINENTAL NAVY FRIGATE *RALEIGH*, CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Monday Sept^r 8th. Latt^d. 43° 31' N^o.—Long^d. 43° 15' West Gave chase to a Brig^t which we came up with; it prov'd to be a prize belonging to the *Oliver Cromwel* Privateer—she was from Exeter bound to Naples—Laden with Woolen Goods—¹

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

Sunday Sept^r 28th. Latt^d. 49° 35' N^o. Long^d. 13° 13' W. Took the Brig^t *Sally* Edward Marshall Mast^r from Dartmouth bound to Newfoundland out 7 Days—having on board 275 Hh^{ds}. Salt & 75^{cwt}. . 2 . . 26 Bread.—after taking out some Bread & sent on board a prizemast^r & Men & order'd her for the first Safe port in the United States—Lost our pinnace along side said Brig^t being overset by a large Sea—

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

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

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

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

1. *Ville de Bayonne*, taken on 16 Aug. NDAR 9: 574, 647.

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

[1777 October] 5 Sabbath. Fair moderate & pleas^t. At 2 PM saw a Sail a head; also made Land, viz. y^e Burlings and Part of the Coast of Portugal. Came up with the Sail & took her. She was a Brig from Newfound Land with 1200 Quintals of Fish called the *Lark* Capt. Canterbury¹

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

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

October 6

LLOYD'S EVENING POST, AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1777

London.

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

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

A Versailles, le 6. 8^{bre.}, 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez écrite le 30. du mois dernier et les pieces y jointes au sujet du Sloup Anglo-Américain nommé le *Mars*, commandé par le Capitaine Alexandre Holmes, entré dans le Port de l'Orient; Si ce Bâtiment est entierement reconnu pour Bâtiment de Commerce, il ne peut y avoir aucune difficulté d'en user à son égard dans l'esprit des ordres que je vous ai donné par ma lettre du 6. Août,¹ l'intention de sa Majesté n'étant pas de gêner les opérations licites du Commerce ni d'y mettre des entraves; Mais il faut veiller sur ce qui se passe, pour dans le cas ou il y auroit lieu de le considérer comme Corsair, où comme une prise, se conformer à ce qui este prescrit par les traités et par les Ordonnances et réglemens du Royaume que je vous ai expliqués, et vous entendre avec les Officiers de l'Amirauté en leur faisant part de ce qui seroit venu à votre connoissance, afin qu'ils agissent en conséquence. Je suis [&c.]

de sartine

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

[Translation]

Versailles, 6 October 1777

I received the letter you wrote me the 30th of last month and the enclosures on the subject of the American sloop called the *Mars*, commanded by Captain Alexander Holmes, come into the port of l'Orient. If that ship is identified entirely as a merchantman, there can be no difficulty of treating it in this regard in the spirit of the orders I gave you by my letter of the 6th of August,¹ the intention of his Majesty not being to constrain the licit operations of commerce nor to put shackles on them; but one must watch what happens, for in the case there would be reason to consider it a privateer, or a prize, conform yourself to what is prescribed by the treaties and by the ordinances and regulations of the realm which I have explained to you, and act in concert with the officers of the admiralty, informing them of that which may come to your attention, so that they act in consequence. I am [&c.]

de Sartine

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

L, FrLAL, series 1, E¹80, fol. 17. Addressed at foot of page: "M. Viger, à l'Orient."

1. NDAR 9: 551-52.

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

Gentlemen

Port L'orient 6th: October 1777.

We have the Satisfaction to inform you of the arrival in this Road of two Continental Fregattes one the *Rolly* of 32 Guns Capⁿ. Thompson the other *Alfred* Capⁿ. Hindman of 20 Guns both sailed from Portsmouth y^e: 22^d. of August last. they have brought under our Island of Groix two Jamaica Men belonging to London taken at the mouth of the channell one

the *Jamaican* Capⁿ. David Watts }
the *Anna & Suzannah* Johnson. }

Both loaded together of

657. Hogsheads of Brown Sugar

210. Tierçons Idem

215. Punchon of Brandy or Rum

3. Bales of Cotton & five Hogs heads of Coffee
one is a three Decker mounting 16 Six Pounders.

Commodore Thompson has no Dispatches from y^e: States for you only a private letter for procuring Guns which since Capⁿ. Thompson has had; he will forward it to you next post, being just come on shore too late to write any particulars. Capⁿ. Thompson Brings no news the fleet of admiral Howe was at sea y^e: last account was he was standing to y^e: Southward and no appearance of his going to Boston.

300 Royalists had been Killed at fort Standwick and y^e: Commander S^t: Jⁿ: Johnson had been Slain.

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

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

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

Gourlade

Berard Freres & Cie.

demonplaisir

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "To/the Honble Commissioners/of the United States of/America/Paris"; and at foot of last page: "Mess^{rs}. Franklin Deane & Lee & Arthur Lee." Docketed: "Mess^{rs}: Gourlarde Berard & Montplaisir/6th. Oct^r 1777."

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

[Gironde] du lundy 6^{me} [octobre]

les vents variables de lest au sudest bon frais, mais très beau temps. ce matin a 6 heures ½ la fregate du roy *linconstante* commandée par m^r de cuverville a appareillié avec sa flotte qui porte des troupes, plusieurs autres batiments marchands qui étoient de relache dans cette rade ont fait la meme manoeuvre. il n'est resté que la prise faite par les insurgents dont le capitaine est de retour de bourdeaux,¹ et qui est venu me demander la permission dattendre les vents n'étant pas favorable pour aller a la cote d'Espagne ou il compte se refugier

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Monday, 6 October

The winds variable from the east to the south east, strong, but very fine weather. This morning at 6:30 the king's frigate the *Inconstante*, commanded by M. de Cuverville, sailed with its fleet, which carried troops. Several other merchant ships, which had put into port in this road, made the same maneuver. There only remained the prize made by the insurgents, whose captain has returned from Bordeaux,¹ and who has come to ask permission to await the winds, which have not been favorable for going to the coast of Spain, where he plans to take refuge.

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 285.

1. *Mercury*, prize to New Hampshire privateer ship *Portsmouth*, John Hart.

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

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

Lloyd's Evening Post, and British Chronicle (London), 20–22 Oct. 1777.

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o. 55.

S^t Ildefonso: 6: Octr 1777.

My Lord.

By the Advices which since I had the Honour of writing to your Lordship, I have received from Ferrol & the Corugna, I find that G Cunningham & his Prize quitted Ferrol on the 17th of last Month; not however without strong Suspicion of his having sold the Prize to the Master of a French brig, who was probably to take possession of her at Sea. The *Success* Captain Fletcher had been ordered & sent out of S^t Andero and the *Hawke* privateer had under pretence of Repairs put into the Coruna & had

received orders to quit that Port. Three Prizes which that Vessel had made & brought in, were ordered out & had sailed it is said for Bilbao. I have likewise heard that Cole of the *Oliver Cromwell* being questioned about his Capture of a French Ship,¹ had declared that her being laden with woolen Goods, made it absolutely necessary for him to take & send them to America, as he knew that Washington's Army was in the greatest Distress for want of all manner of Clothing.

The general Circumstances relative to the Privateers which I have mentioned have been communicated to me by M. Florida blanca by the Note of which I enclose a Copy [and] Translation;² as well as of the Answer which I immediately sent to it.

When I came to talk to him on this subject, I must say that he seemed ashamed of the excuse he was making for the Stay of the *Revenge* at Ferrol. The Governor pretended the Orders had not reached him, that the Vessel had not been supplied out of the King's Stores, but what he laid most stress on, was the closeness with which he pretended Our Ships watch the entrance of the Harbours. I pointed out to him the insufficiency of this excuse, and repeated my expectations that such cases would not arise again, and he promised me that they should not, and that all Sales should really be prevented. . . .³ I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 235–38. Docketed: "S. Ildefonso 6 Oct^r 1777/Lord Grantham/(N^o 55)/R. 24th/one inclosure."

1. Probably the brig *Ville de Bayonne*, Pierre Regnier. See NDAR 9: 574, 647.

2. See NDAR 9: 678.

3. This paragraph is in cipher in the original.

October 7

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

6th. [Oct^r.] Cap^t. Lee Ret^d. fr. y^c. Hosp^l.

7th. Cap^t. Boardm & Shoemaker Ret^d. fr. y^c. Hosp^l. by the Doctor Upon Acc^t. of the Suspicion of the other Night, they went into the Officers Prison.

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

(Duplicate)

Gentlemen,

Passy, near Paris, Oct^r 7

We received duly your Dispatches by M^r. McCreery, and Captain Young, dated May 2. and 30. June 13. 18. & 26. and July 2.¹ The Intelligence they contain is very particular and satisfactory. It rejoices us to be informed that Unanimity continues to reign among the States, and that you have so good an Opinion of your Affairs, in which we join with you. We understand that you have also written to us of later Dates by Capt. Holm.² He is arrived at Port l'Orient, but being chased and nearly taken, he sunk his Dispatches:

We are also of your Sentiments with Regard to the Interests of France & Spain respecting our Independence, which Interests we are persuaded they see as well as we, though particular present Circumstances induce them to postpone the Measures that are proper to secure those Interests. They continue to hold the same Conduct described in our last³ which went by Wickes & Johnson, a Copy whereof we send herewith, as Johnson is unfortunately taken: We have lately presented an earnest Memorial to both Courts,⁴ stating the Difficulties of our Situation, and requesting that if they cannot immediately make a Diversion in our Favour they would give a Subsidy sufficient to enable us to continue the War without them, or afford the States their Advice and Influence in making a good Peace. Our present Demand to enable us to fulfil your Orders is for about 8,000,000 of Livres. Couriers we understand, are dispatched with this Memorial to Madrid, by both the Ambassador of Spain and the Minister here; and we are desired to wait with Patience the Answer, as the two Courts must act together. In the mean time they give us fresh Assurances of their Good Will to our Cause, and we have just received a fourth Sum of 500,000 Livres. But we are continually charged to keep the Aids that are or may be afforded us a dead Secret, even from the Congress, where they suppose England has some Intelligence; and they wish she may have no certain Proofs to produce against them with the other Powers of Europe. The apparent Necessity of your being informed of the true State of your Affairs, obliges us to dispense with this Injunction. But we intreat that the greatest Care may be taken that no Part of it shall transpire: Nor of the Assurances we have received that no Repayment will ever be required from us of what has been already given us either in Money or Military Stores. The great Desire here seems to be that England should strike first, and not be able to give her Allies a good Reason.

The total Failure of Remittances from you for a long time past, has embarrass'd us exceedingly; the Contracts we entered into for Clothing and Arms in Expectation of those Remittances, and which are now beginning to call for Payment, distress us much, and we are in imminent Danger of Bankruptcy. For all your Agents are in the same Situation, and they all recur to us to save their and your Credit. We were obliged to discharge a Debt of Merckle's at Bourdeaux amounting to about 5000 Liv^s. to get that Vessel away,⁵ and he now duns us every Post for between 4 & 5,000 £ sterling to disengage him in Holland where he has purchased Arms for you. With the same View of saving your Credit M^r Ross was furnished with 20,000 £ Sterling, to disentangle him. All the Captains of your armed Vessels come to us for their Supplies, and we have not received a Farthing of the Produce of their Prizes, as they are ordered into other Hands. M^r Hodge has had large Sums of us. But to give you some Idea for the present 'till a more perfect Acc^t can be rendred of the Demands upon us that we have paid, we enclose a Sketch, for your perusal; and shall only observe, that we have refused no Application, in which your Credit appeared to be concerned, except one from the Creditors of a M^r Ceronio said to be your Agent in Hispaniola, but of whom we had no Knowledge; and we had Reason to hope that you would have been equally ready to support our Credit, as we have been of yours, and from the same Motives, the Good of the Publick for whom we are all acting, the Success of our Business depending considerably upon it. We are sorry therefore to find all the World acquainted here, that the Commissioners from Congress have not so much of your Regard as to obtain the Change of a Single Agent who disgraces us all.⁶ We say no more of this at present, contenting ourselves with the Consciousness that we recommended that

Change from the purest Motives, and that the Necessity of it, and our Uprightness in proposing it will soon fully appear.

Mess^{rs} Gardoqui at Bilboa have sent several Cargoes of Naval Stores, Cordage, Sail Cloth, Anchors, &c. for the public Use, consigned to Eldridge Gerry, Esq^r. They complain that they have no Acknowledgement from that Gentleman of the Goods being received tho' they know the Vessels arrived.⁷ We have excused it to them on the Supposition of his being absent at Congress. We wish such Acknowledgement may be made, accompanied with some Expressions of Gratitude towards those from whom the Supplies came, without mentioning who they are supposed to be. You mention the Arrival of the *Amphitrite* & *Mercury*, but say nothing of the Cargoes.

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

We have received and delivered the Commissions to M^r. W. Lee & M^r. Izard.⁸ No Letters came with them for those Gentlemen with Information how they are to be supported on their Stations. We suppose they write to you, and will acquaint you with their Intentions.

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

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

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 85, pp. 85–91 (M247, roll no. 114). Docketed: "From the Commissioners/Paris Oct^r 7th. 1777/see the Files Rec^d. May 2^d/by Capⁿ. Young/Via Baltim^r." The original was in a packet stolen by Joseph Hynson from John Folger, to whom it had been entrusted. See William Bell Clark, *Lambert Wickes, Sea Raider and Diplomat: The Story of a Naval Captain of the Revolution* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1932), 354–55.

1. Printed in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 12–16, 101–3, 158–60, 191–93, 224–25, and 252–53.

2. Sloop *Mars*, Alexander Holmes.

3. NDAR 9: 633–34.

4. NDAR 9: 673–77.

5. *Ship Dispatch*, Stephen Cleveland.

6. Thomas Morris. NDAR 8: 532; 9: 655–56.

7. Gardoqui & Sons to Benjamin Franklin, 16 Aug. 1777, in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 439–40.

8. On 1 July Congress appointed William Lee their commissioner to the courts at Berlin and Vienna, and Ralph Izard to the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. JCC 8: 518–21.

[Enclosure]

The Commiss^{rs}. received of M^r. Gruel on Acc^t. of the
Indigo imported in the *Reprisal*

41571 . . 17 . . 6—

Of M^r. Solier Banq^r to M^r. Gruel, M^r. Pennet and

M^r. Tho^s. Morris

(about) 23000—

Liv^{rs}. 64571 . 17 . 6

This is What they have rec^d. in Consequence of Remittances, from America,—M^r Souliers Acc^t has been delivered, but returns to be corrected, & settled, but this is nearest the Sum received

The Commiss ^{rs} have paid to M ^r Chaumont for Powder received by M ^r Bingham at Martinique	}	Liv ^{rs} 188729 . . 15 . . 0
To M ^r Montieu for the Magazine of Arms at Nantes the first Cost		
Expenses already paid for repairing the Arms &c <u>about</u>		3000—
To M ^r Montieu for Cordage & Duck &c Shipped in the <i>Therese</i>	}	70655 . 2 . 6
To Mess ^{rs} Horneca Fitzeau & C ^o . at Amsterdam for the Construction of a Ship of War		
To Mess ^{rs} Sabbatier & C ^o . for 10000. Suits of Cloaths		339799 . 11 . 7
To Mess ^{rs} Delaps on Acc ^t of M ^r Merkle to get his Goods from Bourdeaux about	}	5000 . —
To ditto, & to other persons on Acc ^t of Repairs, & Disbursements of the <i>Lexington</i> , the <i>Reprisal</i> , the Equipments of the <i>Dolphin</i> & other Vessels about		
To M ^r Hodge for equipment of the Two Cutters at Dunkirk, about	}	60000—
To M ^r Williams for 10.000 Suits of Cloaths and other Articles about		
To M ^r Ross to pay for Goods he had engaged for Congress	}	450 . 000

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

D, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fol. 227. Docketed: "Sketch of Disbursements."

"EXTRAIT D'UNE LETTRE DES OFFICIERS DE L'AMIRAUTÉ DE BORD^x.
A M DE SARTINE DU 7. 8^{BRE}. 1777"

M^{gr}:

[Bordeaux]

Par la lettre dont vous nous avez honoré en datte du 28. du mois dernier, vous nous mandés qu'on vous a assuré que depuis les derniers ordres que vous nous avés donné concernant les Bâtimens américains, le Navire la *liberté* Cap^{ne}. Seabrook a été complètement équipé à Bordeaux, qu'on a achetté huit pieces de Canons pour ce Bâtiment, qu'ils doivent y être montés avant qu'il sorte de la rivierre, et qu'on y a embarqué plusieurs Caisses et barils contenant des armes et munitions de guerre qu'on fait passer pour marchandises ordinaires; que le navire l'*industrie*, actuellement dans notre Port, est un Corsaire américain qui se donne pour Vaisseau Marchand, qu'il n'avoit que 14 Canons à son arrivée, et qu'actuellement il en a 18. et qu'on a également dessein de le charger d'armes et de munitions de guerre.¹

Le premier de ces Bâtimens est parti depuis plusieurs jours ² ainsi que nous avons eu l'honneur de vous le marquer par notre lettre du 20 du mois d'^{ec} comme ce Bâtiment etoit un de ceux sur lesquels portoient les ordres que nous avions reçû de votre part en datte du 19. août d'^{ec} nous avons eu le plus grand soin de le faire visiter avant

qu'il ne sortit de notre Port. cette visite a été faite avec le plus grand soin. l'huissier visiteur nous a assuré qu'il n'y avoit vu aucune espèce d'armes ni de munitions de guerre, que ce Navire n'avoit que des Canons figurés en bois et que dans la S^{te}. Barbe il n'y avoit que quelques touques d'huile et autres memes objets d'usage et pas un grain de poudre; son role d'équipage a été visé au Bureau des Classes; il est donc bien certain que si ce Navire a été équipé en guerre ce n'est pas dans le Port de Bordeaux, ce n'est pas non plus avant d'être descendu au bas de la rivierre, puisqu'il a du être visité par la frégatte du Roy qui y est en station. est-ce donc au moment ou il a mis en Mer; nous avouons M^{gr}, que nous l'ignorons absolument en tout cas si la chose est praticable, de quel moyen aurions nous pu nous servir pour l'empêcher etant à 20 lieües de distance, et n'ayant absolument personne sur les lieux. nous ignorons également si dans le nombre des Caisses et barils qui ont été chargés à bord de ce Navire il y en avoit ou l'on eut renfermé des armes et des munitions de guerre; rien ne doit se charger sans le permis du Bureau des fermes, ainsi si l'on a fait passer quelque chose en fraude, on ne pouvoit accuser que la négligence des Commis. Nous avons eu, M^{gr} l'honneur de vous représenter que nos fonctions ne peuvent nous permettre de veiller sur tout ce qui se charge dans un Port d'une lieuë d'étenduë, et nous avons lieu d'être surpris que les personnes intéressées à faire passer en Cour des avis si bien Circonstanciés, n'ayant pas encore eu l'avisement de nous instruire de ces Contraventions que nous pourrions empêcher dans le moment si nous en étions prévenus.

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

Vous nous marqués aussi, M^{gr}, qu'on prétend qu'il s'arme un grand nombre de bâtimens françois qui ont l'apparence de s'expédier pour S^t Pierre et Miquelon mais qui sont destinés pour l'amérique septentrionale et chargés des choses dont les amériquains ont besoin. nous ne sommes nullement étonnés; ce Commerce interlope offre des profits trop Considérable pour ne pas tenter les armateurs. les représentations que nous pourrions leur faire à ce sujet seroient absolument inutiles, ils sont assés instruits pour connaître les risques qu'ils courent. nous ne manquerons pas néanmoins de déclarer suivant vos ordres à ceux qui s'expedieront pour S^t Pierre et Miquelon que s'ils sont assés imprudent pour s'exposer ils ne doivent avoir aucun espoir d'être réclamés par le Gouvernement. Nous sommes [&c.]

[Translation]

Extract of a letter from the Admiralty at Bordeaux to M. de Sartine of 7 October 1777
My Lord

By the letter with which you honored us, dated the 28th of last month, you sent word to us that you had been assured that since the last orders you had given us concerning the American ships, the *Liberty*, a ship commanded by Captain Seabrook, has been completely fitted out in Bordeaux, that eight guns have been purchased for the ship and are to be mounted on board before the ship leaves the river, and that several barrels and cases that had been taken on board contained weapons and ammunition that were declared to be ordinary merchandise; that the *Industry*, a ship

presently in our port, is an American privateer being passed off as a merchant vessel, that it was carrying 14 guns on its arrival, and now it has 18; there are also plans to load it with weapons and munitions.¹

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

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

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

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fols. 67–68. Notation: "avec la lettre de M. de Sartine du 15"; "with M. de Sartine's letter of the 15th."

1. On 19 Aug. 1777, Lord Stormont protested to the Comte de Vergennes that in the course of the month the Admiralty of Bordeaux had allowed four American vessels, which had arrived from the Caroli-

nas and New England without a single cannon, not even being pierced for guns, completely to arm and equip themselves with ball and powder, and to take on French crewmen. Stormont identified the four vessels as the *Liberty*, sloop, Capt. Seabrook, the *Seaflower*, sloop, Capt. Hodgeson, the *Betty*, schooner, Capt. Williamson, and the *Peggy*, brig, Capt. Barry. FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 584, fols. 340–41. By the date of the Admiralty of Bordeaux's reply to Sartine's inquiry, 23 Aug., two of the vessels had sailed: the *Betty* to which Stormont had referred was in all probability the *Sally*, Capt. Williamson; and the *Polly*. The *Liberty*, Capt. Nicholas Brown Seabrook, from Virginia, and the *Seaflower*, Capt. Francis Hodgson, from Philadelphia, had each arrived on 12 July. The *Liberty* arrived pierced for eight cannon, but unarmed save for muskets, two swivel guns, and wooden cannon. Its officers had obtained eight more swivel guns and sought to purchase some carriage guns for defense. The *Seaflower* arrived armed with four English three-pounder cannon and eight swivel guns and had had four French two-pounder cannons purchased for it. The Admiralty officials sequestered both vessels' munitions purchased at Bordeaux. Ibid., fols. 369–70, 373, 479–80. The Pennsylvania privateer brig *Industry*, Hugh Lysle, of 14 guns and 45 men, owned by Blair McClenachan and John Pringle, and bonded 19 June 1777, arrived at Bordeaux from Sinepuxent, Md., in late August. *Pennsylvania Archives*, 5th ser., 1: 609; Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners, 28 Aug. 1777, in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 475. For the complaint to which the present letter is a reply see Stormont to Vergennes, 24 Sept. 1777, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, 584, fols. 545–47.

2. The *Liberty* and the *Seaflower*, the latter now commanded by Patrick Barry, after their purchased munitions had been restored, sailed together from Blaye on 22 Sept. John Ross to Silas Deane, 7 Oct., Connecticut Historical Society *Collections* 23: 117; deposition of Patrick Barry, at Bordentown, N.J., 10 Jan. 1778, in *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 14 Feb. 1778.

October 8

GAZETEER AND NEW DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1777

London.

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

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

LLOYD'S EVENING POST, AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1777

London.

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

1. See George Gostling, Jr., to Philip Stephens, 18 Oct., below, and enclosure, and NDAR 9: 484, 490–91, 638–39.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N° 150

Most Secret

My Lord

Paris October 8th. 1777

Tho' I have no Expectation that any Endeavours of mine can correct the Duplicity of this Court, yet I continue those Endeavours, and I do it the rather My Lord

as I happen to know, that it has been intimated to the Rebel Agents by the french Ministers themselves, that my repeated Representations distress and perplex them. It was upon this Principle, and without much Hope of success, that I waited upon M de Maurepas yesterday Morning, and had a pretty long Conversation with Him of which I will give your Lordships a particular account.

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

I have certain Intelligence Sir that several Vessels are building in Your Ports, particularly at Nantes, for the use of the Rebels: that Ship¹ I have frequently mentioned to M de Vergennes, and which is to mount 36 guns, twenty six of them Brass, will be Launched this Week, and will be ready to sail towards the End of the Month. She is to carry a Quantity of Arms, and Ammunition for the use of the Rebels—all that regards this Ship, Her sails, Rigging, Guns, Ammunition &c are all furnished in France, and She will be manned with french Sailors, and all this Sir is done in a country the Ministers of which continue to make us the most Peaceable and friendly Professions—

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

like all other ships give a soumission to return directly to Europe—I answered, that we knew this ship, knew her Figure, Dimensions &c and that if she did go to America we should know her at once, and should know too what Wind carried Her thither, and from what Quarter it Blew; after this Reflexion I went on with my Narration.

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

Your Lordship knows that this is the ship that is commanded by Captain Lundy,² one of Bougainvilles Lieutenants, I hope our Fleet will be able to give a good account of Her as she passes the Streights. She surely would be a lawful Prize if ever there was one. When this Ship was stopt and unloaded it was believed that the Rebels were in no want of Warlike stores, and it was upon the News of their having lost such Quantities at Ticonderago, that a secret Permission was sent Her to load again, and set sail. Beaumarchais secretary Frances goes on board of her to distribute the Cargo.

M de Maurepas pretended that all He knew with regard to this ship was that she had been stopt, and obliged to unload the Canon, and Ammunition she had on board, He declared that He never had heard of her since, but would speak to M de Sartines upon the subject. It would not have been polite, and would have answered no good Purpose to contradict so positive an assertion, I therefore only said, that my Intelligence was sure and begged Him to consider, how directly contrary all this was to every Principle of friendship, and how impossible it was for us to believe, that they meant real cordial Peace, if they assisted our Rebels³. . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont

L. *Stevens's Facsimilies*, vol. 19, no. 1716. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Endorsed: "Paris 8 October 1777/Lord Stormont/(N^o 150) most secret/R. 12th by Express from Dover."

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

2. Pierre Landais, captain, Continental Navy.

3. The remainder of the interview with Maurepas consisted mainly of Stormont's elaboration of the last point.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

Confidential

My Lord

Paris Wednesday Two o'clock

oct^r 8. 1777

I think it my Duty, to dispatch this Extra^y Messenger to y^r Lordship to convey an important Piece of Intelligence I have just rec^d. A servant of Monsieur Re chaumont sets out this afternoon for Havre de Grace charged with a large packet of very material dispatches from the Rebel agents to the Congress which Dispatches are to be sent to North America on board one of those French Packet boats at Havre of which M. de chaumont has engaged to furnish one Every Month for the Purpose of carrying Dispatches. These are very material, they contain Duplicates of all those sent by the *Lexington* and several Papers which Franklin and Deane sent to M de Vergennes for his Consideration before they would transmit them to America and which were returned them Yesterday I can say nothing positive as to the Contents of these Papers but am inclined to think that they relate to a Treaty which is in Negotiation between France

and the Rebels. Franklin and Deane had long Conferences with chaumont and sat up writing all last night. The seizure of these Dispatches which would probably lead to most material Discoveries might I think be easily made in the following Manner.

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

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

Stormont

L., *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1717. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Vis^{ct} Weymouth." Endorsed: "Paris 8 October 1777/Lord Stormont/(Confidential)/R. 10th. by Pearson."

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

[Gironde] du mercredy 8^{eme} [octobre]

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

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Wednesday, 8 October

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

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 285.

1. *Mercury*, prize to New Hampshire privateer ship *Portsmouth*, John Hart.

DEPOSITION OF DANIEL GREY, MASTER OF THE SLOOP *PEGGY*

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

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

L: A: Somonte

D, UklPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 306–7. Docketed: "Deposition & Protest of Daniel/Grey late Master of the Sloop/*Peggy* made before the Sec^{ry}/of the Marine Department/in S. Andero 8 Oct^r 1777/Translation/R. 4 Nov^r from Mess^{rs} Bingley/& Pitt/copy of this & the Original/in Spanish sent to Lord Grantham/14 Nov^r 1777."

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 66

Corunna 8th October 1777

My Lord,

I have the Honor to acquaint your Lordship that the Rebel Privateer commanded by Cunningham returned last Thursday from her Cruise, having taken and brought in a large Ship named the *Three Brothers* Capt. Nicolas Kelly bound from Dublin to Oporto.¹ He sailed on another Cruise the Sunday following, and has left his Prize here.

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

I humbly conceive, if Our Ships on this station were sometimes to put in here for intelligence, which they may do without any difficulty under pretext of bad weather, want of provisions, or contrary winds, that few of these piratical Vessels would escape them.²

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

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

H Katencamp

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 263. Addressed at the foot of the page: "The R^t Honb^{le} Lord Visc^t Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 8 October 1777/Consul Katencamp/(N^o 66)/R. 3 Nov^r."

1. Ship *Brothers*. For Conyngham's account of the capture see Captain Gustavus Conyngham to Silas Deane, 3 Oct. 1777, above.

2. This paragraph is in cipher in the original.

October 9

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

"On the 5th inst. the brig *Jenny and Betty*, of Larn, Mark Workman master, bound from Antigua to this place, was taken by the *Bellona* American privateer,¹ mounting sixteen carriage-guns, besides swivels, and was re-taken on the 8th inst. by the *Champion*, of Bristol, commanded by Captain Wm. Peacock, who behaved with the greatest spirit and bravery on the occasion. . . ."

Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser (London), 16 Oct. 1777.

1. South Carolina letter of marque brig *Bellona*, Capt. Cross.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL RICHARD LORD HOWE

My Lord,

[Admiralty Office] 9 Oct^r 1777

My Lords Comm^{rs}: of the Admty having been informed from very good Authority that a Ship named the *Heureux*, carrying 24 Six Pounders, commanded by Lundai

(late Bouganvill's Lieutenant) is intended to sail from Marseilles for North America; that she will endeavour to make Portsmouth in New Hampshire, and that Baron Steinbar¹ is gone down to take passage in her; And that a small Vessel is expected to sail soon from S^t Maloes with Dispatches for the Congress: I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith, and have the honor to be &c.

PS

LB, UklPR, Adm. 2/556, 104. Addressed at foot: "R^t Honble Vice Adm^t Lord Howe/in N^o America. By the *Maidstone*/at Spithead." Notation in the margin: "Acq^d that the *Heureux* is to sail from Marseilles to N^o America & a small Ship from S^t Maloes with the Dispatches for the Congress."

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

CHARLES GLÉYO LA CHESNAÏE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Copie de la seconde lettre écrit par M Gleyo la Chesnaïe à M^r Williams¹

Monsieur,

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

Les Vents contraires m'ont forcé de mouiller dans la rade du port louis, d'où je m'empresse de vous donner avis de mon arrivée, mais je suis bien fâché de vous annoncer que j'ai été forcé de Submerger le paquet et jen'ai pu Sauver que mes ordres,² une notte de la vente, de ma depense, mon reçu et cette lettre de M. Votre père que j'ai laissé en bonne Santé également que toute votre famille. j'aurais bien désiré le rendre aussi heureusement que celui dont vous m'aviez chargé en Partant.

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

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

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

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

je vais écrire à M. Cornic⁵ pour lui demander ses ordres que j attendrai ici, à moins que vous n'en ayez à me donner.

je suis bien fâché que les vents m'ayant empeche d'entrer à Nantes. mais je l'eusse encore été davantage, si j'avais été assez heureux pour vous remettre le paquet.

on ignorait quand j'ai parti ce qu'était devenu le général howe embarqué avec son armée. j'ai L'h^r d'être &c.

[Translation]

Copy of the second letter written by M. Gleyo la Chesnaÿe to Mr. Williams¹

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

Contrary winds have forced me to anchor in the roadstead of Port Louis, whence I hurry to give you news of my arrival, but I am very sorry to tell you that I was forced to sink the packet and I was able to save only my orders,² a memorandum of the sale, of my expenses, my receipt and this letter from your father, whom I left in good health, as is all your family. I would have very much wanted to render him as happy as you had charged me to when I left.

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

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

You should have received a letter I had the honor of writing you by the frigates the *Rouli* and the other which accompanied it.³ Without doubt they are at Nantes for they left three weeks before me. Perhaps they have informed you of the loss of 1000 men that the English have had against the Americans. But they were not able to announce to you that a detachment of General Burgoyne's was attacked by a party of militia who killed 600 of his men, as many deaths as prisoners. At last count, General Burgoyne had lost 2500 men since the taking of Ticonderoga.

You know, doubtles, that the frigate of 22 guns commanded by Captain John ought to be at sea by now, for she was nearly ready to sail when I left Portsmouth.⁴

I am going to write to Mr. Cornic⁵ to ask him his orders, which I will wait for here, unless you have any to give me.

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

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

Copy, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 71, 112. Enclosed in Jonathan Williams, Jr. to the American Commissioners in France, 14 Oct. 1777, in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 68–69.

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

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

3. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh* and Continental Navy ship *Alfred* sailed from Portsmouth 22 Aug.

4. Continental Navy ship *Ranger*, John Paul Jones, left Portsmouth 1 Nov.

5. Veuve Mathurin Cornic & fils, Morlaix merchant firm.

INTELLIGENCE FROM NANTES

Octo^r 9th. 1777—

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

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

The *Liberty* Brig & }
Bellona Brig } mounting 16 Guns each

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

Copy, UkLPR, C.O. 5/149, 331. Enclosed in John Robinson to William Knox, 14 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 329.

JOHN KING TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Nantes October 9th. 1777

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

John King

Signal to be observed at Cape Henry

If it's very dangerouse to get in, that is to say if the Men of War command the Capes—Four Distinc't Fire's will be seen—

If they are within the Cape's & ly in Hampton Road, or pretty high up Chesepeak, three distinct will be seen—

If no Danger their Two distinct Fires will appear,

A Guard of 50 Men stationed their for the Protection of Vessells that may go on shore to get clear of the Enemy—²

J. King

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 70. Addressed: "Doc^t Franklin/at/Passy/prés de Paris," and at foot of first page: "Hon^{ble} Doc^t Franklin/[Hon^{ble}] Silas Dean/[Hon^{ble}] Arthur Lee Esq^t" Docketed: "Jn. King Oct 9./77 Nantes."

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

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

October 10

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

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

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

SILAS DEANE TO JEAN H. AND SAMUEL DELAP

[Extract]

Dear sir

[*Paris, Oct. 10, 1777*]

Yours of the 4th. to Mess^{rs}. F. D. & L is before me & I now inclose you a Copy of mine of the 19th. of August last since which I have had none of yours¹ M^r I.² is in the Country for a few days, in the meantime the measures you have taken as well with respect to the Vessels detained as the Prize³ are undoubtedly the most proper & I hope you will yet succeed so as to get Liberty for the Prize to go to Bilboa, where our Correspondence is with the house of Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui, fils & C^o. & if it be practicable I wish you would engage the Pilots to deliver to the Commanders of Prize Vessels arriving in future directions how to conduct on their entering the River or being examined, which will be singly to shew American Colours, keep their Prisoners (if any) out of sight & report the Vessel from Boston. But as two Prizes are now detained at Nantes which were reported from S^t Eustatia & as you have many busy person in Bourdeaux as well as Nantes the safest way may be to advise them for Bilboa & to apply there to Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui &c. These Prizes are made by Privateers on private acc^t. consequently are not at our Controul & all we can do is to advise. . . . &c.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "Mess^{rs}. Delap." The date is approximate. The letter appears in the letter book between those dated 9 Oct. and 11 Oct. 1777. The portion not printed here concerned bills drawn on the Delaps by Robert Morris and Richard Henry Lee.

1. Neither letter has been located.

2. Perhaps Ralph Izard.

3. On 7 Oct., John Ross sent Silas Deane an extract from a letter from the Delaps, dated Bordeaux, 27 Sept. 1777, in which they asked Ross to inform the American Commissioners "that we are impatient to hear from them. We have however got the two Vessels that were stoped cleared. They both left Blaye last Monday. . . ." *Connecticut Historical Society Collections* 23: 117. The two vessels that had been stoped were the *Seaflower*, Patrick Barry, and the *Liberty*, Capt. Seabrook. See notes to "Extrait D'une lettre des officiers de l'amirauté de Bord^x. á M De Sartine Du 7. 8^{bre}. 1777," above.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

To The Hon^b. Benjamin Franklin, Silas Dean, & Arthur Lee. Esq^{rs}.
Gent^l.

You will perhaps be surpriz'd at two Continental Frigates arriving in France, & not bringing Dispatches or Letters of any kind to you respecting the Public Service—I will therefore do myself the Honour of making known to you the reason of this unexpected appearance in France—Having waited a long time for Guns and being often disappointed, I went in person to Congress to obtain leave to proceed to France & procure Guns and necessaries, I return'd to the Ship again at Portsm^o, on my return I found a probability of getting Cannon in a short time, which I thought would be much better than risking the Ship to France without Guns; I obtain'd most of them after along time waiting.—Then I was put to a difficulty for Men; however I made up the Complement to 180 being 80 short of our number—however considering the little probability of obtaining more, the Season advancing; the Ship growing very foul, & the chance of being block'd up, or watch'd by Brittish Frigates—I say, taking all these things together I thought best to proceed to Sea & make the best of our way to France making what prizes in our way we possibly could Man—From my former Instructions ¹ I thought I was authorized to take this Step; therefore without waiting an Answer from Congress I put to Sea, informing them what I had determined; being the Senior Officer I order'd Captⁿ Hinman in the *Alfred* to proceed on the Cruize in Company, whose Ship was in the same situation as the *Raleigh*, respecting Men and Guns, and in want of many other Articles not to be procured in America, such as Cables Sails and Rigging—we proceedd in full confidence Congress will justify the Step, rather than the Ships should remain in port & be block'd up as the other Frigates are—we are now arriv'd, we want our Ships clean'd and repair'd, some Cables, Cordage, and Canvas &^c, the *Raleigh* will not want much except some Cables, and a Main Mast, which we had the misfortune to spring at Sea in a Gale of Wind; shall also want Six twelve pound Cannon & some military Stores—I shall use all the frugality possible, allowing the Ships ought to be well fitted, now they are where Materials are to be had cheap—We have obtained leave, after various pretences, not consistant with the Honour of the United States, nor the Respect due to a Man of War belonging to a free and Independant Empire—But small Folks must sing small, & for the sake of Convenience must abate their Dignity my Line of Conduct shall be mark'd with prudence and Circumspection, and the Interest of the States whom I serve, shall be my governing principal; I meet with every personal Respect & the principal people shew a friendly disposition towards America; they seem even to Love them for murdering their Old Enemies the English—I wish they were as little afraid of them as the Americans are.—With this you will receive a Letter which was wrote to you at that time for the Special purpose abovemention'd;² I don't know that it contains anything that can be apply'd to the present Case, but I thought it proper to forward it to you, in order you might see the Contents; The Frigate I have the Honour to Command is of equal Quality to any in Europe & will do Honour to the United States, wherever she goes—I have a very crouded Audience every Day—I should be proud of a Line from you, pointing out a Line for my Conduct during my stay here (which will be as short as possible (except you have any Commands to execute for the good of the Continental Service) if so the Ship shall wait your Commands—I

wish I had hapned in a place where I could have had an Interview I might have given you a just description of our Naval Affairs; as I flatter myself none have a more comprehensive view, nor have the Honour of the Service more at Heart, & am confident any Measure I might recommend, would be agreed to by Congress—

What we did after leaving New England, will appear by the Copy Inclos'd of a Narrative of our Cruize, w^{ch}. I have forwarded to Congress by a Vessel I Boarded at Sea.³—I also send you the Minutes of our Voyage afterwards untill our Arrival at this Port;⁴ which was on the Evening of Monday Oct^o. 6th. when the *Raleigh* & *Alfred* came to Anchor in Port Louis both in Distress. I orderd the prizes to Anchor without the Harbour under the Island of Groix, until I could be Inform'd what reception we might meet with—they are yet at that place, but not at our Risque—I hope you will approve of our proceedings; the Ships and Cargoes are Sold for about half their value; but there seems a necessity for secresy & Dispatch, & half a Loaf is better than no Bread, says the Old proverb—I must refer you to Mess^{rs} Berard & C^{os} Letter⁵ for further particulars respecting the Ships in the Road—The Frigates we are preparing with all Expedition to heave down, &c. &c. As to News in America when we saild—can say but little about it—How's Fleet was at Sea, seen last, standing out of Delaware Bay, suppos'd bound to Chesapeak Bay he knows not where to go, he sends his Dove often out of the Ark to see if there is any resting place for his foot on Land, he will not find any except New York—Our Grand Army was at and about Philadelphia, wanting nothing but a General Battle with the Enemy—Ticonderoga to be sure is a cursed Affair & not cleared up to the Satisfaction of the public when I saild; the whole proceedings there are very misterious & very unfortunate at present; but I believe it will turn to the Enemies disadvantage—

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

Tho^s. Thompson

Port Louis Oct^o. 10th. 1777

Since concluding my Letter—here has arriv'd a small Vessess [*Vessel*] which came as a paquet to America—She saild from Portsmouth 4th. Septem^r. Captⁿ. de La *Mere Bobie*,⁶ he was boarded & search'd by an English Frigate of 22 Guns, 50 Leagues from Nantuckett Shoals—he threw over his Mail and all his Letters except one for M^r Williams w^{ch}. he has sent⁷—he further adds there was no Acco^t. of How's Fleet &

Army, & that Burgoyne had lost 2,500 men in different Skirmages, since he took Ticonderoga—600 of which number a party of our Militia had taken Prisoners—

This all I can learn respecting American News—I am [&c.]

Tho^s. Thompson

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

1. Continental Marine Committee to Captain Thomas Thompson, 29 Apr. 1777, *NDAR*8: 472–75. *Raleigh* sailed before Thompson received the Marine Committee's subsequent orders, dated 6 Sept. *NDAR* 9: 887.

2. Continental Marine Committee to the American Commissioners in France, 29 Apr. 1777, *NDAR*8: 475.

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

4. Journal of Continental Navy Frigate *Raleigh*, Captain Thomas Thompson, above at 5 Oct.

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

6. Charles Gléyo La Chesnaye was master of the packet *Mère Bobie*.

7. Charles Gléyo La Chesnaye to Jonathan Williams, 9 Oct., above.

JEAN-PIERRE LOUVEL TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Copie D'une lettre de M. Louvel Comm^{re}. des Classes à M De Sartine.

M^{gr}. De Paimbeuf Le 10. 8^{bre}. 1777.

Le *Mars* doit en fin sortir demain. ce Corsaire armé de 22. Canons et de 120. hommes parroit bien disposé à tirer parti des Circonstances et des rencontres qu'il pourra faire. je le vois ici avec une certaine inquiétude par le souffle belliqueux qu'il répend dans notre petite Cité un peu Républicaine, surtout parmi nos Marins naturellement disposés à se laisser séduire par l'appas de la fortune avanturiere. heureusem^t que plusieurs, déjà détrompés par l'infidélité des Cap^{nes}. Corsaires à leur tenu leurs promesses, en qui ont déserté de leurs bards bien résolus de n'y pas retourner, dégoutene les nôtres de ce métier pénible et dangereux. en effet ces Capitaines ne trouvent plus gueres que des mauvais Sujets, des vagabons et avanturiers qu'ils traitent en conséquence et dont la société ne peut être assés tot purgée.

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

[Translation]

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

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

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

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

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

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fol. 76.

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

[Gironde] du vendredi 10^{eme} [octobre]

beau temps toute la journée, et petit vent de sudsudest. ce matin a huit heures ayant eu connaissance d'un bâtiment a trois mats armé en guerre. sur le champ j'ay fait embarquer la chaloupe, et fait [*indecipherable*] le branlebas chacuun a son poste. a dix heures j'ay appareillé. j'ay fait gouverner sur le susdit bâtiment a onze heure le pilot luy ayant manqué, il a mouillié au dessous de royan.¹ a midy étant assez prés de luy pour le reconnaître pour insurgent, j'ay envoyé un officier a son bord. a une heure j'ay mouillié auprès de luy. mon canot est revenü a bord avec le capitaine du dit bâtiment qui est le sieur jean heart commandant la fregate le *portsmouth* armée de dix huit canons en batterie, quatre sur ses gailliards, et de cent trente hommes d'equipage. a cinq heures, j'ay fait débarquer la chaloupe. a six heures j'ay appareillé ainsi que la fregate insurgente, et apres avoir courü six bordées les vents au sudest nous sommes parvenü a [laide?] du flot a une heure après minuit dans la rade du verdun. ou nous avons mouillié par les 10 brasses fond de sable gris. et filé 45 brasses. linsurgent a mouillié a coté de nous.

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Friday 10th [October]

Fine weather all day, and light wind from the southsoutheast. This morning at eight o'clock having had knowledge of a three-masted armed ship, I immediately brought on board the ship's longboat, and had the ship cleared for action, sending each to his station. At ten o'clock I set sail. I steered toward the above-mentioned ship. At eleven o'clock, lacking a pilot, he anchored below Royan.¹ At noon, being close enough to him to recognize that he was an insurgent, I sent an officer on board him. At one o'clock I anchored near him. My boat returned with the captain of the said ship, who is Mr. John Heart, commanding the frigate the *Portsmouth*, armed with eighteen cannons in broadside, four on the forecastle and quarterdeck, and with a

crew of 130. At five o'clock I ordered the longboat away. At six o'clock I set sail, as did the insurgent frigate, and after having tacked six times, the winds to the south-east, we had reached the fleet, at an hour after midnight, in the road of Verdon, where we anchored in 10 fathoms, a bottom of gray sand, and payed out 45 fathoms. The insurgent anchored beside us.

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 285.

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

October 11

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN TO GOVERNOR EDWARD HAY

[Extract]

(N^o. 9.)

Whitehall 11th: October. 1777.

Governor Hay.

Sir,

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

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

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

Geo: Germain

DfS, UKLPR, C.O. 28/56, 133–34. Docketed: "Dra^t/to Governor Hay/Whitehall 11th: Oct^r 1777./ (N^o. 9.)" Notation: "Ent^d." The portion not printed here concerns the importation of ammunition for the island's defense and relations with the Marquis de Bouillé.

1. An extract of the second letter is printed at *NDAR* 9: 294.

2. On 6 June, Capt. Thomas Pringle transferred to Hay's custody 56 seamen captured by *Ariadne* in American privateer sloop *Marangoin*, John Welsh, commander. See *NDAR* 9: 46, 121–22. On 16 July, he brought in seven more American prisoners, from the privateer *Retaliation*, prize crew of a recapture. Hay to Germain, 17 July 1777, UKLPR, C.O. 28/56, 137–38.

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

à fontainebleau 11 8^{bre}. 1777.

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

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

de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 11 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, the letter that you wrote to me on the 6th of this month, informing me of the arrival in the roadstead of Port Louis of the two Anglo-American frigates, *Raleigh*, of 26 guns, Captain Thomsein, and *Alfred*, of 20 guns, Captain Elechia Henman, and of the two merchantmen, also Anglo-American, arrived escorted by the frigates and laden with almost 200 tons of sugar and rum.¹ You will take care to verify by means of official reports the repairs to the two frigates, putting them in a condition to put to sea again, and you will furnish them, for payment, provisions and others assistance that they will need, but you will keep a close watch so that there will not be embarked on these ships any warlike supplies or munitions, and so that in accordance with the treaties, they only remain in that port for the time absolutely necessary to make repairs and to fill their needs. You will take care to report to me the means that you use to speed their departure.

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

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 18. Addressed at foot of page: "M. Viger l'orient."

1. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Capt. Thomas Thompson, and Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Capt. Elisha Hinman, and their prizes *Jamaica*, David Watt, master, and *Anna Susannah*, John Taylor, master.

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

"In hopes of being of service to my Country & to some Friends I give you the following information w^{ch}. may be publish'd if you think proper,—

“One day this Week a Brigg Letter of Mark of 16 Guns¹ that sail’d from hence ten days before for S^o Carolina return’d with a large Jamaica Man w^{ch} she pick’d up from out of a Convoy this prize is Loaden with 400 & odd Hh^{ds} Sugar & 150 puncheons rum, besides Mahogany & pimento—they say to value of £20,000 Stg they have endeavour’d to erase the Name from the Stern, but still remains a sufficiency to see, she was call’d the *Manners*, she is a long ship without a Head has Quarter Gallaries, close Quarters Boards & four Windows in her Stern—the Crew are close prisoners on Board the Brigg whose Name I cannot learn but is commanded by one Cross, this day they sent a New sail on the prize w^{ch} denotes they intend sending her out again—a practice—this they use with all prizes since the *Clarendon* & *Hanover Planters*—interruption & then return under French or some other Neutral Colours, or else after reaching some adjacent small port send the Goods thence in Barks it is said that Cross is determin’d to sell his prize for the first offer, may be made him & dare say wou’d not refuse £8 to 10,000 Stg for her tho’ she may be actually worth three times the sum,—

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

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

1. South Carolina letter of marque brig *Bellona*, Capt. Cross.

EDMUND ELSDEN TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord

Lynn R^o Octo^r 11th. 1777

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

tom of the Ransomers Letter which I apprehend was done by the Ransomers Wife before she sent the Letter to Lynn, I remain [&c.]

Edm^d Elsdon

L, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 308A. Addressed at the foot of the page: "To the R^t Honor^{le} Lord Visc^t Weymouth."

1. Letter not found. For the capture of *Northampton* and the subsequent activities of Benjamin Bailey see *NDAR* 9: 517–19, 522, 534–36, 539.

October 12 (Sunday)

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, OCT. 12."

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

London Chronicle, 21–23 Oct. 1777.

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

"On the 20th of June last I¹ fell in with two American sloop privateers, the largest of which mounted 12 carriage guns, besides a great number of swivels, and came up with me about eight o'clock in the morning, and hailed. I fired a gun aboard of her, and hoisted an English ensign. She gave us a whole broadside, and hoisted an American pendant. After a smart engagement, which lasted above three glasses, she sheered off. There was reason to believe a great many of the privateer's men were killed, as there was not above one third of the people seen on deck when she went away, which at first appeared to be about 120 or 130. The *Alexander* had only 30 men and a few passengers, who all behaved exceeding well. The *Alexander* had only some shots through her masts and sails, and her stern a good deal shattered."

London Chronicle, 21–23 Oct. 1777.

1. J. Baine, captain of letter of marque ship *Alexander*, 14 guns.

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

October 1777
Sunday 12th.

Lizard N^o. 10. 4E Distant 55 Leagues
AM, at 6 Saw a Sail to the S^oward Gave Chace at 8 Fired 4 Eighteen Pounders & Brought the Chace too, on Examination found

hir to be the *Betsey*¹ Schooner from Nantz, bound to N^o. Carolina, American Property, which we made a Prize of, Sent a Lieutenant and Two Petty Officers & Ten Seamen on Board of hir

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/172.

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

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

[Translation]

Most excellent Sir.

My Lord,

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

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

A short Time ago an English Frigate attacked and took, under the Cannon of Muros in Galicia, a Vessel commanded by Captain Buchomere coming from the Colonies, and carried his Prize into Lisbon, where he sold it.—We undergo other frequent Grievances of the like kind from English Ships of War, which cruize within Sight of our Ports and Coasts. The Insults which the Spanish Flag suffers in the American Seas are even more frequent and more serious, although our Ships are on the direct Course to our own Possessions, (nor are even some of the Ships of the King's Navy exempted from this Treatment,) it being now a regular Practice of the British Navy to fire immediately with Ball, to take possession of the Ships, to recognize the Cargoes, to break open the Papers & sealed Registers, to occasion many other Vexations, & even to declare some Vessels to be legal Prizes. Facts, which unless proved as they are, would appear incredible.—We have made infinite Applications & Complaints to the English Ministers, in the most moderate and friendly Terms, upon these irregular proceedings, but unfortunately we have not yet received due Satisfaction in any one Instance.—Your Excellency loves the publick Good & Justice, and knows how important the preservation of Peace between the two Courts is, and that, in order to procure it, both Courts should strive to exceed each other in fixing it by the

Root, by avoiding all Disturbances, & lawfull Causes of Complaint. I therefore leave it to your Excellency's Penetration & Prudence to consider, whether We, who watch the doing Justice to British Subjects in the most slight & minute Objects, can indifferently see, that while we receive continual Protestations of the like kind from the British Cabinet, no Measures yet reach the stopping the Evils of which we complain, nor give any Satisfaction for the Grievances already suffered.

I repeat my Obedience [&c.]³

S^t Lorenzo,

12th. Oct^r. 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca.

Translation, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 271–72. Addressed at the foot of the page: "His Excy/Lord Grantham." Docketed: "In Lord Grantham's N^o 56." Enclosed in Grantham to Weymouth, 13 Oct., below.

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

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

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

October 13

LLOYD'S EVENING POST, AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1777

London.

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

ance of her helm; so that the *Betty* shot past her; and another vessel appearing to come to their assistance, she put on all the sail she could carry, bore away, and in two hours was out of sight. What is remarkable, the *Betty* had only eight 3 and 4 pounders, and 16 hands, men and boys; the other, besides her superior weight and number of guns, was manned with 150 men. Capt. Angues had one man killed, and there is reason to believe some of his shot took place on board of the privateer.

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

Gentlemen

Paris 13 Oct^r 1777.

Yours of the 6th.¹ is before us. When the Private Letter referred to² & the situation of the Frigates shall be communicated to us we shall be in a Situation for forming a judgment & writing you more particularly. meantime we inclose a Letter for Capt. Thompson which we take the Liberty to ask you to deliver to him. We must rely on y^r assisting these officers as well to Careen their Vessels & procure the necessary refreshments, as in having the Prizes disposed of to the best possible advantage. We have the honor to remain [&c]

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "Mess^{rs}. Gourlade &c."

1. See above at 6 Oct.

2. Captain Thomas Thompson to the American Commissioners in France, 10 Oct., above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Sir

Paris 13 Oct^r 1777

We rec^d. from Mess^{rs}. Gourlaed &c an acc^t. of y^r arrival¹ & were informed that you had a Private Letter for us which we have not yet rec^d.² conclude it must Come to hand in the Course of this week. Mean time we desire you would inform us in a Letter under Cover of Mess^{rs}. Gourlade &c what is the situation of y^r Vessels & what their destination, as well as what articles of supplies you are ordered to purchase &c so far as may be consistant with y^r instructions to Communicate to us, that so far as any thing depend on or may be expected from us we may be apprized as early as possible. We recommend to you to write no Letters but under M^r Gourlade's Cover who will inclose them to M^r Chaumont by which means we shall receive them with less danger of their being intercepted & opened—we are with Compt^s to Capt. Hinman as well as yourself on y^r safe arrival Sir [&c]

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "Commodore Thompson."

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

2. Thomas Thompson to the American Commissioners in France, 10 Oct., above.

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

Fontainebleau 13 8^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, vos Lettres par lesquelles vous m'informez de l'arrivée des deux Batimens Américaines avec deux prises angloises. Vous me avisez que celles-ci

ont eû ordre de votre part de sortir dans les 24-heures sans avoir une vendu et j'apprends par une autre voie que la totalité de ces deux cargaisons a été vendue a des étrangères. J'ai peine a le croire d'après les ordres positifs que je vous ai donné, et les intentions du Roy qui vous sont bien connues. Mandez moi Courier par Courier ce qui en est.

Vous ferez bien de conseiller aux Negotians de L'orient de ne se point compromettre, ce qui ne moins auroit pas de leur arriver d'après la Lettre circulaire que j'ai écrite a toutes les Ports du Commerce ¹ et qui doit leur être connué. Je Suis [&c.]
de sartine

Comme l'heure de la poste me presse et qu'en ai pas gardé la minutte de cette Lettre vous en ferez faire une Copie que vous m'enverrez.

d s

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 13 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, your letters by which you informed me of the arrival of the two American ships and the two English prizes. You told me that these latter had received orders from you to leave within twenty-four hours without having sold anything, and I have learned from another source that the entirety of the two cargoes was sold to foreigners. I could hardly believe it after the positive orders I gave to you and the king's wish which is well known to you. Send me a report of it by courier.

You will do well to advise the merchants at Lorient not to compromise themselves at all, which would, nonetheless, occur to them, according to the circular letter which I wrote to all the ports of commerce ¹ and which must be known to them. I am [&c.]
de sartine

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

d s

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 19. Addressed at foot of page: "M. Viger." Notation: "R. le 17. 8^{re}."

1. Gabriel de Sartine to the Chambers of Commerce of All Ports of France, printed under 23 Oct., below.

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o. 56.

Escorial 13th. October 1777.

My Lord,

I have received the Honour of your Lordship's N^o. 22.¹

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

My several Letters ever since the Date of Cunningham's Entrance into Ferrol, will have shewn your Lordship how constantly attentive I have been to that Object, by speaking and writing upon it to M. Florida blanca: And the Office, N^o. 2, which I now enclose for your Lordship's Information, was sent to him after I had spoken to him on the Subject of it. For tho' in our Conversation he had promised to take particular Steps to stop so daring a Proceeding as Cunningham's, yet I thought it necessary to appeal to him in writing in order to refer to every part of the Case, and to his repeated Assurances.

No Argument has been omitted on my Side to convince him how necessary it is, that the Governors should execute the orders he has sent, if he had any Intention to be thought in earnest about them. and upon my referring to some fresh orders issued in France, which He treated as great concessions in that Court, I added, that such measures might become very necessary here, and would be expected, if those, already taken, were not better executed.²

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

I have mentioned in my Office the Attention, which I was sure would be given to all Matters of Complaint from hence, because a fresh one has been made to me.—It is of a Ship, laden at the Coruña with Provisions for Porto Rico, being taken by a Letter of Marque from S^t Christopher's, carried into the Island of Anguilla, there set free by the Commissary, and retaken by another Letter of Marque Ship from S^t Christopher's, carried in there and condemned. From the Information which I have received, I believe the Vessell was laden at Bilbao, & was really carrying Provisions to Porto Rico.³

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

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

Grantham

P:S: I have just received together two Offices from M: Florida blanca, in answer to those which I have mentioned in this Letter, & have only just Time to enclose to y^r Lordship a Translation of them⁴—G.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 265–67. Docketed: "Escorial 13 Oct^r 1777/Lord Grantham/(N^o 56)/R. 3 Nov^r/four inclosures."

1. See *NDAR*, 9: 649.

2. This sentence, beginning with "and upon . . ." is in cipher in the original.

3. See Declaration of Manuel del Zerro Rubio, at 4 Oct., above.

4. Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 12 Oct. 1777, above; see also its note no. 3.

October 14

J. L. DOERFELD TO WILLIAM EDEN

N^o. 31.

Stockholm October 14th. 1777.

Sir,

I am honored with Your Letter N^o. 6, containing the Earl of Suffolks commands relative to the American Brig, which came in August last to Marstrand, and was said to be English property, taken by an American Pirate.¹

All ever since I had presented a Memorial on this subject to Senator Baron Falckenberg² I have made every inquiry in my power to learn such particulars as might confirm, that the Vessel had been taken by an American Pirate. But I got only a very vague Report, by which nothing could be proved; and when I applied lately to Baron de Falckenberg, he told me that according to the accounts which were sent hither from the Governor, strict inquiries had been made, but it had not been found that the Brig in question had ever been English property. I took this opportunity of declaring to Baron de Falckenberg, that I made no doubt but the amicable, just, and dignified Principles, which had induced His Swedish Majesty to prohibit the admission of Pirate armed Vessels into His Ports, would operate equally against the admission of all Piratical Prizes. He said, that, he did not know exactly the King his Masters sentiments about such prizes as might come in unarmed under the title of Merchant Ships some time after they had been taken, but he supposed that whenever the case should exist, His Swedish Majesty would declare Himself in a satisfactory manner: with regard to those as should be carried into Swedish Ports by American Pirates, or such as were sent within twenty four hours after having been made Prizes they would certainly by no means be admitted. I replied, that I could wish orders without distinction would be given on this subject before any of these cases happened to exist, because there was reason to apprehend, that were they to be dispatched afterwards, several accidents were likely to happen, by which the execution of them would be rendered difficult, or perhaps impossible. But he did not seem to be much inclined to comply with this request, and told me only that it would be best to decide the question as soon as the case existed.

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

I think it necessary to observe, that it is difficult to enter with the Senator into Points of Business, and to get an immediate and positive Answer, as his Power with regard to publick affairs is extremely limited. This is the Complaint of almost all the Foreign Ministers here, who generally prefer to treat with Mons^r Scheffer,³ having in

every Respect infinitely more Power than the other. As he is expected here towards the End of this Month, I hope to obtain a more direct, precise, and favorable Answer.⁴ I have the Honor to be [&c.]

J. L. Doerfeld.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot of first page: "William Eden, Esq^r." Doerfeld was British ambassador to Sweden.

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

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

3. Gustavus III's chancellor, Ulrik Scheffer (1716–99).

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

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

By &c

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

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

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

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

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

You are to continue upon the above Station and Service until you receive further Order, or til' you reliev'd by some other of His Maj^{ty}s Ships or Vessels which you may expect will be soon sent out for that purpose, and then, if you do not receive orders by them to the contrary you are to return with both Sloops to Plymouth sound & remain there until you receive further Order, sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings, And in case any such Ships or Vessels whose Comm^r shall be Senior to you shall be appointed to cruize upon the Said Station while you continue thereon, you are to follow his Orders, and, on the other hand, if he shall be junior to you, he is hereby required to obey such as he shall receive from you. Given &c. the 14th. of October 1777.¹

Sandwich

C. Spencer

H. Palliser

By &c. P.S.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 234–36. Addressed at foot: "Capt^l Cooper, *Hawke* Sloop, Plymouth."

1. On 17 Oct., Capt. Elliot Salter, HM frigate *Hussar*, was ordered to put to sea at the first opportunity of wind and weather. The remainder of his orders read the same as Cooper's, with the addition that, if he should fall in with *Alert* and *Hawke*, which would be cruising the same station, he was to take them under his command. Ibid., 356–59.

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

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

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

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

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

1. *Judith*, brig, Alvara Lofthouse, captured by South Carolina Navy brigantine *Notre Dame*, Stephen Seymour, *NDAR* 9: 311, 714.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen—

Nantes 14 Octo^r 1777.—

I have the pleasure to announce the return of the mere *Bobie* Packet Boat, who delivered your dispatches in Safety but by the inclosed Copy of a Letter¹ that I have recd from the Captain you will see he has not been so fortunate with those he was charged with in return. As there were no Dispatches and the news only a confirmation of what you already have at Paris, I thought that for the delay of one day it was

not worth while to put you to the Expence of an Express; If I am wrong in this I will in future send a Courier on every such occasion, but the expence is so great I always wish to save it except where the public Service requires the Contrary.—

I have sent Cap^t Nicholson to L'orient to see the Captains of the two Frigates that are arrived there,² and to assist them with his advice in what may relate to their Ships &c, as they being Strangers may stand in need of it; and at the same time I have desired them to address themselves to M^r Gourelade for what assistance they may have occasion for.—

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

J Williams J

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 113. Addressed: "The Honorable/The Commissioners of the/United States/Paris." Docketed: "Jon Williams/Nantes 14 Octo^r 1777."

1. Charles Gléyo La Chesnaÿe to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 9 Oct. 1777, above. Williams also sent a copy of La Chesnaÿe's letter of 11 August reporting his arrival at Portsmouth, N.H., 14 July. PPAmP, Franklin Papers, vol. 71, no. 112.

2. Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Capt. Elisha Hinman, and Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Capt. Thomas Thompson.

3. On Capt. John Young's sighting Howe's fleet from Sinepuxent, Md. See George Lupton (James Van Zandt) to William Eden, 15 Oct., and Paul Wentworth to William Eden, ca. Oct. 30, below.

BRITISH PRIZES AT GIBRALTAR

Gibraltar 14th. October 1777.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 300–301. Docketed: "In Lord Grantham's N^o 59." Enclosure to Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 27 Oct. 1777, below. Notation: "Copy sent to Admiralty."

1. Massachusetts privateer schooner *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert, commander. NDAR 9: 657–58.

October 15

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

London.

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

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

WILLIAM LEE TO JOHN KING

[Extract]

M^r Jn^o. King Nantes.

Paris 15 Oct. 77

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

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

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

GEORGE LUPTON (JAMES VAN ZANDT) TO WILLIAM EDEN

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Paris 15th October 1777—

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

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

This Vessell left America the twelfth of August, at which time there was in the Deliware and Chesopeak upwards of Sixty Sail of Merchandmen ready loaded, all which must fall into the hands of Lord Howe, if the Army advances towards Philadelphia—Amongst the Number of these Vessells are Seven or eight frenchmerchantmen, who have been waiting some time past for proper Season to leave the American Coast by which detention I hope they may fall into your hands—

The Affair between Morris & the Commissioners here, has not a little humbled their pride—they have promised never to mention any thing to the Congress concerning him in future—

Two Continental Ships of War,³ are Arrived in the Port of L'Orient—they are the same which had the Engagement with his Majestys Ship the *Druid* Coming from the Leeward Islands—with the fleet under their Convoy, they brought in with them two Vessells⁴ which they took out of said fleet, and which was sold for nine thousand six hundred pounds Sterling, which Ships are fitting out with all expedition, and mean for sea immediately, these Vessells left America, with two hundred men Short of their Complement also Cannon, &c &c—

The Cap^e Green who I mentiond to you some time since, has a Ship⁵ of 24 Six pounder which he means to proceed to America with, this Vessell will be richly loaded—and Sail in about 3 Weeks. . . . I am [&c.]

Geo: Lupton

L, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fols. 234–35. Addressed at foot: "W^m: Eden Esq^r." The portions of the letter not printed here concerned relations between the American Commissioners and the French Court, rumors that one of the Commissioners, perhaps Franklin, would be sent to Berlin, reports that Bancroft was about to leave the service of the Commissioners because of their failure to pay him and Van Zandt's hopes to secure the place, Carmichael's low opinion of the Commissioners and his plans to sail for America with dispatches for Congress.

1. *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*.
2. Capt. John Young, Continental Navy sloop *Independence*.
3. Continental Navy ship *Alfred* and Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*.
4. *Jamaica*, David Watt, and *Anna Susannah*, John Taylor.
5. *Brune*, which would become Continental Navy frigate *Queen of France*, Capt. John Green.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Fontainebleau 15 8^{bre}. 1777.

Lorsque j'ai reçu, Monsieur, la note que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'envoyer de Milord Stormont¹ sur l'arrivée a l'orient le 6. de ce mois de deux Corsaires américains l'*alfred* et le *Polly* avec deux prises,² le S. Viger Commissaire de la marine en ce Port m'en avoit déjà instruit par Sa Lettre du 8. Il résulte de la Déclaration des Cap^{es} Hinman et Thompson qu'ils ont relaché pour cause d'avarie; et le S. Viger ne leur a permis l'entrée qu'après avoir soin constater, par un Procès Verbal, la nécessité des réparations; mais il a prévenu en même tems les ordres que demandé M. l'ambassadeur en Signifiant qu'il falloit que ces Réparations fussent faites promptement et que ces Batimens remissent en mer par le p^e vent favorable. Quant aux deux Batimens que ces Capitaines avoient anoncé Batimens de Commerce de leur Nation qu'ils escorteioient, le S. Viger ayant reconnu que c'étoient des prises faites sur les anglois, et leur avoit defendu l'entrée du Port. J'ai lieu de croire que d'après ce détail Milord Stormont sera convaincu de l'exactitude que l'on a porte a l'exécution des ordres précédemment donnés. J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c]

de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 15 October 1777.

Sir, when I received the note from my Lord Stormont,¹ which you honored me by sending to me, and which concerned the arrival on the 6th of this month in L'Orient of two American privateers, the *Alfred* and the *Polly*, with two captured ships,²

Sieur Viger, the naval commissioner in this port, had already informed me of the fact by a letter dated the 8th. According to the declaration made by the Captains Hinman and Thompson, they had put into port as a consequence of damage to their ships. Sieur Viger, however, allowed them entry only after having made a point of confirming, by a report, the necessity of repairs, and, at the same time, told them of the orders requested by the ambassador emphasizing that the repairs had to be done promptly and that the ships had to put to sea with the first favorable wind. As for the ships these captains had said were merchant ships of their nation which they were escorting, Sieur Viger, having recognized these were ships captured from the English, had forbidden their entry into the port. I have reason to believe that my Lord Stormont will be convinced by this detail of the exactitude that has been applied to the execution of the orders previously issued. I have the honor of being [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fol. 110. Addressed at foot of first page: "M le C^e de Vergennes." In the margin: "ordres donnés à l'orient sur l'arrivée de deux Corsairs américains l'*alfred* et le *Polly* avec [deux] prises anglaises"; "orders issued at L'Orient on the arrival of two American privateers, the *Alfred* and the *Polly*, with two captured English ships."

1. See Lord Stormont to Lord Weymouth, 15 Oct., below.

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

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o 151

My Lord

Fontainebleau October 15th. 1777

This Morning I had the Honour of your Lordships Letter N^o 62,¹ and immediately waited upon Monsieur de Vergennes, and Monsieur de Maurepas, to both of whom I made those Representations your Lordship directs.

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

In consequence of Information which I received this Morning, I drew up the inclosed Note,² which I delivered to M de Vergennes—after stating the circumstances of the Case.—He made his usual answer, that he would talk to M de Sartine upon the Subject. He spoke as if the whole had been new to Him, which I think can scarce be the Case, as Monsieur de Maurepas owned to me, that He, Maurepas, knew of the Arrival of the two American Privateers,³ knew that they had been admitted into the Port of

L'Orient: He said that they were Leaky, and in great distress, and that as soon as they had received those succours which upon principles of Humanity cannot be refused, they Should be ordered to put to Sea; as to the Prizes⁴ He said he was persuaded they were gone off—I observed to Him that whilst the Orders given with regard to the American Privateers were evaded under various Pretences, no benefit whatever could accrue to us from them; that Vessels would always appear Leaky to those who had a Mind to think them so, and that in a Word the whole was a mere jest, and was considered as such by the Americans themselves, who were known to have said, that these Orders would change a little their mode of Operation but would do them no essentiel Harm—His answer to this was general and evasive, that the french Ministers did all they could, and were very sincere in their Professions, but could not prevent every abuse. . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimilies*, vol. 19, no. 1722. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount/Weymouth." Docketed: "Fontainebleau 15th Oct^r 1777/Lord Stormont/(N^o 151)." Notation: "R. 19th by Express/from Dover/one inclosure." In the portion of the letter not printed here Stormont briefly reports a conversation with Vergennes and vents his general frustration with the failure of the French to redress British grievances.

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

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

3. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, and Continental Navy ship *Alfred*.

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

October 16

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

By &c

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & Cruize off the Port of Oporto for the Protection of the Trade of His Maj^{ty}s Subjects & diligently to look out for & to use your utmost endeavours to take or destroy Privateers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America, sending Letters to the British Consuls at that Port & at Lisbon by the first Vessel you may meet with going thither, to inform them of your arrival & of the time you are appointed to Cruize on the Coast of Portugal which is to be, off Oporto, as above directed, for the space of Fifteen Days after your arrival upon that Station & at the expiration thereof for the like number of Days off the Tagus, whither you are to proceed & Cruize accordingly for that time & for the above purposes; and then repair to Lisbon where you are to make enquiry for all such homeward bound Trade as may be desirous of accompanying you, and (after a stay not exceeding Ten Days from the time of your going into that Port) you are to take the said Trade under your Convoy & make the best of your way (consistent with their security) with them towards England & having seen them to Spithead or as near to it as your way & theirs may be together remain there until you receive further order; sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings.

And Whereas the Commanders of His Majestys Sloops named in the Margin ¹ are directed to proceed & Cruize, for the like purposes off the Ports of Portugal abovementioned until relieved by the arrival of other clean Frigates intended to be sent out as soon as possible; we signify the same to you that you may know of their being on the Coast & give information thereof also to the British Consuls as above directed, And, in case you shall receive information that can be depended upon, either from them, or others, that any Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned are in parts contiguous to, tho not within the Stations you are hereby directed to Cruize upon you are at liberty to proceed in quest of them; taking care to return immediately to the said Stations as soon as you shall have taken destroyed or driven them away or be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there. Given &c 16th Oct^o 1777

Sandwich

J Buller

H Palliser

By &c &c

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 350-52. Addressed at foot of letter: "Cap^t Elphinstone, *Egmont*, Spithead."

1. "*Hawke Alert*."

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

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

London Chronicle, 18-21 Oct. 1777.

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

Extract of a Letter from Captⁿ. Hughes Commanding His Maj^{'ty}s Ship *Centaur* to M^r Stephens dated at Sea the 16th Oct^r 1777—

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

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

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

An Account of American Vessels at Pember Reef¹

& Sta. Lucie, near Nantz—

Two Irish Wherrys, bound to Virginia Very Deep—

One Brig of 150 Tons, bound to South Carolina.

One Brig, Fitting as a Privateer, Captⁿ Abbott—commonly call'd Silver Fist, expected to sail in a Fortnight—²A Ship called the *Mars*,³ fitting as a Privateer to mount 22 Guns only waits for Men.A Privateer Brig, Captⁿ Cross, mounting 14 Guns which lately carried in a Jamaica Man expected to sail in Three Weeks—⁴A Privateer Brig, call'd the *Fanny* Captⁿ Kendrick which took the *Hanover Planter* the 8 Augst. last Ready to sail, mounts 14 Guns—A Privateer Brig, call'd the *General Mercey* took the *Clarendon* the 8th Augst. last mounts 14 Guns & ready to sail.A Ship call'd the *Hancock & Adams* Fitting for America

There are a Great many others up at Nantz of which the Person, (who gave the Principal Part of the above Intelligence) can give no Account, by reason of his being strictly confined but heard that there was amongst them a 36 Gun Frigate, Fitting for Sea.

R^d HughesCopy, UKLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 243–44. Docketed: "In M^r Stephens's to SSP [Sir Stanier Porten]/21 October 1777."

1. Paimboeuf.

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

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen—Nantes 16 Octo^r 1777.

The present serves to inform you that Cap^t Brown who has the *Dolphin* wishes to be excused from taking her as his owners have directed his return in the *Mars* which belongs to them; Cap^t Brown hopes you will not misinterpret his Desire, and says that if you choose he will continue, but if the Change will not displease you he wishes she may be given to some other man. Her new mast is gone alongside and they are getting it in; while the *Dolphin* stays here she is very usefull to keep our men together, as they can not appear on board the Frigate, and it would be very expensive & inconvenient to keep them on shore, I should therefore be glad if she were not to sail 'till the *Lion* is ready: Or if you think to sell her she may possibly be put off.—Please to return the french Captains Conditions¹ as soon as signed. I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J

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

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 114. Addressed: "The Honorable/The Commissioners of the/United States/Paris." Docketed: "Jon Williams/Nantes 16. Octo^r 77."

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

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

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

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

ETIENNE-HONORÉ DUPLESSIS DE MONGELAS TO
 JEAN-MARIE LE SAULNIER DE LA VILLEHELIO

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

Monsieur

La presente est pour vous faire part de l'arrivée d'un Brigantin françois de Nantes, la *Poggy*, qui veut dire en françois la *Catherine* de Nantes Capitaine Jean Prochetier qui a été conduit icy par la frégatte l'*Entreprise* Commandée par le Capitaine Tomas Lier,¹ on l'a entré dans cette Baye le 13. du courant avec Pavillon Anglois, malgré toutes les diligences que je fais pour découvrir la verité de ce fait, il m'a été impossible, seulement j'irai accoster le Capitaine lorsqu'on le meneroit a l'Amirauté de cette place pour prendre sa déclaration, je postay un homme dans la Cour pour entendre la déclaration qu'y feroit le Capitaine et ensuite je l'attendis, pour sçavoir de luy ce qui s'estoit passé, mais les officiers de la frégatte qui l'escortoient pour le conduire abord ont dit qu'il est encore prisonnier, et ont même deffendu a personne d'aller abord, ils l'ont empeché de me parler, sinon le rapport que m'a fait l'homme que j'avois posté, que le Bâtiment appartient a M. Grûel, Negociant a Nantes a qui j'Ecriray aujourd'hui, afin qu'il donne pouvoir de suivre son affaire. Il me semble à propos qu'il envoie une procure afin que je puisse avoir toutes les forces qu'exige cette malheureuse affaire, Quoiqu' autorisé de la Cour je ne puis présenter en fait de justice, que lorsque je suis muny par procure, aussitôt que j'aurois la declaration du Capitaine, j'en ferai part a M^{sr} De Sartine afin de prendre ses ordres et luy marquer la façon avec laquelle les anglois agissent envers notre pavillon, cet époque et bien d'autres survenires icy en peu de tems, je vous prie, M. de faire part a M. Gruel que son Batiment fut pris apres 3. jours de navigation de Nantes sur le Cap finistere ou la fregatte de cette place est toujours en croisiere. Je finis en vous assurant que j'apporterai tous les soins possibles pour faire rendre justice au Cap^e. Je suis, M. &c.

P.S. Je viens d'apprendre dans le moment par une personne qui etoit a l'examen du Capitaine qu'ils s'appelle, Louis Le Grand et le Brigantin Le *Pompée* au lieu de la *Catherine*, c'est ce que j'eclaireray lorsque j'aurai vû le Capitaine. Les Anglois ont donné ce nom masque afin que je ne prisse point connaissance de l'affaire.

[Translation]

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

Sir

This letter is to inform you of the arrival from Nantes of a French brigantine, the *Poggy*, which means in French the *Catherine*, commanded by Captain Jean Prochetier, who was brought here by the frigate *Enterprise* under the command of Captain Tomas Lie.¹ The vessel entered this bay the 13th instant flying an English flag. Despite my haste to uncover the truth regarding this act, it was impossible for me to do so, but I was going to approach the captain when he was brought to the Admiralty of this place to take down his statement. I stationed a man in the courtroom to listen to the statement the captain would make there and I then waited to learn from him what had happened; however, the officers of the frigate, who were escorting him to the ship, said he was still prisoner and even forbade anyone to go on board. They prevented him from speaking to me. According to the report the man whom I had stationed in the courtroom made to me, the ship belongs to M. Gruel, a merchant in Nantes, to whom I shall write today so that he may give me authority to take action on his case. It seems appropriate to me that he send me a power of attorney so that I may have all the legal power that this unfortunate case requires. Although I am recognized by the court, I can appear before the court only when I am in possession of a power of attorney. As soon as I have the captain's statement, I shall inform my Lord de Sartine that I have it so that I may receive his instructions and shall report to him the way the English behave toward our flag, at this time and on many other occasions, during a short period of time. I request, Sir, that you inform M. Gruel that his ship was seized off Cape Finistere, three days out of Nantes, where the frigate is still cruising. I close by assuring you I shall exercise all possible care that the captain is treated justly. I am, Sir etc.

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

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fol. 114. Notation: "avec la lettre de M. de Sartine du 6. X^{bre} 1777." Mongelas was French consul general at Cadiz.

1. Capt. Sir Thomas Rich, R.N.

October 17

LLOYD'S EVENING POST AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, TO FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17

London.

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

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

[1777. *October*] 17 Friday. The Man of War in Chace hard by. We Rowed & kept at a Distance

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

October 18

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

London.

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

GEORGE GOSTLING, JR., TO PHILIP STEPHENS

D^{rs}. Commons 18th. Oct: 1777

Sir.

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

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

Geo. Gostling Jr.

[Enclosure]

Extracted from the Registry of his Majesty's High Court of Admiralty of England.
 (N^o. 4)

To Capⁿ. Tobias Okman
 of the Ship *Rebecca*
 Sir

L'Orient 27th. July 1777

Captain Day of *General Miffing's* Ship who is safe in our Road, having informed us of the particulars of the Cargo and situation of Ship *Rebecca*, that would be sold to great disadvantage at Morlaix We have advised him to give you Orders to proceed to this Port and follow our Directions on y^e same which is the purport of the Inclosed to you from Capⁿ. Day.

We intended at first to have given you in writing the necessary Instructions how to clear your Vessel from Morlaix for this Port, but finding that many Incidents might start which might embarrass you or render our Plan perhaps abortive, we have thought best that one of us should go on y^e spot to Execute and compleat our plan of clearing out your Vessel from Morlaix for this place under french Colours and Clearances to avoid all risks and difficulties of landing here your Cargo. M^r De Montplaisir who will deliver you this, is the Gentleman that will attend you from us on said affair; youll please to follow his Directions, and dispatch yourself as expeditiously as possible; he will with his friends provide a Pratick who will appear Master of the Vessel with 2 or 3 men or more if he can get them, youll take care to keep as close as possible to the Land all the way and hoist your french Colours when you come in our Road; youll send all your own Men on board the *General Miffing* at Groix and will keep only what shall be necessary to work in y^e Ship from Groix in the harbour, where you'll only come in when we send you an approbation and take care the Pilot youll take care on y^e Coast knows nothing about you being a Prize.

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

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

In hopes of seeing you soon safe here We Remain [&c.]

Berard freres & C^o.
Gourlade

Youll please to give M^r De Montplaisir a Note in writing of the Contents of your Cargo that he may take the clearance for the same

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

Yours—Berard

(superscribed)

To

Captⁿ. Tobias Oakman
of the ship *Rebecca*
Morlaix

Godf: Lee Farrant
Registrar.

Examined at D^{rs}. Commons London, with the Original Letter, remaining in the Registry of the High Court of Admiralty of England this eighteenth day of October, 1777 by me,

Geo. Gostling, Jr.
Not^y Pub^k.

L, UKLPR, Adm. 1/3884, with enclosure, Copy. Addressed at foot: "Philip Stephens Esqr."

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

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

18th. [Oct^r] my Self & Doct^r Powers Moved Down to the Officers Prison

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen.—

Nantes Oct^r 18. 1777.—

I have recvd^d a Letter from Cap^t Thompson Commander of the *Rawleigh* Frigate by which I find the prizes made by the two Ships consisted of

750 hhds Sugar

325 Punch^{ns} Rum

70 Plank Mahogany

15 Casks of Coffee and the two Ships which Capt. Nicholson tells me are 500 & 800 Tons Burden, this Property was sold for 9700 Sterling, which I take to be about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the real value, & about $\frac{1}{2}$ of what in their circumstances they ought to have been sold for; this appear'd to me such a shamefull waste of property, that I thought it my duty to signify my disapprobation of it & have written to L'orient accordingly; offering 2000 Sterling more, on your acco^t if the bargain is not past redemption; should that be accepted I will go over to L'orient [*torn*] some dutchmen, and send the whole as french Property to Holland.

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

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

Jon^a Williams J

L, CtY, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Western Americana Collection. Addressed at foot: "The Hon Commissioners/of the United States." Docketed: "M^r Williams Oct^r 18. 1777/Thompson's/Prizes/Goulade & C^o."

1. On Goulade's role in the sale of the prizes and their cargo, cf. Paul Wentworth to William Eden, ca. 30 Oct. 1777, below.

JOURNAL OF A CRUISE IN MASSACHUSETTS PRIVATEER BRIGANTINE

OLIVER CROMWELL, CAPTAIN WILLIAM COLES

[1777. October] 18 Saturday. Fine Weather. Lost sight of the Man of War

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

October 19 (Sunday)

SILAS DEANE TO
MIGUEL LAGOANERE AND COMPANY

Gent.

Paris 19 Oct^r 1777

We did ourselves the honor of replying to y^{rs}. of the 20th. ult^o. since w^h. are fav^d. with y^{rs}. of the 27 w^h. came to hand last Evening only, so that I presume this will hardly reach you before the affair of Capt. C^s. Prize¹ will be adjusted we wrote Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui & Fils at Bilboa to honor the Bills for G. Cun. repairs which hope has been done. As to the Prize mentioned it is to be hoped that it may be disposed of at Some rate or other. & the less the loss the better. some must be inevitable circumstanced as we are at present. In future should prizes arive the most prudent method as we apprehend will be to have them reported as Vessels belonging to America & to dispose of them without loss of time, keeping every thing secret until the Sale is made. Unacquainted as the Com^{rs}. at this distance must be with the modes of Procedure with you in such Cases they can only give general directions relying on y^e. prudence & knowledge of the situation of affairs to do the best which can be done in these affairs. I have the honor to remain [&c.]

S. D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at the foot of the page: "Mess^{rs}. Lagoanere & C^o."

1. Continental Navy Capt. Gustavus Conyngham's prize *Brothers*.

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

1777 October
Sunday 19

Cape Finisterre S $\frac{1}{4}$ W. 16 or 17 Leagues—

Light Airs and fair Weather. . . . 8 AM Saw a Sail to the Westward, Hal'd our Wind and Gave Chase 11 Spoke a Spanish Brig from Malaga bound to Amsterdam Bore Away and Gave Chase to the NW. Several Sail in Sight— $\frac{1}{2}$ past a privateer Brig. (as we Supposed) passed under our Stern to take Our Attention from the Chace Who hoisted a White field With a Pine Tree In it.—

First part Moderate and Cloudy. Middle and Latter Fresh Gales and Cloudy at 1 fired a shot and brought too the Chace a Brig from South Carolina bound to Bourdeaux¹ Sent an Officer and 10 Men to take Charge of her. Rec^d. on board 7 Americans and One French man Emp^d. Sending Necessarys onboard 6 Wore Ship Brought too and Got in the Boats. Saw the Privateer Brig Standing to the Eastw^d: 11 handed Main Sail Mizzen Tops^l and [*illeg.*]Sail and Got down Top Gall^t yards.

D, UklPR, Adm. 51/566.

1. *Charming Betsey*, Ephraim Gardner, master, from South Carolina with rice and oak staves.

October 20

LLOYD'S EVENING POST, AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

London.

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

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

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

CAPTAIN JOHN WELSH TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

S^r

Portsmouth Oct^r 20th. 1777

Excuse the Freedom of my Presumption, in Writing to you tho not Personally Acquainted, Still from the Charector you bear from every Loyal American, induces me to let you Know of my Misfortune of being taken Prisoner, & brought here from the Westindias Where I commanded a Privatier fitted out by W^m. Bingham Esq^r. Agent of the Honourable Congress of the United States¹ am in a Distress'd situation, the Particulars you'l Excuse as times does not permit. begs your Assistance if Convenient & hopes you'l make Known to Congress, as we may Expect a Carteel some time Tho God Knows When. however any service I may Recive will be Greatly thankful, as W^m. Bingham or Rich^d. Harrison of Martinicoe Wood be Answerable—I am [&c.]

Jn^o. Welsh

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

Superscription thus

To

Capt^t. Jn^o. Welsh
at Portsmouth
in the Goal of
Fortune

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

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

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

[Extract]

"The *Rising States* privateer, taken by the *Terrible*, was purchased by Mr. Samuel Robin-

son, merchant, of Portsmouth, who is fitting her out as a letter of marque. She will soon be ready for sea.”¹

London Chronicle, 21–23 Oct. 1777.

1. For the capture and sale of Massachusetts privateer brigantine *Rising States* see NDAR 9: 523, 635.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

L'Orient. *Raleigh*
October 20th. 1777.

Gentⁿ.

I have the Honour to have now before me your Letters of the 13th. & 15th. Instant¹—in the first you desire I would write our situation; mine of the 10th.² will satisfy you in that particular, therefore shall not say anything more on that head; in your first you advise us to Gurlard and Company—& to send our Letters under Gurlard's Cover—in your last you say “wish you to take the Advice of M^r Gurlard in your affair, who is our Friend,” we wish you to be particular on that head & to know if you give a preference to M^r Gurlard, as we look upon the whole House now concerned—with whom jointly we at present do our business.

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

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

Tho^s. Thompson

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

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 78. Addressed: “The Honorable/Doct^r Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane/& Arthur Lee Esq^{rs}/American Commissioners/At/Paris.” Docketed: “T. Thompson/L'Orient Oct. 30. 77.”

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

October 21

PAUL WENTWORTH TO WILLIAM EDEN

Sir

I flatter myself you will Pardon the liberty I take to acquaint you that a Certain Ph: Merckle¹ a German, has found Credit enough at Leige to Purchase

3000 fusils of the Prussian Modell
 2000 lighter D^o.
 200 Brass Blunderbusses.
 100 Iron D^o.
 200 Swivel Guns—of 1^{lb} Caliber
 1000 Pairs of Cavalry Pistols
 5000 Spare Gun locks
 1000 Spare Pistols—

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

Poland Street. [*London*]

the 21 Octr. 1777

P. Wentworth

L, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fols. 240–41.

1. Johannes Philip Mercklé.

2. Simeon Deane.

3. The 36-gun ship *Indien*, built by Jacques Boux.

PAUL WENTWORTH TO WILLIAM EDEN

[Extract]

[*London, Oct. 21, 1777*]

General intelligence & Observations.

... about 50 Sail for Trade.

... The House of La Veuve Lalanne et fils of Bayonne—three Cargoes.—Six or Eight Cargoes are going from Havre de Grace; & others from other Ports.—

George Grand, Chev^e of the order of Vasa, is the consealed partner of this House. He reced the Knighthood at the request of C^t Vergennes, whose principal agent he was in Sweden, in the Part france acted in the late Revolution. He also attended on the part of the C^t Vergennes As umpire, between the Farmers General, & the

M. Chenicke—Spanish Agent in Amsterdam, & Mess. Hornica Fiseaux & Comp^y—are building in the same Ship Yard of M. Staats—the first a 74 Gun Ship—the last two ships of a New Construction planned by the Chev^e Boux one to Carry above 1200 Tons Merchandize besides 36—24 Pounders on one Deck & Able, he says, to fight a 74 Gun Ship: the other launched above

American Comm^{rs} during the late Tobacco Contract. He is also the Contractor for the Dutch Tobacco—with the Farmers General, M. Prevôt of the Royal Americans at Augustine, married his Daughter; has sent His Children to Ams^t who are in Grands house—and they Correspond—but I do not mean to suggest that M. Prevôt is unfaithfull to his Majesty. M. Grand—Bqr. at Paris, has the trust of the American Comm^{rs} Money reced from M. Micault d'Harvebey, Court Bq'r for foreign affairs—under the direction of M. Vergennes.

Monthieu is Brother in law to Belgarde; & M. de Grebevalle is his Agent.¹ The reformed fusils were of a hexagon form; Beaumarchais bo't them at £4.10. reduced the angles & sold them at £18—to the Comm^{rs}. for the Congress—they are found to be dangerous in the day of Battle. But they have been better supply since—and they say it was a french Gift. Beaumarchais has No Contract, nor has he ever hinted the Idea of payment.

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

Besides the great Quantity of Warlike Stores Collected & Collecting at Nantes by M. Monthieu according to the Contract with the American Comm^{rs}.² which I Copied from the Original—there are in the Kings Warehouses at Marseilles under Beaumarchais, for the use of the Congress—the remainder of the following Articles—

13000 Bombs

27 Brass Mortars with their

Beds &c

68 D^o. field Cannon, with their

Carriages &c

50000 Sulpher

36000 Gun Powder

25000 Tools for Artillery,

Engineers, Miners, &c &c

6 large Hogsheads Soldiers

Knives

a large Quantity of Cannon Balls.

Of which were Shipped onboard the
Heureux (often mentioned) besides
 the Articles mentioned p^r. 3^d.—

44 Brass field Cannon—

Carriages &c—

20 Brass Mortars &c

5000 Cannon Balls

2000 Bombs.

6 Hhds soldiers Knives.

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

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

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

2. For the contract between the Commissioners and Montieu, see *ibid.* 24: 122–26.

LEFRAS AND LE MESURIER TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord,

We take the Liberty to inclose to Your Lordship a Letter which we received Yesterday from our Correspondents Mess^{rs}. Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena of Bilbao¹ (the first of whom is Vice Consul for the English Nation at that Port), by which Your Lordship will see the daring Insolence of Capⁿ. Jeremiah Hibbert of the American Privateer called the *Hawke*, by taking the Schooner *Adventure* of Jersey Capⁿ Philip De Gorrequer, bound from Newfoundland with a Cargo of Fish to the said Port of Bilbao, when lying at an Anchor near the Bar at the Entrance of that Harbour with a Pilot on board, and under the Sanction of the Forts, As it may be a Matter of Doubt whether the said Vessel and Cargo will be restored, we have thought it necessary (and more particularly at this time that the Newfoundland Ships are daily arriving at the different Ports of Spain, where and on that Coast we are informed several American Privateers are waiting for them) to inform Your Lordship of this, that Your Lordship may take thereon such Steps as in Your Wisdom may be thought necessary for the Protection of the Trade of the English Nation. We have the Honor to be [&c.]

Walbrook 21 October 1777

Lefras & Le Mesurier

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 229. Addressed: "Right Honourable Lord Viscount Weymouth His Majestys Principal/Secretary of State." Docketed: "Walbrook 21 Oct^r 1777/Mess^{rs}. Lefras & Le Mesurier/R. D^o/one inclosure." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 21 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 228.

1. Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrena to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct. 1777.

October 22

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM BEERHAVEN, OCT. 22."

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

London Chronicle, 6–8 Nov. 1777.

THE LONDON PACKET; OR, NEW LLOYD'S EVENING POST (LONDON),
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1777

London.

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

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN JAMES CUMMING, R.N.

By &c

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

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

Sandwich

J Buller

H Palliser

By &c. P.S.

LB, UklPR, Adm. 2/103, 244–45. Addressed at foot of letter: "Captⁿ. Cumming—*Aurora*—Downes."

1. Ibid., fol. 244. *Aurora* was to be provisioned for four months.

AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN HALL, SEAMAN ON SNOW NANNY

(Copy)

John Hall maketh Oath before me that on or about the beginning of Sept^r 1777. that he the said John Hall was taken Prisoner in the *Nanny* Snow Capt^m Smith—Commander in Latt^d: 40..00. by the *Roler* of 32 Guns & the *Alford* of 20 Guns,¹ two American Privatiers and was Carried into Port Lewis, in France the 10th: of Oct^r 1777—and was brought over to England, with 70 other Prisoners in a French Brig & landed at Chrischurch the 20th: October 1777, that he the said John Hall further says, that when he left Port Lewis that the two abovementioned Privatiers had taken out their Guns and was going to Heave Down at that Port, and he further adds that the Commanders of the Privatiers had given out their, that they had taken the other West Indiamen, which Ships were in Port Lewis & had sold their Cargoes at that Port, & likewise had taken a Brig bound to Newfoundland & a Schooner;—The *Roler* Privatier was the Ship that engaged His Majesty's Ship the *Druid*, in the Engagement the Privatier lost one Boy & a Lieu^t wounded—Their Station for cruizing is in Latt^d: 40..00—near the Western Islands.

John Hall

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

R Vernon Sadlurs

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 247–48. Notation: "In M^r Stephens's 21 Oct^r 1777/Copy sent to Lord Stormont/October N^o 65/D." Enclosed in Philip Stephens to Sir Stanier Porten, for Viscount Weymouth's attention, 21 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 246.

1. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, and Continental Navy ship *Alfred*.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL EDWARD SMITH, MEMORANDA

Mem^{os}. 8^{br}: 22^d: 1777

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

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

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

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

The ships belonging to private adventurers push for the Southward in order to bring back a good Freight. The Congress ships attempt the North that is the coast of Boston as the last Effort the Congress Commissarys can make in order to keep up the Rebellion there next Summer, for they give up the Provinces to the Southward.

The Congress fleet is to assemble at Bilboa and is to consist of, a French fifty gun Ship.

Cap^t Weekes in his old Ship, with Clothing. & Linnens

Cap^t Thompson, who (If the *Rich^d. Pen* is not on her way) will be provided with a two & twenty gun frigate with Bails of Cloth and Linnen.

Cap^t Nicholson in a fine four hundred tonn Ship of six or eight and twenty guns with Arms, Cloth, Linnen. Clothes.

Cap^t Patten from Cadiz in a two and twenty gun Ship with arms. Clothes. Linnen.

M^r Williams the Agent at Nantz has forty Men at work dayly in his very commodious Magazine in preparing & arranging every provision and armament that His Commissioners can procure, for to be ready for this next years campaign This Magazine is most commodiously situated at the back of the Town—and can load any ship from their doors with out being seen from any part of the Town. Hynson saw this building the Work men and preparations.

All American Ships falling in with Bermudas Island must stand for the West end and by their hoisting a Jack at the MainTop mast head, A M^r Tucker would send if [*it*] about, and procuring them as required assistance would give them orders or satisfactory information.

E Smith

DS, Uk, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, fols. 253–54.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o. 155

Separate

My Lord,

Fontainebleau 22 Oct^r 1777.

I shall not trouble Your Lordship with a Detail of my Conversation with M de Vergennes, which turned nearly upon the same Points as that with M. de Maurepas: I read him the same Papers, and made almost the same Observations upon them. His Remark upon the Paragraph of Franklin's, and Deane's Letter,¹ which he read again and again, with great Attention, was rather singular. "They may assert what they please said he; it is most certain that the Sequestre was ordered by the King as a Mark of great Displeasure; If they are not hurt with such Treatment, Ils sont de bons Chretiens qui savent pardonner.["] I am inclined to think My Lord that Nicholson's Letter² is not only very material, but comes in a very critical Moment. I easily saw by the Account M. de Vergennes gave me of a Raport he had had from M. de Sartines, that without this authentic Proof they would have continued to deny the Truth of my Intelligence: M. de Vergennes actually told me, that upon Inquiry such a Ship as I had described had been found at Nantes, but that it belonged to a French Merchant who had built it for his own Use: I answered that there might be such a Prête Nom, but that Nicholson's Letter afforded clear and irrefragable Proof, and amounted to Demonstration. I dwelt much upon this, and made no Scruple to add that now They had an absolute Certainty, that this Vessel, built, armed, and equipped, in one of their Ports, was for the use of the Rebels, it was impossible they should suffer her to go out of Port, if their pacific Professions were really Sincere, as it was manifest that the conniving at such Assistance, would be contrary to every Idea of Friendship. He answered that he un-

derstood the Frigate was a good one, and that the best Way to end the whole Matter was to purchase her pour Le Service du Roi, he did not promise that this should be done, but spoke of it as a Thing he should advise. He desired an Extract of Nicholson's Letter, and of that of Mess^{rs} Berard.³ I saw no Objection to this, and sent him the Extracts as soon as I got home. Upon reading Mess^{rs}. Berard's Letter he said, he was glad it had fallen into our Hands, as it shewed us, what Fraud and Duplicity was used, to elude the Orders given by this Court, and to deceive the Officers that are charged with the Execution of them. I answered that I must always be of Opinion that the Orders given could not be so constantly eluded, if there was a real and earnest Endeavour to execute them, that it was but too manifest that little or no Advantage had accrued to us from the Orders sent to their Ports, as the American Privateers still found their Way thither, and what was more conducted Prizes, which, if they were not sold in the Harbour were disposed of at some little Distance from it, and disposed of to the Subjects of France: This, Sir, happened very lately in the case of those two Ships which I mentioned to you last week.⁴ We now know, and indeed half Paris knows, that they have been sold, knows the Price given, and the Persons who bought them: They have been sold, Sir, to Mess^{rs}. Berard and Montplaisir at L'Orient, and that too for 9,700 £ Sterling, which is not half their Value. (I had this Intelligence, My Lord, five or six Days ago, but for the sake of my Informer purposely avoided mentioning it, 'till it came to me from several Quarters.) M. de Vergennes assured me that this was new to him (it is very extraordinary that it should be so): In my Answer, I asserted the Truth of the Fact, and laid in a formal Claim for the Restitution of these Ships and Cargo's protesting against the Sale, and all the Consequences of it. I expressly told him, that these Ships and Cargoes could be considered in no other Light, than that of English Property forcibly detained by the Subjects of France; put him in mind of the Orders given by this Court, which not only prohibit the Sale of Prizes, but make the Purchasers criminal; observed to him, how clearly Mess^{rs}. Berard and Montplaisir are within these Orders and, how much they deserve to be punished, and ended with saying that the most natural Punishment was to oblige them to make immediate Restitution. He did not contravert this, but said it would be indispensably necessary that the Sale should be proved, and the Ships and Cargoes found. I insisted that it would be sufficient to prove the Sale and the Purchasers, and that they ought to be forced to make immediate Restitution. Tho' I dwelt upon this, and inforced it by every Argument I could think of, yet I do not, My Lord, expect any real Benefit from these Applications, as it will be next to impossible to establish a Proof, that to such unfair, and partial Judges, shall appear sufficient. In the Course of my Conversation, I said a great deal to M. de Vergennes upon the Mischiefs that must result from their suffering their Orders to be eluded, and observed to him, how idle it would be to suppose a real Difference between the Sale of Prizes made in the Harbours of France, or at some little Distance from them, that such Evasions were unworthy of them, unworthy of us, that there was a Time when Things of this Nature might have been supposed to be unknown to both Nations, but now that Both had spoke out very explicitly, now that we had complained, and they had promised Redress, it was for their Honour, as well as ours, that the Evil should be effectually cured. He did not contravert this Principle, but made his usual Answer, that nothing can be more positive than the Orders France has given, nothing more sincere and friendly than her Intentions. I am [&c.]

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1730. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Fontainebleau 22 Oct^r 1777/Lord Stormont/(N^o. 155) Separate/R. 28th by Messenger to/Calais."

1. American Commissioners in France to Captain Henry Johnson, 25 July 1777. *NDAR* 9: 533–34.
2. Captain Samuel Nicholson to Captain Henry Johnson, 25 Aug. 1777. *Ibid.*: 601–2.
3. Bérard Frères & Co. to Henry Johnson, 27 Aug., 1777. *Ibid.*: 606.
4. *Jamaica*, David Watt, master, and *Anna Susannah*, John Taylor, master. See Lord Stormont to Lord Weymouth, 15 Oct. 1777, above.

October 23

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

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

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

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

London Chronicle, 13–15 Nov. 1777.

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

Font^{au}. 23 8^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 17. de ce mois par laquelle vous m'informez que des deux frégates américaines le *Raleigh* et l'*alfred* l'une étoit entrée dans le Port le d. Jour 17. et l'autre devoit y être admire le lendemain. Vous me faites part aussi

de cequi vous est revenu Sur l'avis que j'avois eû que les deux prises¹ qui avoient mouillé sous Groix avoient vendu la totalité de leur Cargaison et Je vois par le détail dans lequel vous entrez que ce Raport avoit quelque fondement. Je ne savois assés vous recommander de veiller, en cequi vous concerne et de concert avec les Off^{rs}. de l'amirauté, à qui J'en écris également, non Seulement à ce qu'aucune prise ou Corsaire ne puisse être admis dans nos Ports, mais encore à cequ'il ne se fasse aucun débarquement de ces Batimens sous quelque prétexte que ce Soit. Les volonté du Roi est très précise à ce Sujet et la moindre tolérance Seroit reprehensible.

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

de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 23 October 1777.

I have received, Sir, your letter of the 17th of this month by which you informed me that the two American frigates, *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, the one having entered the port on the 17th and the other supposed to be admitted the following day. You also apprised me of that which was told you about the information that I had received to the effect that the two prizes¹ which had moored at Groix had sold their entire cargoes, and I see by the detail into which you entered that this report had some foundations. I cannot urge you strongly enough to keep a close watch on that which concerns you, and, together with the Admiralty officers to whom I shall also write, not only so that no prize or privateer be allowed to enter our ports, but also so that there not be any debarkation from these ships under any pretext, whatsoever. The king's wish on this subject is very precise, and the slightest tolerance would be reprehensible.

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

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series E¹ 80, fol. 48. Addressed at foot of first page: "M. Gonet."

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

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO CONDE DE ARANDA

11

Ex^{mo.} Sor.

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

Su desorden se habia reducido á los principios á abusar imprudentem^{te} de la proteccion que hallaban en ambos Reynos, y á disponer su caso del modo que juzgaban mas perjudicial á los Vasallos de Inglaterra. Pero no satisfechos yá de este abuso han llevado la temeridad hasta apoderarse de varias embarcaciones francesas, con pretexto de conducir generos de fabrica Inglesa, á pertenecientes á Vasallos Británicos, y mirandolar como presa lexitima dirixilas á sus Colonias.

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

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

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

No me detendré á exponer quan indecoroso es á las Coronas de España y Francia tolerar semejantes excesos, y quan injusto seria dejar á sus respectivos Vasallos expuestos en tiempo de paz á unos chascos de igual naturaleza. Tampoco me explicaré, como podria, sobre el incremento que tomarían estos excesos una vez tolerados, y sobre la consternacion general que habria si los Corsarios Americanos se convirtieren en piratas y á su exemplo lo practicaren igualmente los Armadores Ingleses como otros muchos de varias Naciones. Pero si manifestaré á VE. que ha chocado al Rey en sumo grado el lance del dia 9. de Septiembre por recaer sobre los que yá sabiamos, y por la circunstancia de haber sido á la vista de nuestros mismos Puertos, cuyo auxilio vienen diariamente á solicitar; y aunque en mi carta del N^o. 2^o tengo insinuado que se iba á providenciar la remesa de algun socorro en dinero ó Letras á esos Diputados me acaba SM. de mandar que lo suspenda. Comprehende el Rey que seria



Conde de Floridablanca

muy impropio exercer tales actos de generosidad al mismo tiempo que se reciben unos agravios tan escandalosos, y antes de todo desea SM asegurarse de que sin la menor dilacion se ha de restituir la presa referida con total resarcimiento de los perjuicios causados; y de que en lo sucesivo no volveran á verse lances iguales; pues así para obtener proteccion en nuestros Puertos los Cosarios Americanos se les ha de mirar como sugetos al actual Gobierno del Congreso, y en tratandose de sus tropelias particulares se han de disculpar como que no alcanza su autoridad sobre ellos, seria esta una contradiccion repugnante por mil caminos, y sobre todo incompatible con la seguridad de las Naciones.

Excuso entrar en otras muchas consideraciones obvias, y solo apuntaré, que harán bien los Diputados Americanos de reflexionar sobre los daños á que exponen su causa Nacional si llegan á disgustar á las Cortes de España y Francia pues el resentimiento de estas podria trastornar todas las ideas del actual Gobierno de las Colonias. Y concluyo recomendando á V.E. hable seriamente sobre este asunto con el Sr.^o Conde de Vergennes y haya igualmente entender á los Diputados las graves causas que concurren para el justo enojo de SM. Dios gue. á V.E. m^s a^s como deseo. Sⁿ. Lorenzo 23. de Oct^{re}. de 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca

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

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

[Translation]

Most excellent sir,

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

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

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

What will be our surprise on seeing that same disorder continue and what our indignation on observing that the American privateers dare to seize vessels laden principally on the account of Spanish merchants? The accompanying papers will inform your excellency of what happened near the coast of Galicia the 9th of September to the French merchantman the *Fortune*, which was sailing from London to Cadiz, laden with commodities of licit commerce, as stated in statements by our na-

tionals. The name of the privateer was not stated, but it was probably the same as one of those that on one of those days entered the ports of Corunna and Ferrol, where they recieved a very warm welcome and received the assistance that they needed; which circumstance makes so much more odious the deed under discussion.

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

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

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

El Conde de Floridablanca

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

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

October 24

THE LONDON PACKET; OR, NEW LLOYD'S EVENING POST (LONDON),
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, TO FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1777

Friday, October 24. London.

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

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

Honble Sirs.

Cap^t Watt late of the Ship *Jamaica* and Cap^t Hooper of the *Nanny* both from Jamaica, and Cap^t Marshall of the *Sally* from Dartmouth to Newfoundland, and Cap^t Athens of a Schooner from New York with several other Passengers landed at this Port last night from Port L'Orient having been taken and carried in there by the *Raleigh* (a Frigate belonging to the Rebels) of 32 Guns under the Command of one Thompson. The two first mentioned Captains informed the Surveyor and Landwaiters, when they were examining their Baggage—"that before they left L'Orient the Cargoes of their Ships were discharging and intended to be Sold. That the *Raleigh*, and her Consort the *Alfred* of 22 Guns were landing their Gunpowder and Stores in the King's Arsenal in order that they may go into the Kings Dock—That there was a Frigate at L'Orient ready to be launched for the Rebels, that she was to be Commanded by an Irishman and manned by the French—This Frigate when ready in Conjunction with the *Raleigh* and *Alfred* were to Convey from L'Orient to America near Twenty Sail of Ships laden with Stores &c."—We think it Our Duty to Communicate this Information to Your Honours, and are in haste to save Post, with great Respect, Your Honours Most faithful and Obedient Hble Servants

Custom House.

W. Cooley

Portsmouth

W. Stiles

24th. Oct^r 1777.¹

Copy, UKLPR, C.O. 5/149, 507–8. Addressed at foot of letter: "Honble Commiss^{rs} of the Customs." Docketed: "Copy of a Letter/ from the Coll^r & Compt^r of/Portsmouth to the Comm^{rs} of the Customs/dated 24th. Octo^r 1777." Notation: "In M^r Stanleys of the/25th Octob^r 1777." Enclosed in Edward Stanley to William Knox, 25 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 505. Cooley was the collector and Stiles the comptroller at the Customs House, Portsmouth.

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

LACOSTE CASSENAVE & CO. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

M. le Docteur Franklin Paris.

Cadiz le 24. Oct^{bre}. 1777.

Mons^r.

Nos Amis M^{rs}. Horniold & Clough ont chargé pour notre Compte et à notre consignation 19 Balles de Marchandizes sur le Navire françois la *Fortune* Capt Beltrand

Kenguen expedie de Londres pour Cadiz, ainsi qu'apert du Connoisse^t & facture des d^{tes} effets et de la Lettre des des dites Amis qui nous les apporté.—

Le susd^t Navire ayant été pris dans sa Traversée par le Corsaire Americain le *Civil Usage*, nous sommes en souffrance par le manque de nos fondes, et par le deffaut de l'assortiment qui nous étoit necessaires pour notre Commerce. Notre qualité de françois justifiée par le Certificat cy joint du Consul de France a Cadiz, nous autorise a la demarche que nous faisons auprès de vous Mons^r pour reclamer no dites Effets & les temoignages Publics de votre probité nous font esperer que vous voudrez bien employer vos bons Offices auprès du Congrès pour que le Capteur nous dedomage. C'est la Grace que nous vous demandons, ainsi que celle de nous croire reconnoissons d'avance et tres parfaittem^t Mons^r &c &c

Lacoste Cassenave et C^o

(Copy)

[Translation]

Doctor Franklin Paris.

Cadiz, 24 Oct. 1777.

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

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

Lacoste Cassenave et C^o

(Copy)

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

October 25

ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Sir,

Sandwich at Spithead 25th Oct^r 1777.

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

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

Tho^s. Pye

L, UkLPR, Adm. 1/955, 190. Addressed at foot of letter: "Philip Stephens Esq^r." Notation on verso of letter: "27 Oct^r Send Copy of the inclosed. (This far) to S^r S. Porten fr Lord Weym^o inforⁿ Send the description to L^d Shuldham to be distrib to [hM?] wars[hips] assent & approve of having done." For Stephens's reply, noting the Lords Commissioners's acknowledgement and approval, see Stephens to Pye, 27 Oct. 1777, in UkLPR, Adm. 2/556, 112-13.

[Enclosure]

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

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

They were carried into Port L'Orient and on the 11th. Ins^t sailed from thence with Seventy other Prisoners in a French Brig for England.

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

Descriptions of the two Rebel Privateers

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

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

On her Main Deck, Twenty 12 and Six 9 Pounders

Quarter Deck Six 6 Pound^{rs}.

ForeCastle Four 6 Do.

In each Top Two Swivels and an Arm Chest

On Her Taffrel Two Cohorns

Runs her two stern Chases out of the Cabin Windows

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

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

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

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

On her main Deck. Twenty 9 Pounders

Swivels on her Fore Castle.

Four Cohorns in each Top with a Chest of Arms

This Ship's yards are not square, her Sails are the same as when in the Merchant Service. Taunt Masts, two Top gallant masts, with long Royal Masts and sets a flying Mizen

Top gallantsail, her Studding sails are very large Waist Cloths black with white borders as in the Tops. her breast work on the quarter Deck is is about 5½ feet which the Master said should be cut down in France.

She can run out four Stern Chases. 2 in the Cabin, and 2 on the Quarter Deck.

This Ship sails poorly particularly on a wind

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

The *Raleigh's* Powder was taken out by the King's powder boat, and put into the King's Store. her Guns are landed on St Michael's Island. A main Mast was making for her in the King's Yard, if her own would not do—on the 10th Sept^r it was sprung, but well fished again.³

These Ships were well found with every thing, and were in no distress—they only wanted to clean their Bottoms.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WILLIAM MCCREERY TO JOHN ADAMS

Sir

Bordeaux 10 October 1777

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

& they were such a Motly Crew, that people are astonishd at his Having made so Gal-lant a resistance—

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

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

An Insurance office has been lately established here & I am told it is a very good one—The premium to & from America is thirty p^{c}

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

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

Should Congress see cause to Employ an agent here you may depend, there is no House so fit for the purpose, and as I have in all the Letters which I have had the Honour to write you, given my own Sentiments & opinion very freely I will now just mention what I think Congress may very well do—In the first place let Faithfull active Men be employ'd in Virginia and Maryland, (for Tobacco at present is the best article you can send to Europe) to purchase & load vessels, and when ready to Sail forward by Several different conveyances Bills of Lading to your agents here with orders to insure the whole,—At the Same time let directions be given about the returns which may be got ready immediately—If the vessel arrives safe Mr Delap will advance

as near the amount of what the Cargo is likely to bring & not detain the vessel for the Sale of it—Should Several thousand Hog^{ds}. arrive at the Same time—his Credit is so extensive that he could immediately Ship for the whole, if the vessels are lost he recovers the insurance agreeable to orders—

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

Cap^t Ashburne in a Brigg from Cinespuct [*Sinepuxent*] is arrived here this morning with a 100^d Hhds of Tob'o She is own'd in Philad^a.

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

W. M. Creery

Dear Sir

Bordeaux oc^{thr} 25

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

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

I beg you will be So good as to Let me hear from you I have not been able to procure the Books I wanted for you, all I can now Send you is an Irish Magazine for july, I am [&c.]

W. Creery

I have determined to Settle in this place.

Copy, MHi, Adams Papers. Docketed: "McCreery"; "October 10th & 25th 1777."

1. Pliarne, Penet & Co.

October 26 (Sunday)

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

26th. [Oct^r] Sunday foul w^r this Day the People in the Itchey ward Detected in a plan Laid to Elope, by a pass made thr^o. the Drean, thr^o. which the Most of us Ex-pected to pass but are Disappointed the Guard Comnd. Six to y^e. B.h. [*black hole*].

D, McHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU LE MARQUIS DE MONTBAS

A M Le M^{is}. de Montbas

Ens^e. de V^{au}. Command^t La Corvette du Roi

L'*Etourdie* à Bordeaux.

Fontainebleau Le 26 8^{bre}. 1777.

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

J'ai appris avec plaisir que la prise Le *Mercury*, Cap^{ne}. jean Still,¹ a appareillé aussitôt qu'elle a pu se procurer les secours qui lui étoient nécessaires: vous avez bien fait de laisser remonter la Rivière au N^{re}. Le *Duc de Chesuel*. Les marchands anglois n'ont jamais de passeports; mais, seulement une police et des Connoissemens. Il en est de même des Bâtimens insurgens et vous ne devez faire aucune difficulté de laisser remonter ceux qui auront un chargement en marchandises: La prohibition ne regarde que les Corsaires; Le Commerce doit être libre. J'approuve que vous ayez procuré à ce Bâtiment les facilités qui ont dépendu de vous, et les Secours dont il avoit besoin pour assurer son mouillage.

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

Je mande aux Officiers de l'amirauté et à M Le Moyne² de tenir la main à ce que le Corsaire américain Le *Portsmouth* redescende la Riviere aussitôt qu'il aura été

réparé, & vous veillerez à ce qu'il ne reste dans la Rade que le tems que pourroit exiger l'état de la Marée ou la contrariété des Vents. Je suis [&c.]

[Translation]

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

Fontainebleau 26 October 1777

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

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

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

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

I am [&c.]

LB, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 134, fol. 359. Notations: "N^o. 1"; "Admettre dans les Ports tout Bâtiment qui a une cargaison." "To admit into the ports any vessel that has a cargo."

1. See Journal of French Navy Corvette *Etourdie*, Marquis de Montbas, Enseigne de Vaisseau, under dates 1, 6, and 8 Oct., above.

2. Commissaire Ordonateur de la Marine, or pay commissioner of the navy, at Bordeaux.

CAPTAIN ELISHA HINMAN TO ELLIS GRAY

Dear Sir

Port L'Orient October 26th. 1777.

The 22^d. of August I sailed from Portsmouth Harbour in New England, in Company with Captain Thompson of the *Raleigh* Frigate, in our way here we took a Schooner,¹ from New York, bound to Nova Scotia, which we burnt—We also took a Snow² from St. Vincent's, laden with Sugar, Coffee, She we ordered for America, likewise a Brig³ from England bound for Halifax, laden with Salt and some Cordage, ordered her like-

wise for America, both of which we hope are arrived safe in some American port. On the 30th of September, in the Channel of England, we took two large Ships,⁴ from Jamaica for London, which we convoyed to this port, and have sold them. We arrived here the 6th of October, we are cleaning our Ships and refitting, and shall sail first on a Cruize, and then proceed for America. I hope to be Compleatly Manned here, which was not the case when we left America. At Portsmouth I let Captain Thompson have 20 of my Men, in order to enable him to proceed to Sea, who was at least 70 Men Short.

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

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

N.B. My Respects to M^r. Dolbier & Family and particularly to M^{rs}. Grissell.

A true Copy

Robert Walker

Sworn before me this 2^d April 1778
at St George's in Grenada.

Macartney

Copy, UKLPR, C.O. 101/21, 184–85. Addressed at foot of first page: "M^r Ellis Gray Esquire Boston." Docketed: "Copy of a draft of a Letter from Elisha Hinman, to Ellis Gray Esq^r at Boston in New England, found on board the Rebel armed Ship, *Alfred*, commanded by said Elisha Hinman, taken off Barbados on the 9 March 1778 by the *Ariadne* & *Ceres*. The Draft is not Signed but was acknowledged by the said Hinman before me to be the Duplicate of a Letter written by him to the said Gray. M." Notation: "In Lord Macartney's (N^o 7) of 10th April 1778 (3)."

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

October 27

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

Font^{au}. 27 8^{bre} 1777.

Je reçois, Monsieur, la lettre par laquelle vous me rendrez compte de la suite des dispositions des f^{es}. le *Raleigh* et l'*alfred* pour leur Carène et leur radoub. Je vous

recommande de nouveau de tenir la main à ce qu'elles soient promptement réparées et qu'elles mettent aussitôt à la voile. J'approuve que vous ayez fait délivrer les différents articles que l'on vous a demandés. Je concure également que vous fassiez remettre les deux ancres dont on a besoin, afin qu'il n'y ait aucun prétexte de retard. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

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

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 27 October 1777.

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

de sartine

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

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 66. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet."

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o. 59.

Escorial, 27th. October, 1777.

My Lord,

... M. Florida blanca has acquainted me, that the Vessel, which was said to have been taken at Bilbao,¹ and which I mentioned in mine, N^o. 56,² had not been allowed to be kept by the Privateer who took it, but had been released upon my Application.

I enclose to your Lordship a List of Prizes taken by Sir Thomas Rich, and Captain Mann, and carried into Gibraltar on the 13th. Ins^t. ...³

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

Grantham.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 298–99. Addressed at the foot of the page: "[To] Lord Viscount Weymouth; /&c^a. &c^a. &c^a." Docketed: "Escorial 27 October 1777/Lord Grantham/(N^o 59)/R. 14 Nov^r/two inclosures."

1. Schooner *Adventure*, Captain Gorrequer. See Ventura Gomez de la Torre and Barrera to Lefras and Le Mesurier, 4 Oct. 1777, above.

2. Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 13 Oct. 1777, above.

3. British Prizes at Gibraltar, 14 Oct. 1777, above.

4. Elisha Hinman.

JAMES GARDOQUI TO ARTHUR LEE

Hon^{ble} Arthur Lee Esq^r.

My Dear sir

Madrid 27th. Oct^{re} 1777

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

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

By advises from Nantz I hear two of your frigates¹ are safely arriv'd at L'orien & with good news about the army at Saratoga. if so I hope you will inform me without loss of time, as besides it being of service towards you I am impatient to hear of your success, may the Almighty grant it acording to the wish of your Real Fr^d. [&c.]

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (80). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1. Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Thomas Thompson, and Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Elisha Hinman.

October 28

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

The *Two Friends*, M'Gregor, from Cadiz to New-York, was taken in Lat. 40, Longit. 61, by the *Glaister* Privateer of 16 Guns, John Colson Commander¹

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

The *Adventure*, ———, that was taken off Bilboa, and carried into that Port, by the Americans, is released, and the Captain of the Privateer² ordered to pay all Charges.

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

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

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

1. Massachusetts privateer brigantine *Gloucester*, John Coulston, commander.

2. Massachusetts privateer schooner *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert, commander.

3. Massachusetts privateer schooner *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert, commander. NDAR 9: 657–58.

4. Ephraim Gardner, master. *Daily Advertiser* (London), 29 Oct. 1777.

DEPOSITION OF WILLIAM BRAY CONCERNING THE SLOOP *CHESTER*

Minuted on a twelve stivers Stamp

Copy

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

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

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

That thereupon the two Privateers with him deponent and the beforementioned Eight men of his Ship's Company on board, steered for S^t. Eustatia, where they arrived on the fifth or sixth day of the month of July last past, and would not allow him deponent or any one of his Ship's Company to go on shore, (except ones on the 14th. or 15th., when he deponent was allowed to go on shore to take a walk with the first and Second Lieutenant of the *Fair American* Privateer, by whom he was guarded all the time,) but kept them all on board of the privateers till the 18th. of said month of

July at night, at least one hour after Sunset, when the Privateers weighed Anchor and made Sail, and after making three or four tacks, brought a shoreboat too, which was plying there, and put him deponent and three of his Ship's Company, viz^t his Boatswain, a Portuguese and two of his Seamen, one being an Englishman and the other an Irishman, in the boat, and sent them on shore, and kept one of his the deponent's seamen against his inclination on board of the Privateers the *fair American*, Charles Morgan, the Commander of said Privateer telling him "you are a Dutchman, and too valuable a young Lad to part with you, and you may as well fight for the Americans as for the English" and the remainder of his deponent's ship's Company (being three Irishmen and one Rotterdammer, Called Hermanus Hubregts) having voluntarily Entered on board of the Privateers.

That at about Eight o Clock that night, he deponent and his said three men Came on Shore at S^t Eustatia, where he deponent staid till the twentieth, when he Sailed from thence in the Passage boat to the Island of S^t Christopher's, where he arrived the same day, and from whence he took his departure on the first of August last past in an English Ship, Called the *Venus*, John Smith Commander, of and for London, in a Large fleet of English ships under Convoy of four English men of war, and arrived in London, some time this month of October, and on the twenty seventh in this City. And Lastly he Deponent did attest, that Peter Theodore van Teÿlingen, Esq^r bought the said sloop *Chester* upwards of fifteen months ago in Black River on the Musquito Coast, and he deponent sailed in her in his service ever since, till she was taken, and that in the beginning of this year one thousand seven hundred seventy seven, a proper proof of the Said Sloop and her said Cargo, being Dutch property, and belonging to the beforementioned M^r Anthony Ameloo as aforesaid, hath been made, and Sworn to in the bay of Honduras, before an English Judge in Said bay, and also that the said sloop *Chester*, from the time of her departure out of said bay, till the time of her being taken as aforesaid, never hoisted any other but Dutch Colours, and had Dutch Colours hoisted, at the time of her being seized by said Privateers. Wherefore he this deponent in name of himself and his ship's Company, and also in name of the said M^r Anthony Ameloo, and all others anyways Concerned in the said sloop *Chester* and her Cargo, did and doth hereby solemnly protest against the said Charles and Francis Morgan, and their Ship's Companys, and all others Concerned, for all Losses, damages, detriments, Costs, Charges and expenses, allready had, suffered and sustained, and, yet to be had suffered and sustained, on account of the seizure and detention of the said Sloop and her Cargo, to be recovered in time and place Convenient. Proffering to make Solemn Oath to the Contents hereof, if thereto required.¹

Thus done and protested in Rotterdam aforesaid in the presence of Abraham Sevenbergen and Rÿnart Frier, Witnesses the minute hereof is duly signed, quod attestor (Signed) LS Adam Schadee 1777. Not^s Pub^s & Translator.

Jurat

In Court of the Gentlemen Commissioners of the Maritime Laws of the City of Rotterdam, appeared Captⁿ William Bray late Master of the sloop Called the *Chester*, deponent herein mentioned, who made Solemn Oath on the Holy Evangelists of Allmighty God, by us to him Lawfully administred, after having said affidavit Clear and distinctly read to him, by Adam Schadee, Notary Publick and Sworn English Translator at this City, that all the Contents of said affidavit, are in all points just and

true, and that he deponent did persist therein. So help him God. Done at Rotterdam this 29th. day of October 1777.

as Secretary

(Signed) A^s. J^s. Vⁿ. Ravesteÿn

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

Adam Schadee

1777. Not^s. Pub^s. & Translator

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 45, pp. 109–12 (M247 roll no. 59). Notation at top of first page: "Van Berckel." The copyist ran the text together, indicating paragraph breaks with a symbol. This copy, as well as other supporting documentation, came to the American Commissioners in France covered by two letters dated 30 Oct. from those interested in the sloop and its cargo, asking redress: Anthony Ameloo, Franco and Adrianus Dubbeldeemuts, and Pieter Willemssen to the American Commissioners, and Franco and Adrianus Dubbeldeemuts to the American Commissioners. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 25: 122–24. For the commissioners' reply to the Dubbeldeemuts, 10 Nov. 1777, see *ibid.*, 147–48.

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

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO MARQUIS DE BOUILLÉ

A M Le M^{is}. de Bouillé

Command^e. G^{nl} à La Martinique

Fontainebleau Le 28. 8^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, M les Lettres que vous m'avez f^t lh^r. de m'ecrire le 16. août N^o. 67 et 68.

Je répons aux art^{es}. de ces deux Lettres qui concernent les Bâtimens en Station aux îles du vent.

Je vois que vous vous proposiez de concert avec M Le Command^e. de Dampierre de f^{re}. passer La *Renommée* à St^e. Domingue à la fin du mois d'août et qu'après le départ de cette frégate il a du vous rester l'*Amphitrite*, La *Blanche* et la *Diligente*. Vous m'observez qu'il ne faudroit plus que deux Corvettes pour que ces forces fussent suffisantes.

D'après votre observation, je fais partir la Corvette L'*Etourdie* Commandée par M Le M^{is}. de Montbas Ens^e. de V^{au}.; et comme des 3 frég^{tes}. qui escortent les Convois

de Troupes, une est destinée ☿. rester en station à La Martinique, Elle tiendra lieu de la seconde Corvette que vous demandez. Ainsi les forces en Station aux îles du vent, consisteront en 1 Vau. et 9 frégates ou Corvettes.

Je fais partir un supplément de vivres pour la *Prothée* et L'*Amphitrite*; et j'espère que cette Lettre ci arrivera assez tôt pour que M de Dampierre n'en soit pas encore parti. Quant à L'*Amphitrite*, l'ordre porté par ma Lettre du 9 juillet, prescrit à M de Dampierre de ne laisser partir aucune frégate ou Corvette que celle qui doit la relever ne soit arrivée: Je dois compter que L'*Amphitrite* ne sera pas partie.

J'ai appris avec plaisir que le Commerce est beaucoup moins troublé; et je compte que les forces que vous aurez assureront encore mieux sa tranquillité. J'ai l'h. d'être [&c.]

[Translation]

To Monsieur Marquis de Bouillé
Commanding General at Martinique.
Fontainebleau, 28 Oct. 1777.

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

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

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

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

I have learned with pleasure that the commerce is a great deal less troubled, and I count on the fact that the forces that you will have will better assure its tranquility. I have the honor of being [&c.]

LB, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 134, fol. 361. Notation: "Mouvems p^e les Stations[;] convois annoncés[;] supplément de vivres ☿. le *Prothée* et l'*Amphitrite*."

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

Hon^{ble}. Gentlemen

(N^o 83)

Nantes Octo^r 28. 1777.

The present serves to inform you that M^r de Sartine has written to the Commissary here relative to the *Lion*,¹ in which he forbids that any munitions of war of

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

Jon^a Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Honorable/The Commissioners of the/United States/at Paris." Docketed: "M^r Williams Oct^r 28 1777./Hon: Com^{rs} to U.S./Expence of the Uniforms from Montpelier" and: "(N^o 83)."

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

October 29

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

Tuesday, October 28. London.

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

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

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GUERNSEY, OCT. 29."

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

London Chronicle, 13–15 Nov. 1777.

SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Capt. Thompson

Paris 29 Oct^r 1777

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

S.D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o 157Fontainebleau. October. 29th. 1777

My Lord

I Inclose a duplicate of my Letter by Mondays Post.¹ I may now venture to assure your Lordship that this very important Affair is upon the point of being concluded, and I hope to the satisfaction of the Proprietors.

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

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

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

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

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1733. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Fontainebleau 29 Oct^r 1777/Lord Stormont./ (N^o 157)/R. 2 Nov^r by Express from/Dover."

1. Stormont's letter, dated 26 Oct. 1777, stated that, having received a letter from Mr. Liege announcing that the Admiralty of Nantes had confiscated "au profit du Roi" the *Clarendon*, and the *Hanover Planter*, two British Jamaica men that had been captured by American privateers, Stormont conferred with the Comte de Vergennes, who assured him that the ships and their cargoes would immediately be restored to their British owners. See *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1761, where the 26 Oct. letter is summarized.

October 30

CAPTAIN J. CHANDEAU'S STATEMENT REGARDING THE *PHILIPPE*

[Before 30 Oct. 1777]

Nous soussignés Certifions, officiers majors et mariniers et Passagers du N^{re} Le *Philippe*, Cap^{ne}. Chanseau, appartenant a M^{es} Baux freres et Neveux, parti du fort Dauphin le 14. aoust 1777. faisant route pour Bordeaux, Ce jour 23. aoust meme année par les 31. Degrés 31. minutes de Lattitude Nord et par les 73. Degrés 22. m. de Long. du meridien de Paris sous toutes voiles de hors, cinglant au plus près du vent a la faveur du vent d'E.N.E. a 10. heures du matin avons eu connoissance d'une voile au vent à nous, a 11. heures reconnu que c'étoit une Goelette qui chassoit sur nous, toutes voiles dehors, a midy et demi étant a portée du Canon elle á hissé pavillon françois. j'ay répondu par le mien, et aussitot qu'elle l'a eu reconnu, elle a amené Le Sien et hissé un pavillon blanc avec une double croix rouge. Cette feinte ne m'a point étonné. Elle a fait ce que m'avoit fait la fregate La *Wenchelsa* de Londres portant 22. canons, qui m'a visité au travers au travers de la petite Cayque. Elle m'avoit mis pavillon françois avant le Sien. Cette goelette a assuré son pavillon d'un Coup de Canon, et a tiré très précipitamment trois autres Coups de Canon. j'ay fait Carguer mes basses voiles; a peine ai je eu fini Cette manoeuvre, elle a fait une autre décharge de Six autres Coups de Canons a boulets qui m'ont passé dans les manoeuvres. j'ay fait mettre vent dessus, vent dedans, et a fait aussitot une autre décharge de Coups de Canons, et m'a crié de mettre mon Canot à l'Eau et de leur envoyer tout de suite a bord, tirant toujours de distance en distance des Coups de Canons. un abord aussi impertinent m'a donné tout a craindre: je l'aurois réprimé, Si je l'avois pû; mais la poudre qui étoit la principale chose me manquoit. je n'en avois qu'environs ving livres. Cette quantité n'étoit pas suffisante pour me défendre et m'engager à un Combat. j'ay donc été obligé de mettre mon Canot à la mer, dans lequel j'ay mis 4. hommes et le Patron et un officier à qui j'ay remis mon passeport. Arrivés a leur bord ils se sont saisis de l'Equipage du Canot, et les ont mis a fond de Calle, Sans vouloir rien écouter, ni meme avoir égard au Passeport. ils m'ont renvoyé mon Canot armé de leur Equipage, qui arrivés à mon Bord m'ont dit que J'allois a la Nouvelle Angleterre, qu'il falloit que je me rendisse a leur bord pour parler a leur Capitaine, ou bien qu'ils alloient faire feu sur nous et nous Couler a fonds, et en meme tems ont fait une recherche si nous n'avions point de munitions de guerre, et se sont emparé du peu de poudre que j'avois et ont visité mes canons, et ont mis le feu à un que j'avois de chargé a poudre. Incertain sur le party que j'avois a prendre me pressant toujours d'aller à bord. je me suis consulté à qui il étoit sensé que je le fisse. Voyant, mais trop tard que j'avois affaire à des Pirates gens obstinés, devoués au Crime et a la Barbarie, dont il y avoit tout a craindre, menaçant a tout propos mon Equipage les armes à la main, je me suis rendu à leur bord. Le Cap-

itaine m'a fait passer derriere en me disant que j'étois de bonne prise. je luy ay demandé si la france étoit en guerre avec L'Angleterre: il m'a repondu que non, mais qu'il avoit ordres de L'amiral de luy envoyer à la Nouvelle York tous les navires qu'il trouveroit dans ces parages, ajoutant que nous étions la cinquieme prise qu'il faisoit. C'étoit ainsi qu'il en avoit usé avec les autres. voilà tout ce que j'ay pu Sortir et entendre d'Eux. ils ont renvoyé mon canot à bord, et ont fait mettre ma Chaloupe à la mer pour la remplir de marchandises de mon bord et la garder a latraine de leur bord. Voilà ce qui étoit leur premier projet. Le Canot ne discontinuoit de faire des voyages chargé du pillage qu'ils faisoient, comme fusils, Epées et toutes Espèces de papiers, un de mes Canon et provisions de Bouche; Comme Volailles, vins, Sucre, Caffé, or et argent, et effets qu'ils ont trouvés dans ma malle, après avoir bouleversé toutes celles des passagers: mais la mienne a fixé leur attention ou il y avoit dedans pour quatorze ou quinze mille livres en effets, Bijoux, or et argent monnoyés de france et de L'amerique, que j'avois de divers sous connoissemens et a moy appartenant, Comme on verra par le détail cy après, que je réclame pour avoir été pris dans ma dite malle en présence des soussignés. Contents de ce dernier pillage, ils ont changé leur projet. Le Capitaine m'a dit qu'il m'alloit renvoyer à mon Bord, et que je pourrois m'en aller en france, n'étant pas assés de monde pour Conduire Cette prise, me disant cela m'arrachant ma montre dans ma poche, malgré la précaution que j'avois eu de ne pas la laisser appercevoir. je me suis rendu à mon bord a 6. heures du soir. je Les ay trouvés occuppés a enclouer mes trois Canons, ayant long-tems balancé de les jeter à la mer. Cela fini, ils se sont rendus à leur bord avec mon Canot, et me l'ont renvoyé avec mon Equipage qu'ils avoient tenu a bord tout ce tems là. j'ay fait en présence des Soussignés la vérification de ma malle, j'ay trouvé qu'il m'avoit été volé la somme et effets suivants

Sçavoir

trois cens piastres Gourdes et dix sept Louis d'or de france sous Connoissement pour compte et risque de M. Garat, a l'adresse de M ^{re} . Bernard, Martin et Courrejeolle	3087. ^{lt}
Dix Louis d'or de france, dix sept piastres gourdes, quatre vingt Gourdins, vingt livres huit sols argents de france, sous connoissement pour Compte et risque de M. Hurvoy, à l'adresse de M ^{re} . Baux freres et neuveux, et une médaille d'argent	693. ^{lt} 17
Deux cens soixante dix neuf livres, argent de france, et Vingt quatre piastres gourdes chargées sous connoissement par M. Peyre, a L'adresse de M. Richard	616. ^{lt} 10
Soixante gourdes et quatre doubles Escaliers pour Compte et risque de M. Perrons, chargées sous Connoissement par M. Castera	501.
	<hr/> 4898 7
a feu jean L'Eglise charpentier cy devant sur le navire, conformément à son Inventaire deux cens dix neuf livres argent de l'amerique, et vingt sept Livres argent de france, une paire de Boucle et un bouton d'argent	259. 10
Appartenant au S. Chandeau Capitaine du d. navire douze Portugaises, dont cinq en or et sept en argent, et cent ving livres argent de france	972
Une montre d'or garnie en Jargon et une paire de Boucles à Brillants	435.
	<hr/> 6565. ^{lt} 17

Montant à la Somme de six mille cinq cens soixante cinq livres dix sept sols que formoient toutes les Espèces monnoyées que j'avois dans ma dite malle, plus une Bague de diamans fins, appartenante à M. Durand, qu'il m'avoit donnée pour luy faire remonter, luy ay fourni une réconnoissance. Nous avons dressé le present verbal pour servir et valoir Comme de raison. fait et redigé Le jour, mois et an susdit. Signée j. Chandeau &^a.

Observation

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

[Translation]

We, the undersigned, senior officers, seamen, and passengers of the ship *Philippe*, Captain Chandeau, belonging to Messrs. Baux Freres et Neveux, certify that we sailed from Fort Dauphin on 14 August 1777, making for Bordeaux. On that day 23 August, same year, at 31 degrees 31 minutes north latitude and 73 degrees 22 minutes longitude of the Paris meridian, with all sails set, sailing close to the wind from the E.N.E., at 10 o'clock in the morning, we sighted a sail to our windward; at 11 o'clock we identified it to be a schooner bearing down on us with all sails set. At a half after noon, coming within gun-shot, she hoisted the French flag; I answered by hoisting mine, and as soon as she identified it, she hauled down hers and hoisted a white flag with a double red cross. This ruse did not surprise me. She did what had been done to me by the frigate *Winchelsea* out of London and carrying 22 guns, who inspected me off Little Caicos. She had shown a French flag before showing her own. The schooner asserted her colors by firing a gun, then very quickly fired three more shots. I had my lower sails furled; hardly had I completed that maneuver than she fired six round-shots that passed through the rigging. I had the sails backed and filled; the schooner immediately fired another volley of shots and called to me to put my boat in the water and to send it immediately to his ship, while continuing to fire his guns at intervals. Such an insolent approach gave me every reason to be concerned. I would have overpowered him, had I been able, but powder was the main thing I was lacking. I only had some twenty pounds of it. This quantity was insufficient to defend myself and to engage in a fight. I was, therefore, forced to put my boat in the water and put in it 4 men, the owner, and an officer to whom I handed my passport. Upon arriving at the ship, the boat's crew was seized and put in the bilges, without trying to hear what they had to say, nor did they pay any attention to the passport. They sent my boat back manned by their own crew who, upon boarding my ship, said to me that I was going to New England, that I was to go on board their ship to talk with their captain or they would fire on us and sink us. Meanwhile they made a search to find out whether we might have any ammunition. They seized the small amount of powder I had, examined my guns and fired one that I had charged with powder. Uncertain as to the decision I had to make while being pushed to go to the other ship, I mulled over what was the sensible thing to do. Realizing too late that I was dealing with pirates, obstinate people dedicated to crime and barbarism, of whom there was every reason to be afraid, and who were, at every turn, threatening my crew with small arms, I

went to their ship. The captain had me go aft while telling me that I was a good prize. I asked him whether France was at war with England; he answered no, but he had the admiral's orders to send to him in New York any ships found in the area, and added that we were the fifth prize he had taken and that was how he had dealt with the others. That was all I could get out of them or to understand about them. They sent my boat back to my ship and had my longboat put in the water so as to load it with goods from my ship and to keep it astern of their ship. That was their first scheme. The boat continued to make trips loaded with goods they had pillaged, such as rifles, swords, all sorts of papers, one of my guns, and provisions such as fowl, wine, sugar, coffee, gold and silver, and personal belongings they found in my trunk, after turning upside down all those belonging to the passengers. Mine, however, caught their attention. It contained items worth some fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds, gems, French and American gold and silver coins, which I held under consignment from various persons or as belonging to me, as one will see by the detailed list below, which I claim as having been taken from my trunk in the presence of the undersigned. Satisfied with this final robbery, they changed their plans. The captain told me he would send me back to my ship and I could go on to France, since there were not enough men to sail this prize. He was telling me that while snatching my watch from my pocket, despite the care I had taken not to let him see it. I went back to my ship at 6 o'clock in the evening. I found them busy spiking my three guns, having planned long before to throw them overboard. That done, they then returned to their ship with my boat, sending it back with my crew whom they had held, all that time, on board. In the presence of the undersigned men I checked the contents of my trunk and found that the following sum and items had been stolen from me:

To wit

Three hundred <u>gourde</u> piasters and seventeen gold Louis from France on consignment for Mr. Garat's account and risk in care of Messieurs Bernard, Martin and Courrejeolle	3087. ¹⁶ 00
Ten gold Louis from France, seventeen <u>gourde</u> piasters, eighty <u>gourdins</u> , twenty livres eight sol in silver coins from France on consignment for Mr. Hurvoy's account and risk, in care of Messieurs Baux Brothers and Nephews, and a silver medal	693. ¹⁶ 17
Two hundred seventy-nine livres in silver coins from France and eighty <u>gourde</u> piasters on consignment by Mr. Peyre, in care of Mr. Richard	616. ¹⁶ 10
Sixty <u>gourdes</u> and four double <u>escaliers</u> from Mr. Perrens's account and risk on consignment by Mr. Castera	501.
	<hr/> 4898 7
Belonging to the late Jean L'Eglise, formerly carpenter on this ship and according to the inventory of his personal effects: two hundred nineteen pounds in silver coins from America, twenty-seven pounds in silver coins from France, a pair of buckles and a silver button	259. 10
Belonging to Sieur Chandeau, captain of the aforesaid ship, twelve Portuguese coins, five of which were gold and twelve silver, and one hundred twenty pounds in silver coins from France	972
One gold watch set with a zircon and a pair of buckles set with brilliants	435.
	<hr/> 6565. ¹⁶ 17

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

Comment

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

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fols. 234–36. Notations: "envoye copie a M. le M^{is} de Noailles le 1^{er} 9^{bre}. 1777."; "Copie avec la lettre de M de Sartine du 30. 8^{bre}. 1777. Cap^{ue}. Chandeau."

PAUL WENTWORTH TO WILLIAM EDEN

[*London, ca. Oct. 30, 1777*]

Port News.

This packett sailed from Sinypuxent Harbour in Maryland, the 10. August—while there, Young had seen L^d Howe's fleet on the 4 to the 8 Aug^t beating close in to the land with a Contrary wind, steering to the S.W. which leaving Young no doubt of their destination to Chesepeak Bay—He sent off three Expresses to Maryland, & Virginia—& to the Congress & Washington: who rec'd them, he tho't the 9 or 10 Aug:—

This Expedient was suggested by M^r Thurgot to D^r Fr:—& by him furnished to M. Sartine, who requested the Doctors advice about the 10 Sept.

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

It is very probable that the Jamaica Ships¹ lately claimed at Nantes, will be detained—ultimately—for the Benefit of the Captors. The process will be allowed to go on, but as slowly as possible, till the Proofs of the property & the port she Cleared from are Legally admitted; then the Farmers General will claim Her as a forfeiture incurred by the false Entry, & devolving to them in right of their Compact &c. This claim will no doubt be followed by an adjudication, the King cant interfere, & the Farmers General may give away their property to the american Commissioners, or any one else.

She mounts 24 Six pounders,
& is well Manned.

of no use in the W. Indies.

Bound to Portsm^o NHamp:

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

the Comm^{rs}. Agent.

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

with 500 Hhds Sug^r,

The ship,² said to have been detained &
unloaded at Marseilles, at Lord Stormonts
demand—was again Reloaded with the same
Articles before mentioned—Her Name Changed,
the Command given to Lundai, late Bougainvilles
Lieutenant, & who had just been appointed
Captain of the Port of Brest, & by order from
Court, allowed to take on board 8000 fusils
25000^{lb} Sulpher, Saltpetre &c^a, for the french
Islands—But sailed the 25 last month, bound
directly to Portsmouth New Hampshire. On
board Her, went Passengers The Baron Steuben,
often mentioned; and M. Francy well known, as
Brother to M. Morand, & Secretary to
Beaumarchais.—

On the 7 Inst^t The *Alfred* Privateer, 30 Guns,
Cap^t Hinman, and the *Polly Raleigh*—32 Guns,
Cap^t Thompson, arrived at L'orient with two of
the last Jamaica Fleet,³ Carrying 780 Hhds Sugar
& 250 Puncheons of Rum—the Seamen are sent
on board the Packett,⁴ Cap^t Young laying at
Nantes—And the Ships & Cargoes (reserving 50
Puncheons of Rum, their Guns, the Cabin stores,
unbent Sails &c) they sold to Mess^s. Berard,
Montplaisir, &c^a. at L'orient for £9700 St^g—The
Ships lay under the Island of Grouaix, last
Monday the 13. M^r. Gourlade, was to have had a
share, but could not in Conscience agree to give
so little, which occasioned the delay, & M.
Chaumont, wrote a letter to the Purchasers to
engage them, for the Honor & Interest of France,
to make up the Price £13000 St^g. The Privateers
had found Pretexs so specious that the Comm^r
of the Port, had allowed them to stay till they
should be refitted, or till the Court should forbid
it, & last monday the 13. Dispatches were sent to
the Comm^{rs}. at L'orient by Franklin & Deane.

Another of the Jam^a Fleet was brought into
Nantes, by the Privateer lately fitted out there by
M. Williams the Agent to the Comm^{rs}, instead, &
with the Crew of the *Surprize* Cap^t Nicholson
converted into a Packett & sailed the last month
for America.⁵ The Prize was not sold the 11.
Inst^t—as the Adventurers in the Privateer (the
Comm^{rs}, M. Montheiu, Chaumont, Williams &c)
Hoped to have Interest enough to Procure

the Comm^{rs}. had been twice before refused the large Cannon—& the fieldpieces were not ready till lately.—It is worthy remark here, that Chaumont is in Treaty with F & D. for 150 Cannon now at Barcelona &c, in Spain of 24 18 12 & 6 Pounders.

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

M. Carmichael is going passenger in this Ship.

passports & take the benefit of Purchasers in the Case before stated.

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

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

Cunningham has again sailed from Ferrol on a Cruize—after selling His Prizes—he says for half price—& refitting His ship the *Revenge*—He procured Papers from a Merch^t there (which were intended for another ship belonging to Spain) to Cover the *Black Prince*—a Prize—laden with Wine, Fruit & Oyl which he sent to Bayonne.

1. Besides the *Hippopotame*—which is to carry 14000 fusils besides other warlike stores for Congress—There are the following getting ready—

- A ship of 60 Guns at Rochefort, and an
- 2 & 3. Indiaman pierced for 60 Guns, at L'orient, belonging to M. Chaumont, Holker, Sabatti, &c. to be loaded with Merchandize—The *Lyon* a Frigate of 36 Guns belonging to the Commissioners & fitting out at Nantes by M. Williams in the Name of M. Pelletier de
4. for war.

M. Chaumont is sending 10 Vessels loaded with Salt, besides several Vessels with Cloathing & other Merchandize—

M. Monthieu & Associates—6 or 8 very Valuable Cargoes.

M. Buat of St Maloes & associates—The Count de Vaux; The Viscomte Narbonne Pelet; &c are also sending four Cargoes.

M. Jauge of Bourdeaux & His Associates—10 Cargoes.

Mess. Basmarin of Bourdeaux several Cargoes

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

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

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

By &c.

Whereas we intend the Ship you command, accompanied with the Ships & Sloops named in the Margin,¹ shall proceed to the West Indies with such Trade bound thither, as shall arrive at Spithead, when the Wind shall have been fair for bringing Ships from the Downes for the space of 48. hours after the receipt hereof; You are, therefore, hereby required and directed to take the said Ships & Sloops under your command (their Commanders being directed to obey your Orders) & such Trade as shall be assembled at the time abovemention'd under your convoy; and, putting to Sea with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather, proceed with them towards the places of their destination, And, having seen such as may be bound to Barbadoes in safety to that Island, you are to dispatch the *Aurora* & *Deal Castle* to Tobago & Grenada with such as may be bound thither; directing their commanders, after they have seen them in safety to the respective places of their destination, to cruize about those Islands (the former off Tobago the latter off Grenada) for the protection of the Trade of His Maj^{ty}. Subjects, & to use their best endeavours to take, or destroy Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America; continuing on that Service until they shall be relieved by other Cruizers from Vice Adm^l. Young or the Commander in Chief for the time being of His Maj^{ty}. Ships at Barbadoes the Leeward Islands &c. with whom they are to correspond by all convenient opportunities, following his Orders for their further proceedings; And to whom you are to cause the inclosed Packet to be delivered, or safely conveyed, by the first opportunity which may present itself after your arrival within the Limits of his Station.

Having dispatched the *Aurora* & *Deal Castle* as above directed you are, in the Ship you command accompanied by the two Sloops, to proceed towards Antigua with the Trade bound to that & the neighbouring Islands, And, having seen those bound to

Antigua, in safety thither, & the others as far as your way & theirs may lie together, make the best of your way to Jamaica with such as may be bound to that Island and the Florida's; directing the Commander of the *Hound*, when you reach the East end of that Island, to see the Trade bound to the North side of it, in safety to the Ports of their destination, and then to follow you to Port Royal, where, upon your arrival, you are to put yourself under the command of Vice Adm^l. Gayton, or the Commanding Officer for the time being of His Maj^{ty}. Ships & Vessels at that Island; And, delivering to him the inclosed Packet, follow his Orders for your further proceedings.

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

Sandwich

J Buller

Palmerston

By &c. P.S.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 254–55. Addressed at foot of letter: "Captⁿ. Lambert, *Niger*, Spithead."

1. Named in the margin were the *Aurora*, of 28 guns, and the *Deal Castle*, of 20, and the sloops *Hound* and *Sylph*.

2. This refers to the final paragraph of Lords Commissioners, Admiralty, to Captain Matthew Moore, 2 Oct. 1777 (UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, fols. 220–21), giving instructions about keeping the convoy in company, accommodating speed to the slowest, and reporting merchant vessels that part with the convoy or disobey orders.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO VICE ADMIRAL JAMES YOUNG

By &c.

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

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

Sandwich

J Buller

Palmerston

By &c. P.S.

LB, UklPR, Adm. 2/103, 254–56. Addressed at foot of letter: “To James Young Esq^r Vice Adm^l of the Red, or the Commanding Officer for the time being of His Maj^{ty}s Ships & Vessels at Barbadoes & the Leeward Islands.”

1. Named in the margin were the *Aurora*, of 28 guns, and the *Deal Castle*, of 20, and the sloops *Hound* and *Sylph*.

2. See William Knox to Philip Stephens, 9 Aug. 1777, C.O. 5/254, fol. 173; Lord George Germain to Lords of Admiralty, 9 Oct. 1777, C.O. 5/127, fols. 202–3d; entry in C.O. 5/254, fols. 183–84; and Lord Macartney to Lord George Germain, 11 July 1777, NDAR 9: 267–69.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO SILAS DEANE

Dear Sir

Nantes Oct^r 30th. 1777—

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

Sam Nicholson

P.S. M^r Jonaⁿ. Williams has got the Acc^t. of Disburs^{ts}. at S^t Malo, if you choose to have it, send me word & I will send you mine

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: “To/The Honble Silas Deane Esq^r/At/Paris.” Docketed: “Capt. Nicholson 30 Oct^r 1777.”

1. Deane asked Nicholson on what account the latter had drawn a bill for 4,703.18 livres, on 16 Sept., payable to Desegray, Beaugeard, fils & Co., “as you have not yet given me advice of your drawing.” *Deane Papers* 2: 203.

October 31

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

[Admiralty, 31 Oct. 1777]

By &c.

Whereas we have receiv^d Intelligence to be depended on, (a Copy of which you will receive in this, in addition to the Intelligence transmitted in our Order of the

18th. of last Month) that several French Ships have sailed; and that others are soon intended to sail from different Ports in France, having on board Cargoes of Warlike Stores, and other Supplies for the use of the Rebels in N^o. America: All which Ships it is reported from good Authority are to be convoy'd off the Coast of France by Ships of War belonging to that Nation; And whereas it is of the utmost importance to His Maj^{ty}. Service that the aforesaid Ships should be intercepted. We do therefore hereby require and direct you to use your utmost diligence in the Ship you command (directing the several Captains under you to do the like)¹ in looking out for the said ships, and in case of falling in with, to examine them, notwithstanding any remonstrance from the Officer commanding the Convoy to the contrary; And being satisfied the Ships you so examine are those pointed out to be employ'd as above described, to seize and bring them into One of His Maj^{ty}. Ports; taking care the several Articles on board are effectually secured from loss or embezzlement: and sending our Secretary a minute Account of your proceedings.

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

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/1334, 34. The letter is incomplete, lacking its end, date, signature, and address. Its location in the letter book, together with its contents, suggest strongly that it is the set of instructions to which the Earl of Sandwich refers in his letter to Digby of 31 Oct., immediately below.

1. Digby opened his secret instructions on 12 Nov. and on 14 Nov. sailed from Torbay on a cruise in the *Ramillies*, accompanied by the *Culloden*, *Prosperpine*, *Resolution*, and *Royal Oak*. *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782*, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38), 1: 254–55.

EARL OF SANDWICH TO CAPTAIN ROBERT DIGBY, R.N.

Private.

Admiralty, October 31st 1777.

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

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

Sandwich

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38), 1: 254.

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON), FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1777

The *Fanny*, Wood, from Spain and Falmouth for Quebec, that was taken by the *True Blue* Privateer, is retaken by the *Mermaid* M. W. and carried into Halifax.¹

1. "James Spence mate of the Brigantine *Fanny* being duly sworn depose, that the said Brigantine was Bound on a Voyage from Falmouth in England to Quebec, loaded with Wines, that on or about the 8th of July last they fell in with a Rebel Privateer Schooner of 10 Carriage Guns, call'd the *True Blue*, that the Rebels Boarded & took Possession of said Brig being in the Latitude 45° N. Long. 33. That the Rebels took out the master John Wood, & all the hands except the Depon^t & a Boy, & also took out all the Papers except the Register & Bill of Sale of the Vessel, which are in the Attorney Genls. Hands, that they put on Board said Brig 7 men and a Prize Master & stood to the Westward for Marblehead, that on the 29th of August last being near the Seal Islands in this Province they fell in with his Majestys Ship of War the *Mermaid*, James Hawker Esq^r Commander who retook the said Brig *Fanny* & sent her Safe into this Port of Halifax, that when the *Mermaid* took possession of the Brig^t the Rebels made their escape in the Boat & the Boy with them." *American Vessels Captured by the British during the Revolution and War of 1812: Records of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Halifax, Nova Scotia* (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1911), p. 29.

DESEGRAY BEAUGEARD JR. & CO. TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON

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

To Desegray Beauguard J^r & C^o. D^r

To M^{rs}. Neven for Tallow as p^r bill 29 .. —

To M^r V. Chenard, Griandais & Le Page for fagg^{ts}. 12 .. 14—

To Marten for brooms &c 1 .. 3 .. —

To us Desegray & C^o. for a plank 1 .. 10—

To M^r Touche for his Voyage from here to Nantes

& Back by land & Several Disburs^{ts}. 200—

To Postage & inquiries ab^t 8 Men run away From s^d. Vessel 5 .. 10—

249 .. 17 .. 0

Our Commission at 4 p^rC^t including advance of Money & Disc^t of bills of Exchange

10 .. 0—

£259 .. 17 .. 0

We Certifye the Above Acc^t of the sloop The *Dolphin*, Amount^s

Errors Excepted, to 259 .. 17—

S^t. Malo the 31st. Oct^r. 1777—

Desegray Beauguard J^r & C^o.

Copy

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

November 1

THOMAS ERSKINE TO LORD SUFFOLK

No. ¹⁰

Gothenburg 1st. Nov^r. 1777—

My Lord,

I have now to Inform your Lordship that Cap^t. Woodhouse is now about clear to Sail from Marstrand under Swedish Colours, his masters Name I. Tangren—the vessell under the same discription as already given—the Cargo consisting of Salt, Linens &c^a to the Extent of circa £3000—

The two Schooners are also about clear to sail chiefly loaded with Teas & I suspect some Powder,—

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

Thom^s Erskine

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot of first page: "R^t Hon^{ble} Earl of Suffolk." Notation in left margin: "Extract sent to the Admiralty."

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord.

Corunna 1st Nov: 1777.

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

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

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

H Katencamp

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 328. Addressed at foot of page: "The R^t Hon^{ble} Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 1st Nov^r 1777/Consul Katenkamp/(N^o 68)/R. 28th."

November 3

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

(Copy)

Egmonts Intelligence

Torbay Road Nov^r 3. 1777.

John Woods of the *Oderion* of 90 Tons from Newfoundland to S^r Andero was taken the 6: Oct^r about 7 Leagues to the NW of Cape Ortugal by the *Hawke* Schooner of 10 Guns & 10 Swivels put the Crew on board a Spanish Brig, and were carried to Bilboa, when he left Bilboa the *Hawke* & *Success* Schooners were cleaning & wou'd

be ready for Sea in 5 or 6 Days an American Letter of Marque was ready for Sea & waited only for a Bar & bound to America—

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

Jn^o: Elphinston

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 312. Docketed: "In M^r Stephens's to S^r S. P/13 Nov^r 1777." Enclosed in Philip Stephens to Sir Stanier Porten, 13 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 311.

November 4

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

London.

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

DECLARATION OF PHILIP AMY, MASTER OF THE BRIG *ELIZABETH*

This is to Certify that on the last day of September at 6 o'Clock in the afternoon, being on the Coast of Spain, one Mile from Mount S^t Anthony where I took a Pilot for Bilboa; The Morning ensuing at 5 o'Clock distant about two Miles from Shore, I was boarded by the *True American* privateer mounted with 12 Guns commanded by John Buffington who immediately took possession of my Vessel ordered myself & Crew on board of his privateer, where we was kept thirty six hours, but it blowing strong from the N.W. obliged him to put in Castro (the said Privateer left Bilboa at 2 o'Clock the same Morning) At my arrival at Castro I sent an express to Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui & Sons of Bilboa who had for several Years before transacted my owners business in that port, desiring them to have the Privateer arrested, I receiv'd an Answer the 3rd. day of October that if I could have a Certificate of the Pilot, proving that I was taken within Gun Shot I could have the said Privateer arrested; but in the same hour Buffington received a Letter from Bilboa ordering him to leave Castro immediately which was effected in the night. I repaired as soon as I could to Bilboa with my Crew and where I made a Certificate proving that I was taken within two Miles of the Coast, & obtained one of the same assertion from my Pilot. On the 13th. of the same Month Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui's informed me that my Vessel was at Secouá [*Socoa*] in France; on the 15th. I went Post & arrived there the 19th. but after enquiry found that my Vessel had left the place the 16th. but the Americans had unloaded the Cargo which Consisted of 2200 Q^{ts} of Cod Fish & sold it to M^r. Du fourcq of Bayonne in france, at Fifteen Livers $\frac{3}{4}$ quintal. Sixteen hundred Quintals where sent by the said Du fourcq to S^t Sebastien, where I have had them arrested; and the law suit to be tryed.

I went to Bayonne in order to speak myself to M^r Du fourcq; & this is what he told me concerning my Vessel. "I have remitted to your Correspondents Mess^{rs} Gardoqui & Sons 26,000 livres, French curr^y for John Buffington's Account part of the amount of the Cargo I purchased from him." He further said, that the Mess^{rs}. Gardoquis had sent several expresses ordering the Officer of Buffington who was Master in my Vessel to go to sea without delay for fear of my meeting him there.

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

Jersey 4th. Nov^r. 1777.

Ph: Amy

DS, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 333–34. Endorsed: "In Mess^{rs} de Gruchy & Fiott's/21 Nov^r 1777." Docketed: "Declaration of Cap^t Amy/of the Ship *Elizabeth*/ & Letters from S. Sebastian." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 28 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 330–31. Extracts of letters from Richard Birmingham and Peter Mallet were included. These letters attest to Amy's journey.

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

Hon^{ble}. Gentlemen

(N^o. 84)

Nantes Nov^r 4. 1777.—

As it was absolutely necessary to have Ballast for the Ship ¹ and neither the Flints or Copper arrived nor any appearance of their arriving (except about 30.000 w^t of the latter) for some time I have bought 40.000 w^t of Bar Lead at 23^{1/2} p cwt and about 30 Ton of Salt. I have in doing this been as saving as I possibly could, and even now shall be obliged to fill in the ground Tier of Casks with as much sand & small Stones as I possibly can, for so large a Ship must have at least 150 Tons dead weight in her Hold to enable her to carry sail, especialy in such blowing weather as she will probably have on our Coast. I should have been happy to have purchased three times as much Lead, as it is a usefull article with us, and will Ballast the Ship without taking up any Room, but I dare not make so great a Consumption in our Funds without orders. If the Copper or Flints had arrived this purchase would have been unnecessary, that is if we could ship the Flints without their being considered munitions of War.

The first Gabar ² consisting of water Casks filled, Lead, what Copper we have and other articles to go in her Bottom will be loaded to day and the Ship by the Time these Things get down will be ready to take in.

I have about 5000 Suits of my Cloths pack'd & packing, the Remainder will soon be ready, but whether quite time for the *Lion* or not will not be material, as I have already more Cargo than sufficient for that Ship.—If you are willing to continue the making of Cloaths here after my 10.000 shall be finished, I beg to know now, as I will so take my measures for Cloth & other materials that the work will go on with Facility and dispatch, I have now near 100 hands that when I finish will be again dispersed unless I continue their employ. I am [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J.

P.S. A Circumstance is much talked of here that is supposed to be an omen of war, it is the recall of the Newfoundland Fishery. One Vessell is arrived with a small quantity only on board & reports that she quitted the Banks by express orders, a Frigate being there with the Kings commands that all the Vessells whether loaded or not

should immediately return home.³ The Post from Bordeaux to day advises the arrival of a Vessel from Eddington N Carolina, the Captain of which reports that Gen^l Howe & the Fleet had not got more than half up the Bay, and had never attempted to land.—The acco^t adds that Gen Prescott is exchanged for Gen Lee.

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "The Hon^{ble} Commissioners/of the United States." Docketed: "Mr Williams Nov^r 4 1777/Hon: Com^{rs} U.S./Soldiers Cloaths" and "N^o 84)."

1. The *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

2. Gabare, a lighter for transferring cargo.

3. In August, expecting a British declaration of war, the French government had ordered the Newfoundland fishing fleet home. Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 78-80.

November 5

LEFRAS AND LE MESURIER TO PHILIP STEPHENS

Extract of a Letter from Mess^{rs}.

Lefras & Le Mesurier; dated at

Walbrook 5th. Nov^r. 1777, to M^r

Stephens

Walbrook 5th. Nov^r. 1777

We take the Liberty to inclose you a Letter from our Correspondents Mess^{rs}. Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena of Bilboa¹ (the first of whom is Vice English Consul at that port) by which you will find that a great number of American Privatiers infest that Coast, waiting for the Newfoundland Ships, and that there are three of them that Rendezvous in the said Port of Bilboa, and go out by turns to relieve one another, by which means very few English Vessels escape being taken; Capⁿ. Gorrequer of the Schooner *Adventure* of Jersey (mentioned in the aforesaid Letter) was taken at an Anchor near the Bar of Bilboa as he was going in, and carry'd into the said Port by one of these Privatiers, but as he was taken when under the Protection of the Forts, he was by order of the Commissary of Marines released.

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

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 293. Docketed: "In Philip Stephens's to S^r S P/12 Nov^r 1777." Enclosed in Philip Stephens to Sir Stanier Porten, 12 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 292.

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

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

Secret

N° 160

Fontainebleau November 5th 1777

My Lord

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

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

His Answers were short, and not very Satisfactory. He only said that he had never heard before of a Fleet assembling at Bilboa, that He did not know how to credit the existence of such a Project, qu'il s'informerait plus particulièrement et verroit ce qu'il y auroit a faire He renewed the Professions of his Pacific Intentions. . . .¹ I am [&c.]

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1735. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Fontainebleau 5 Nov^r 1777/Lord Stormont/(N^o. 160) Secret/R. 12 by Messenger to Calais."

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

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o 161

Most Secret

Fontainebleau November 5th. 1777

My Lord

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

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

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

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

When I came to the Intelligence I had received from my Court, I told His Excellency that He would find it in two Papers, which I gave Him to read, and which were those marked B, and, C. He read them, and when He came to the Deposition relating to the Powder and Stores, being taken out of the two Privateers; He said that

that was always done, when ships were repaired. I observed to Him that they had been deposited dans L'Arsenal du Roi, which was surely a mark of favour, and friendship and added, that the most exceptionable Part of all was the repairing the Ships, and repairing them in the Kings Dock; Notwithstanding all the Solemn Promises made us to the Contrary, He gave his usual frivolous Answer, that the ships were in Distress, and that the assistance granted them was only upon a Principle of common Humanity. . . .¹ I am [&c.]

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1736. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Fontainebleau 5 Nov^r 1777/Lord Stormont/N^o. 161/most secret/R. 12th. by Messenger to/Calais/one inclosure."

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

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. PETER LIEGE, DATED NANTZ, NOV. 5,
TO MESS. LONG, DRAKE, AND LONG, LONDON."

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

London Chronicle, 15–18 Nov. 1777.

1. Jamaica men *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*, taken by Massachusetts privateers *Fanny* and *General Mercer*.

November 6

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VICE ADMIRAL LORD SHULDHAM AND ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE

My Lord

[*Admiralty Office*] 6 Nov^r: 1777.

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

PS.

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

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

WILLIAM LEE TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG

Capⁿ. John Young Nantes
Sir

Chaillot N^o. 5 Rue Bataille
Pres Paris 6 Nov^r. 1777.

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

LB, ViHi, William Lee Papers.

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

[Gironde] du jeudy 6^{eme} [novembre]

quoique le commis ne soit pas de retour le lieutenant en pied et un officier sont parti pour bourdeaux pour travailler a l'armement. le meme jour le batiment la *ste anne* commande par charles linsee anglois est venü nous demander du secours contre le *portsmouth* qui est mouillie aupres de nous ainse que contre une goelete insurgente qui est au meme mouillage cette goelete se nomme lhironnelle. nous luy avons dit a langlois de sortir, et nous avons declaré aux insurgents qu'ils ne partiroident que vingt quarte heurs apres.

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Thursday 6th [November]

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

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 287.

November 7

PHILIP STEPHENS TO VISCOUNT BARRINGTON

My Lord

[Admiralty] 7th: Nov^r: 1777.

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

PS.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/556, 167–68. Addressed at foot: "R^t: Hon^{ble}: Lord Viscount Barrington &c. &c. &c^a." Notation in the margin: "Relates to the furnish^s a Guard at Forton Prison."

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

Font^{au}. 7. 9^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 29, 8^{bre}. par laquelle vous m'informez que les frégates américaines le *Raleigh* et l'*Alfred* continuer à travailler a leur Carène et a leur radoub. Signifiez aux Capitaines de ces Batimens que l'intention du Roy est absolu-

ment que leurs Batimens restent le moins de tems possible dans ses Ports et qu'ainsi ils aient à se dépêches de se mettre promptement en état de reprendre la mer.¹

Quant aux deux prises² faites par ces frégates le S. Berard³ méritoit surement d'être puni s'il étoit prouvé que c'est par son fait q'u á eû lieu la levée clandestine des matelots françois qui les ont conduit dans la Riviere de Crach. Je vois d'ailleurs par une Lettre que m'ecrit le S. de Lespinay qu'il s'est mis dans le cas d'être condamné a une amende relativement a la contravention a l'ord^e dans laquelle est tombé le Cap^e du Navire le *Baltimore*⁴ pour être parti sans avoir fait aucune déclaration a l'Amirauté. Enjoignez lui d'être plus circonspect a l'avenir sinon je ne pourai me dispenser de rendre compte de sa conduite au Roi.

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

de sartine

[Translation]

Fontainebleau, 7 November 1777

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

As to the two prizes² taken by these two frigates, Monsieur Berard³ surely would merit being punished if it were proven that it was by his act that there was a clandestine enlistment of French sailors who brought them into the Crach river. Moreover, I see by a letter which Monsieur Lespinay wrote to me that he was placed in the circumstances of being condemned to paying a fine as a result of a contravention of a regulation into which fell the captain of the *Baltimore*⁴ for having left without having made any declaration to the Admiralty. Enjoin him to be more circumspect in the future; otherwise I will not be able to excuse myself from giving account of his conduct to the king.

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

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 96. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet." Notation: "R. le 12 9^e."

1. Noted in a different hand at this point: "presser ce départ"; "to hurry the departure."

2. *Anna Susanna*, and *Jamaica*.

3. Bérard was a member of the firm of Bérard, Frères & Co., merchants at L'Orient.

4. The *Baltimore*, formerly *Rebecca*, prize to Massachusetts privateer ship *General Mifflin*, Captain William Day, departed from Morlaix 25 Aug., with a French captain and crew. NDAR 9: 639.

5. Interlined here in a different hand: "avec deffenses d'y reparaitre"; "with prohibitions to return there."

6. This paragraph is bracketed, with the notation: "Extrait à M de L'Epinay procureur du Roy à l'amirauté de Vannes, le 12, 9^e 1777"; "Extract to M. de L'Epinay, King's attorney at the Admiralty of Vannes, 12 Nov. 1777."

COMTE DE VERGENNES TO MARQUIS D'OSSUN

[Extract]

A Fontainebleau le 7 Novembre 1777

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

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

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

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

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

[Translation]

Fontainebleau 7th November 1777.

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

However much the American Deputies shew their gratitude for this fresh mark of the king's kindness, they are equally dismayed at the information which I gave them that they have incurred the indignation of His Catholic Majesty. You have doubtless heard mentioned, Sir, the capture made by one of their privateers of the French vessel le *Fortune*, which was going from London to Cadiz, and which was, nevertheless, sent to America. The greater portion of the cargo being on account of Spanish

merchants, the Catholic King, alive to their just complaints, claims not only reparation for this insolence, which is quite according to rule, but also means to suspend his benefits until satisfaction is given.

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

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

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

Copy, SpMAH, Estado, legajo 3884, expediente 3, doc. 39. Translations, with alterations, from *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1737, which was of the draft in FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Espagne, vol. 587, fols. 37–38. The portion extracted here was originally in a numerical cipher. Among other matters discussed, this letter reports with skepticism Lord Stormont's claim to have certain information "that several French merchant vessels fitted out for war and trade are to join at Bilbao some Spanish vessels, similarly equipped, and from there to go in company, under convoy of some American privateers, direct to America."

1. See Conde de Floridablanca to Conde d'Aranda, 23 Oct., above.

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

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 69.

Corunna 7th November 1777.

My Lord.

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

Being informed the next day that Cunningham was going to take in a fresh Supply of Stores and Amunition from his Prizes, I presented a Petition to the Captain General that he would be pleased in compliance with His Catholick Majesty's Orders to command him to leave this Port seeing he had been allowed Time more than sufficient to provide himself with Provisions and necessaries. the Answer I received and which I sent to My Lord Grantham was that Cunningham had no Design to take any thing from his Prizes, that he came here merely by Stress of Weather, and should depart as soon as it cleared up. In order to prevent any Doubt that might be affected concerning the Weather, as soon as it proved fair I applied to the King's Pilot to certify it, with Intent to inclose his Certificate in a fresh Application to the General, when I heard to my great Surprise that Cunningham had quite unrigged his vessel, and under Pretext of its having received some Damage had obtained Permission to repair and refit it. I immediately waited on the General and requested the Favor of him to acquaint me with his Reasons for granting such Permission after the Answer

he had been pleased to give me to the memorial I presented him the Day before, he replied that Cunningham's vessel was not in Condition to put to Sea, that it could not be his Catholic Majesty's Intention to refuse Assistance to People in Distress, that the new mast he received from the Inspector of the Packets on his first Arrival here was too large for the winter Season, but that as soon as it was lessened, and he was provided with the necessaries he wanted he would immediately order him to depart. however there can be no Doubt other Excuses will be found, and Cunningham be permitted to remain here as long as he pleases, I am extremely sorry I have not been able to succeed, for some of His Majesty's ships are now actually of this Harbour, which is the real Cause of Cunningham's putting in here.

This Pirate has also represented to the General that his Prize the *Two Brothers* containing four thousand Quintals of Fish is so much out of Repair that the Cargoe must perish if not landed, and this is done in order to sell it which it would be impossible to hinder if it is once brought on Shore. I presented another memorial to the General yesterday to acquaint him that Cunningham had another Prize¹ in this Harbour empty, and fit to receive the Cargoe, and that if it was true the *Two Brothers* was really in the Condition it was represented to be the Cargo might be put on board that vessel, since he well knew it would be difficult, if not altogether impossible to prevent the Sale of it if landed, This morning I received his Answer that he had sent Cunningham's Representation to Court, and should not determine in the Affair untill he received an Answer. It is true My Lord that he has sent it to Court, but with a Representation of his own that the Country is very much in want of this Article and would receive great Relief from this Cargoe, which however is not true. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

L, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 359–60. Addressed at the foot of the page: "The R^t Hon^{ble} Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 7 Nov^r 1777/Consul Katencamp/(N^o 69)/R. 11 Dec^r."

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

November 8

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CHESTER, NOV. 8."

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

London Chronicle, 11–13 Nov. 1777.

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

D^r SirParis Nov^r 8 1777

I wrote you by Peltier & somewhat in haste since w^{ch}. y^{rs}. of the 4th is arrived I am sorry that any thing should be put into the *Lyon* as ballast that will not be useful in America. Pray purchase salt or Flints or Lead or some thing for the purpose that is wanted in America; as to the Funds we must contrive to supply them. I pray that she may be equipped as soon as possible & also the *Dolphin* w^h. may Carry some of the Articles & sail under the Convoy of the *Lyon*. The *Mercury* & *Marquis de Chaylote* can take all and more than what you will have left & I presume you will not find difficulty in agreeing for the freight ʒ Tonn. M^r Montieu proposed 120 Liv^s. ʒ Tonn out. I think he will abate a little but I had rather give that Sum than not have the goods sent in them. Those two Ships, the *Lyon* & one or two more of equal Force ready to go at the same time may resist any single ship here or on the Coast of America. The Cloths are of the first & capital importance & therefore must at all Events be dispatched. with respect to the Cloths furnished by Montieu, if they will not Compare with the Patterns given they cannot be taken on the Terms agreed for and as to those which you find absolutely too Small, they cannot be sent on any terms on our Acc^t. Indeed I apprehend you will meet with difficulty—I know not how it can be adjusted better considering the necessity there is for all the Supplies possible than for Montieu to ship them on his own Acc^t. I have not spoke particularly with him as he is sick & as from y^{rs}. it does not appear that you had finished the examination of them. M^r Ross will go for Nantes next week & by him shall forward the particular instructions for Capt. Nicholson &c. My Brother is returned & will take the Brig w^h. I desire may be loaded with Salt as no other article of any Consequence will be sent in her I have not seen Ross since the rec^t. of y^{rs}. I am sorry that Williams¹ as well as we should be disappointed by this misunderstanding but hope you will be able to procure another person equally able to Conduct the Brig, & that she may go with Capt. Nicholson & the others & I shall send down the orders for the Capt. leaving a Blank for his Name which you will fill up properly. As to the making any more Cloths in france nothing can as yet be determined. My private Opinion however is that it is better to send out the Cloth in Bales I have no patience with Mercier & wish heartily we were rid of a fellow who appears to be a perfect trifler & therefore desire he may be held close to his ag^t. [*agreement*] or be wholly off. I am &c.

S. D.

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

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "M^r J. Williams."

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

SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG

Capt. Young

Paris 8 Nov^r 1777

Sir By y^{rs}. of the 3^d. I learn you will be ready soon for sea. What is necessary to be sent you from hence will be forwarded in the Course of next week I hope you will be ready to set sail immediately after the receipt thereof, & I shall write more particularly by the same Conveyance. I am &c. S. D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

JOURNAL OF FRENCH NAVY CORVETTE *ETOURDIE*,
MARQUIS DE MONTBAS, ENSEIGNE DE VAISSEAU[Gironde] du samedy 8^{eme} [novembre]

il ne nous est rien venü de bourdeaux. les insurgents¹ sont parti ce matin ils ont salué le pavillon de cinq vives le roy nous en avons rendu trois.

[Translation]

[Gironde River] Thursday 8th [November]

There is nothing come for us from Bordeaux. The insurgents¹ left this morning. They saluted the flag with five shouts of "Long live the king," we rendered them three.

D, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 147, fol. 287.

1. New Hampshire privateer ship *Portsmouth*, John Hart commander, and Maryland letter of marque schooner *Swallow*, John Martin master.

VENTURA GOMEZ DE LA TORRE AND BARRENA TO DEGRUCHY AND FIOTT

Extract of a Letter received by DeGruchy & Fiott of London, from Mess^{rs}. Ventura Gomez de la Torre & Barrena of Bilbao, dated 8 November 1777.

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

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

DeGruchy & Fiott

Copy, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 368. Docketed: "R. 4 Dec^r: 1777 from/Mess^{rs} de Gruchy & Fiott." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 5 Dec. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 361–62.

November 10

PAUL WENTWORTH TO THE EARL OF SUFFOLK

My Lord

I Received this afternoon a Letter from M^r Edwards¹ dated the 31 Oct. & sent by a private Hand—who writes on the Letter He hopes to return to P— this week, & dates it from Miss Simpkins Essex Street Strand N^o. 42—where trusty Messengers have frequently lodged—Deane had been twice to Fontainbleau for the answer from Spain,² & returned to P—to wait another week. They suspect amusement. The Court of France have bought the Ships Building at Amstⁿ. by Boux for Deane and Franklin—and are going to Build many Frigates on the same Plan—Eight are already on the Stocks to Carry 32–24 P^drs. Brass Cannon on one Deck. M. Sartine has given Boux all his confidence. Beaumarchais writes from Rochefort that His ship of the Line (the *Hippopatame*) will sail in three weeks with Arms, Artillery, Cloathing, Tents & ammunition. K^s of Prussia's agent had proposed a secret meeting, but Ald: Lee has taken Possession of the Business, so nothing can be done. Ar: Lee has taken a House & a Mistress—Izard is disgusted at the distance they observe towards him—Carmichael getting ready to go to America—Hinson came to England and displeased D & F.—They are told some money may be borrowed in Holland, and are Engraving Notes to be passed for the Sums received. You have heard of many armed vessels fitting & gone to America—Many more than you have heard of & some of great force are going; the particulars of which you shall know soon. This is all that is worth any notice—Except his own affairs, which he has lately pressed with unremitting attention: I have the Honor to recommend His plea to Your Lordships consideration, and that of being [&c.]

Poland Street [*London*].

P. Wentworth.

10 Nov: 1777.

L, UKLBL, Auckland Papers, vol. 3, pp. 347–48.

1. Edward Bancroft.

2. A mark, "Q+", is interlined here, referring to a notation at the top of the letter: "Q+ N.—M^r Wentworth was by Letter from Basley Park on the 18th. Nov^r at night desired by L^d. North to obtain if possible the Spanish Answer & such other particulars as are material to or known before the meeting of Parl^t—In Consequence He set out early the next Morning for Paris.—"

DEPOSITION OF EDWARD SYMONDS

Town & County of Poole

This day appear'd before me, John Bird Esq^r Mayor & one of His Majestys justices of the Peace for the said Town & County, Edward Simmonds late Master of the Brig *William & Polly*; who on his Oath declares that on his Passage from Newfoundland to Bilboa, in Spain laden with dry'd Cod Fish, the said Brig was taken by an American Privateer call'd the *Success* of 8 Guns; & that he & his crew were by the said Privateer made Prisoners, & carried to the Port of Bilboa where he had his liberty, but the said Brig remains still sequester'd, that he arrived at Bilboa aforesaid the 2nd. Oct^r 1777 & left it the 24th. of the same Month.

That during his stay there the Brigantine *Mercury* whereof John Pearce was late Master (& which he has been inform'd was the Property of Mess^{rs}. John & Young Green of the said Town of Poole) was brought into the aforesaid Port of Bilboa as a Prize captur'd by some American Privateer,¹ & that he has some reason to think & verily believes that the Property of said Vessel & Cargo was alter'd by the aforesaid Capture; as he saw not Cap^t. John Pearce or any of his Crew on board her, & he further saith, that the Cargo of the Brig *Mercury* was discharg'd there, and also saith that he Knew the said Brigantine to be the *Mercury* aforesaid, having seen her several times at Poole, & he is convinced it was the same Vessel, she having formerly been a Snow & the Tack holes still remain in her Gunwale, & the Name of the Vessel which was wrote in her stern is eraz'd, save & except the Capital Letter M. which he plainly discern'd.

Edw^d. Symonds

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

DS, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 363. Docketed: "Deposition of John Pearce/Master of the *Mercury* Brig/R. 3 Dec^r 1777 from/Mess^{rs} Bingley & Pitt." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 5 Dec. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 361–62. See also Edward Symonds to William Spurrier, 4 Oct. 1777, above.

1. *Mercury* was taken by the New Hampshire privateer ship *Portsmouth*, John Hart.

JACQUES GRUEL AND COMPANY TO COLONEL WILLIAM AYLETT

Sir,

Nantz 10th. November 1777—

Conformably to our precedent Letters¹ which We have the honour to confirm by this one, We have the pleasure to inform you, that We have Shipped by the French Vessel le *Chavigny*,—Cap^t. M^r. Etienne Fourneau, under the mark VIR, to be delivered to Messieurs Fourneau merchants at the Cape François, the goods mentioned in the Envoice here inclosed². . . . Viz—

Forty Chests which contains altogether Thousand new guns, with their Bayonets and Rammers (these are exactly the Same as those which are used now by the french infantry)—One Chest which contains 500 gun's locks: Twenty three Bales which contain altogether 161 Pieces of Tent cloth:—One Box in which are inclosed 200 Pounds of white thread: Two hundred and Twenty Seven pieces Etamines³ Viz 71 pieces blues, 78 whites, and 78 Red. Ten Bales which contain altogether 500 dozens of wollen Stockings: Six chests & One cask which contain 3000 common hats: Eleven caskes of Brimstone, and Ten Barils of tin in leafs, the whole amounting with the Charges, Freight and the Insurance from Nantz to Cape François, as per Envoice, to Seventy Seven thousand and thirteen livres, twelve Sols, and two deniers, of which Sum you will be Kind to credit us—

We have directed the above Said goods to the consignment of the house of commerce of M^r. Gruel, M^r. Fourneau & Cie merchants at the Cape François, with order to deliver them to the care of M^r. Rauleigh Colston, or to the Agent of the State of Virginia, at the said Cape François, and—if in case none of these gentlemen are there to reclaim the said goods, We recommand expressly M^r. Fourneau & C^o. to keep them by at your disposition, or else for them to Ship them according to the Orders they should receive from you.—So by this our dispositions are intirely exact according to what We had the honour to write you, by our last, on account of our Sending you this goods—

According to your Orders by your letter of the 25 of April last, We have insured the said goods shipped on board le *Chavigny* bound to the Cape François, the prime cost amounting to Seventy thousand livres, insurance to two and one quarter per Cent. Absolutely we could not procure the Insurance for any of your harbours, as you mentioned to us.

We had had the pleasure to cultivate the acquaintance of M^r John King when he was in this Town, & that of Dealing with him for the furniture of sundry merchandizes for the State of Virginia. We are now pretty much busy at the fitting out of a French Vessel, in which We Shall Ship a parcel of merchandizes, that We agreed with you for. We expect the Vessel will be ready to Sail, at about 20 or 30 days, and we Shall be happy to hear of his safe arrival, and in mean time that of the goods to their proper destination, and more So to your own Satisfaction

We are daily expecting the arrival of some Vessels that you mentioned to us. We think this time of the year will be of a great Service to them: We wish it to be so, especially on account of your proper Interest We have the honour to be &^{ca}.

(Signed) J Gruel & C^o

(A Translation)

Translation, Vi, State Agent 1775–1782, Papers of Penet, Dacosta, Frères & Co. 1776–1783. Docketed: "Letter/10th. November 1777/James Gruell & Company."

1. J. Gruel & Co. to William Aylett, 12 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, for instance.
2. Not printed.
3. Here there is a mark, "+", referring to a comment in the margin, "+ A Sort of light French Stuff for colours."

November 12

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAINS
SAMUEL BARRINGTON, R.N., AND GEORGE VANDEPUT, R.N.

You are hereby required and directed, to put to Sea in the Ship you command, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed & cruize, on the Meridian of Cape Finisterre, between the Latitudes of 46°,00" & 47°,00". North, for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects, and diligently to look out for, & to use your best endeavours to take, or destroy, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue, upon the above mention'd Station & Service, for the space of one Month after you get between those Latitudes; and then make the best of your way back to Plymouth Sound & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c. the 12th. Nov^r. 1777.

Sandwich
H. Penton
H Palliser

Hble Captⁿ. Barrington, P^r of Wales, Plym^o.
Vandeput, Asia, Plym^o 44°,00" & 45°.11".
to Spithead

By &c. P.S.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO, R.N.

Having ordered the Stores of the Ship you command to be completed to a proper proportion for Channel Service and her Provisions for four Months with all Species except Beer of which she is to have as much as she can conveniently stow & to be supplied with a proportion of Spirits for one Month in lieu of the remainder, you are hereby required and directed to use the utmost dispatch (so far as the same may depend upon you) in getting on board such an additional quantity of Stores & Provisions as may be necessary for those purposes; & then put to Sea, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather, & proceed & cruize, from five to twenty Leagues North from Cape Finisterre, for the protection of the Trade of His Maj^{ty}. Subjects & diligently to look out for, and to use your best endeavour to take, or destroy, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America.

You are to continue upon the abovemention'd Station & Service for the Space of one Month after you make Cape Finisterre, & then make the best of your way to Spithead, & remain there until you receive further Order; sending Us an Account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c 12 Nov^r 1777.

Sandwich
H. Penton
H. Palliser

Captⁿ. Varlo, *Bedford*, Plymouth
By &c. P.S.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 413-14.

JAMES BABSON TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

M^r Beniaman Francklen Esq^r
Sir

Bilboa Novemb^r th 12^d 1777—

This Days post from Nantes brought me the Disagable a Counts of the Sea prisoners¹ tacking by me & Cap^t Kendrick to be Condemed to yours [use] of the King France I Cannot Se on what grounes or authoruity thay have for So Doing, as I had agood Commision for tacking of Saiad Shipes, I Neiver thought of their Doing aney thing futher then oarding them out again & Sir I Cant help thincking if the Coart of France New how fair I am Now Distressed thay would Realive me at this time Sir I Left Nantes as M^r Williames thought it bettor that I should be out of the way I Continued Crausing Till the Second of this month my Stores being almost out was oblige to Cum to this port I have Now Fortey Eight Seamen besides offorsors Down with the Small pox & No frind Nor a farthing to Supply my Self with Stores to proced on aNother Crause when my people have Recvard their Sicknell, the ship thay have Tacking from me has ben my Last Dependance to fit my Versell for a Nother Crause But Sir with oute Sum Releaf must must lay up my Versell

It is Not In my power to Right the gent^l oaners of my Versell the affair as I No Not on what foundashon thay have for tacking the Ships from us & Sir must beg you would favour me with a line² & am Sir your Obt & Verey Hum^{ble} Sarvent

James Babson

L, DNA, PCC, item 45, pp. 279–82 (M247, roll 59). Addressed: “To/Beniamen Franklen Esq^r/In/Paris.” Docketed: “Cap^t Babsons Letter/to Doct^r Franklin/inclosed in Nov^r 30th. 1777.”

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

2. On 30 Nov., Franklin wrote to Jonathan Williams: “Let Capt. Babson know that I receiv’d his Letters and have done all I can for him. That we shall endeavour to obtain the whole Value: but it will be a Work of Time, And that he must be careful how he attempts to put his mad Threats of making Reprisals in Execution unless he has a mind to hazard being hang’d for Piracy.” *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 215.

November 13

MARQUIS D'OSSUN TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

N^o. 126.

Monsieur,

à L'Escorial Le 13. 9^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 31. du mois dernier N^o. 67.

J'avois prévu, Monsieur, que la réponse de M. Le C^{te}. de Floride Blanche Sur les Secours pécuniaires à donner par l'Espagne aux Américains ne vous paroîtroit pas conséquente aux principes établis dans Sa reponse, meme Sur l'interêt majeur que la France et l'Espagne ont à ce que les Colonis Angloises demeurent indépendantes, ou au moins que leur guerre contre la Métropole Se prolonge assez, pour affoiblir et user les forces des deux athletes. En effet ce n'est pas le cas de Se borner à donner des Secours médiocres et de grandes esperances; Les considerations exposées dans votre depeche le demontrent.¹

Quelques Chefs font aller toute la machine, S'ils Se croient abandonnés, S'ils Sont Secourus trop foiblement, ils peuvent Se décourager, l'entousiasme de la revolte et de l'indépendance S'affoiblir dans les peuples qu'ils conduisent, et ces peuples qui Souffrent de toutes les façons, peuvent leur forcer la main pour un accomodement, il faut des armes, des vetemens, des munitions, pour faire la guerre et c'est dans ce moment qu'on doit fournir aux americains les moyens d'assurer ces objets, afin qu'ils puissent Soutenir les efforts redoublés de l'Angleterre la campagne prochaine.

Lorsque Votre expedition, Monsieur, du 3 de ce mois me parvint, je n'attachai Sans Succès à fixer le Roi Catholique et Son ministre à ce point principal et à les engager de donner comme la France 3 millions de livres, le plutôt qu'il Seroit possible ou au moins à déterminer l'époque des payemens de cette Somme, afin que les députés du congres, pussent trouver du crédit pour les choses indispensablement necessaires à leurs commettans.²

Je n'ai pas communiqué votre lettre à M. le Comte de floride blanche, je lui ai Seulement dit que Sa M^{te}. ne S'étoit pas encore décidée d'après le memoire de la Cour d'Espagne, et que vous m'aviez mandé que vous ne manquerez pas de m'instruire de la resolution du Roi, aussitôt qu'il en auroit pris une. J'ai insisté par voye d'insinuation auprès de ce ministre Sur les raisons qui doivent engager la France et encore plus l'Espagne à Secourir promptement et Suffisamment les Insurgens; Je n'ai pas gagné du terrain dans ce premier entretien; M le Comte de floride blanche a persisté dans l'opinion qu'il falloit les aider, et que trois millions de livres de la part

de l'Espagne ne Seroient pas une Somme trop considérable, mais qu'il falloit leur donner ces Secours peu à peu, en nourrissant leurs esperances; Il m'a dit que Sa M^{te}. Cath^e. etoit irritée de ce qu'un de leurs Corsaires avoit enlevé dernièrement un vaisseau françois venant de Londres à Cadix, chargé de marchandises angloises appartenantes à des Espagnols,³ et que ce monarque avoit fait Suspendre la remise aux députés du Congrès d'une Somme qu'il avoit ordonné qu'on leur fit toucher; Que les Corsaires Anglo americains avoient pris deux autres Bâtimens Espagnols et que le Roi Catholique vouloit Savior à quoi S'en tenir vis à vis des Colonies revoltées, et ce que pouvoient et diroient leurs députés Sur les excès dont il est question. J'ai representé à M. le Comte de floride blanche que la france devoit être plus irritée que l'Espagne, à cause de la violence et de l'insulte faite à Son pavillon,⁴ mais qu'une Puissance quelconque quoique bien intentionnée ne pouvoit pas empêcher qu'un de Ses Corsaires commit des excès, Que ce qu'elle pouvoit et devoit faire, etoit de le chatier et de reparer le dommage; Qu'il ne falloit pas pour un pareil grief perdre de vuë la convenance et la necessité de donner des Secours prompts aux Colonies angloises. Ce Ministre est convenu du principe, mais il a ajouté que Sa M^{te}. Cath^e. avoit voulu faire connoitre Son ressentiment aux Députés du Congres, et qu'elle n'en etois pas moins disposée dans le fonds à leur faire administrer des Secours.⁵

Je continuerai, Monsieur, à m'entretenir Sur cette matiere avec M. le Comte de floride blanche dans le Sens que vous m'avez prescrit; Je l'ai assuré, Selon vos ordres, que nous etions parfaitement d'accord avec lui Sur les mesures de circumspection et de prudence qu'il a recommandées, et que quoique la france fasse des avances aux americains, elle veillera à ce qu'ils ne puissent pas en abuser et la compromettre, et avec la condition de discontinuer Ses libéralités, du moment où il y aura lieu à une négociation pour la paix entre les Colonies et leur metropole.⁶

Je vous ai annoncé, Monsieur, dans ma derniere lettre dattée de Madrid que j'aurois l'honneur de vous informer d'une confidence que S. M. Cath^e. a daigné me faire relativement au Portugal; Ce monarque m'a dit qu'il avoit parlé à la Reine Sa Soeur de la convenance réciproque qu'il y auroit à former une alliance entre le Portugal, l'Espagne et la france, Que cette princesse S'y etois montrée disposée, et qu'elle l'avoit assuré que la Reine Sa fille et le Roi Son gendre feroient ce qu'elle voudroit à cet égard.⁷ J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c.]

Ossun

[Translation]

N^o. 126.

Sir,

The Escorial, 13th. November 1777.

I have received the letter which you did me the honour to write to me on the 31st. ultimo, N^o. 67.

I had foreseen, Sir, that the reply of Count de Florida Blanca concerning the pecuniary aid to be given by Spain to the Americans would not appear to you to be consistent with the principles laid down in his reply, especially regarding the great importance to France and Spain that the English Colonies should remain independent, or at least that their war against the mother-country should continue long enough to weaken and wear out the strength of the two combatants. Indeed, it is not the time to limit oneself to giving only moderate aid and great hopes; this is proved by the considerations set forth in your despatch.¹

A few leaders make the whole machine work; if they think themselves abandoned, if they receive too little support, they may be discouraged, the enthusiasm of revolt and independence may grow weak in the people they lead, and these people, who are suffering in every way, may force them to come to an agreement. Arms, clothing and munitions are wanted for the war, and this is the moment to furnish the Americans with the means of securing these things, in order that they may be able to bear the redoubled efforts of England in the next campaign.

When your despatch, Sir, of the 3rd. instant reached me, I endeavoured unsuccessfully to bring the Catholic King and his Minister to a decision on the principal point, and to induce them to give, like France, three million livres as soon as possible, or at least to fix the period for the payment of this sum, in order that the Deputies from Congress might find credit for the things which are indispensably necessary to their constituents.²

I did not communicate your letter to Count de Florida Blanca, I merely told him that His Majesty had not yet decided, in accordance with the memorandum of the Court of Spain, and that you had told me that you would not fail to inform me of the King's decision, as soon as he had come to one. I insisted, by means of insinuation with that Minister, on the reasons which should induce France, and still more Spain, to promptly and sufficiently help the insurgents. I did not gain ground in this first conversation; Count de Florida Blanca persisted in the opinion that it was necessary to help them, and that three million livres from Spain would not be too large a sum, but that this help should be given them little by little, while feeding their hopes. He told me that His Catholic Majesty was irritated because one of their privateers had recently carried off a French vessel going from London to Cadiz, laden with English goods belonging to some Spaniards,³ and that that monarch had caused the payment of a sum of money, which he had ordered to be given to the Deputies of Congress, to be suspended; that the Anglo-American privateers had captured two other Spanish vessels, and that the Catholic King wished to know on what terms he was with the revolted Colonies, and what their Deputies could do and would say regarding the excesses in question. I represented to Count de Florida Blanca that France ought to be more irritated than Spain, because of the violence and insult done to her flag;⁴ but that no Power, however well-intentioned, could prevent one of its privateers committing excesses; that what it could and ought to do was to punish it and make good the damage; that we must not, for such a grievance, lose sight of the desirability and necessity of giving prompt aid to the English Colonies. That Minister agreed with the principle, but added that His Catholic Majesty had wished to make his resentment known to the Deputies from Congress, and that he was none the less disposed at bottom to cause aid to be given them.⁵

I shall continue, Sir, to converse on this matter with Count de Florida Blanca in the terms you have prescribed to me; I have assured him, according to your orders, that we were perfectly in accord with him regarding the measures of circumspection and prudence which he recommended; and that, although France is making advances to the Americans, she will see that they do not abuse them and compromise her, making it a condition to discontinue her liberalities, the moment a negotiation for peace takes place between the Colonies and their mother-country.⁶

I announced to you, Sir, in my last letter dated from Madrid, that I should have the honour of informing you of a secret which His Catholic Majesty has deigned to

confide to me relative to Portugal; this monarch told me that he had spoken to the Queen his sister of the mutual convenience there would be in forming an alliance between Portugal, Spain and France; that that Princess had shewn herself disposed to it, and that she had assured him that the Queen her daughter and the King her son-in-law would do as she wished in this respect.⁷ I have the honour to be [&c.]

Ossun.

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1740. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "Monsieur Le Comte de Vergennes." Notations: "M De Rayneval"; "Reçu le 26."; "rep le 3. x^{bre}. N. 3." "M. De Rayneval"; "Received the 26th"; "replied 3 Dec., No. 3." The letter was in cipher.

1. In the margin: "usage que M. d'ossun a fait de nos reflexions sur la necessité de donner des secours prompts aux Insurgents." "Use made by M. d'Ossun of our reflections on the necessity of giving prompt aid to the Insurgents."

2. In the margin: "M. d'ossun engage l'Esp^c à donner comme la france 3 millions aux Insurgents." "M. d'Ossun tries to induce Spain to give, like France, three millions to the Insurgents."

3. Massachusetts privateer *Civil Usage*, Andrew Giddings, took *Fortune* in July 1777. See NDAR9: 667. In the margin: "M. de floride Blanche convient de la necessité d'aider les Insurgents mais S.M.C. irritée des excès de leurs Corsaires envers la france et l'Esp^c a suspendre la remise qu'il devoit faire aux Deputés du Congrès." "M. de Florida Blanca agrees as to the necessity of helping the Insurgents, but His Catholic Majesty, irritated at the excesses of their privateers towards France and Spain, has suspended the payment which was to be made to the Deputies of Congress."

4. In the margin: "representations de M. d'ossun sur le ressentiment de S.M.C. contre les americains." "M. d'Ossun's representations regarding His Catholic Majesty's resentment against the Americans."

5. In the margin: "S.M.C. malgré Son ressentiment n'en est pas moins disposée dans le fonds à donner des secours aux Insurgents." "His Catholic Majesty notwithstanding his resentment, is nonetheless disposed at bottom to give help to the Insurgents."

6. In the margin: "M. d'ossun instruit M. de floride blanche des mesures de prudence que la france a prise pour l'administration des secours à donner aux Insurgents." "M. d'Ossun informs M. de Florida Blanca of the prudential measures which France has taken regarding the administration of the help to be given to the Insurgents."

7. In the margin: "confidence importante de S.M.C. sur les dispositions favorables de la Reine douairiere de Portugal pour l'alliance des 3 Couronnes." "Important secret confided by His Catholic Majesty as to the favorable disposition of the Queen Dowager of Portugal for an alliance of the three Crowns."

November 14

WILLIAM MCCREERY TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

[Bordeaux, ca. 14 Nov. 1777]¹

A Prize² having been lately made between the Mouth of this River, & the Light-house call'd Cordouan, by an American Privateer, and a Letter of Marque, which has occasion'd much talk at this place, much censure to me, as part owner of the latter, and many Letters to the English ambassador; the purport of which I understand, is, that I, as an owner shou'd be made responsable for, Said Prize. I humbly crave the Liberty to relate to you, in as few words as I can express it, the real State of the case.

I arrived at this place on the 3^d of September last in the above mention'd Letter of Marque call'd the *Swallow*, John Marten Master, Navigated by himself, his Mate, and Eight foremast Men. From that time to the latter end of October the vessel was detain'd by repairs, and by my going to Paris and afterwards collecting such Goods as I wanted for American consumption. On the 30th. Ult^o. I gave him his Sailing Orders and his being deep loaded with valuable Goods, only Eight Men, some of whom

were sick I was sensible that if he cruized for the enemys Ships, he must inevitably loose the Vessel, their Ships being at present cheifly Arm'd, & certainly better Man-n'd than he is. I therefore gave him express orders to proceed immediatly for America, and avoid speaking any Vessel on the passage. He left this place the 1st. Ins^t. and by various accidents was detain'd in the River untill the 11th. when he wrote me by the Pilot who carried him out, that Six of his Eight Men had contracted disorders at Bordeaux which then renderd them allmost incapable of doing Ships Duty, & that he was going out in Company with Captⁿ. Hart, who promised to conduct him 700 Leagues to the Westward.

By what Captⁿ. Hawkins (late Master of the Prize) His People, & the Pilot, have said, it appears to me, that they fell in with this Vessel about nine or Ten Leagues from the Land, and gave her chase, that when she got near the Land, Captain Hart, obliged Captain Martain to take a Number of his People on board the *Swallow*, and follow her amongst the Shoals, which he very imprudently did in the first place breaking his orders, and, exposing the Vessel & Cargo to very great danger in a place where he had no acquaintance of the Channel.

Tho' it must appear quite plane to every impartial Man, that I am not in the least censurable in this affair, I understand that great pains have been taken to make me appear quite culpable—especially to the English Ambassador at Paris, who, no doubt, will, or has, made application to the Minister, and he, perhaps, to render some satisfaction, may give orders for my imprisonment: I have therefore, most humbly to entreat, that, shou'd (shou'd) such a procedure take place, you will be so good as to interpose on my behalf, & urge these reasons for my enlargement.

Exclusive of any bad consequences that may arise to me from this disagreeable affair—It gives me much concern that any of our Vessels shou'd attempt making a Prize, so near to any French Port, as it is in reallity breaking the Neutrality of that Port, & may eventually prove the loss of its trade to us.—All that I can offer in their excuse, is—that they had a pressident from the Enemy in the instance of the three Carolina ships—and I believe did not know the regulation in regard to the distance that Captures might be made. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

Will M^cCreery

P.S. The *Portsmouth* Cap: Hart was Arm'd with 22 Carriage Guns 14 Swivells & 110 Men. The *Swallow* of about 25 Tons had Four Small Hawitzer Mounted as Swivells, & as many Swivells.—

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 41, 81. Addressed at end of letter: "Honorable B. Franklin, S. Deane, & A. Lee Esq^{rs}. Commissioners at Paris." Notation: "M^cCreery/no Date."

1. The editors of the *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* assign this date since the episode the letter discusses was known at Bordeaux this day. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 155–57.

2. Brig *Emperor of Germany*, Robert Hawkins, master.

ETIENNE-HONORÉ DUPLESSIS DE MONGELAS TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Extrait d'une lettre écrite a M. de Sartine par M. de Mongelas Consul général à Cadix le 14. 9^{bre}. 1777.

Sur le compte que j'avois rendu a M. le M^{is}. D'Ossun, de l'enlevements du Brigantin le *Pompée*, de Nantes, conduit à Gibraltar par la fregate de guerre anglaise L'*entreprise*, S. Ex^{ce}. vient de me faire savoir par M. Boyetet¹ que je devois faire reclamer

ce Batiment, sa cargaison, son Equipage, ses passagers. je vais former cette reclamation, la fonder sur les raisons les plus propres a detruire l'arrêtement de ce navire. Je ferai valoir que le vaisseau étant françois, son équipage de même, ses expeditions en regle pour une colonie françoise, les anglois n'ont eu aucun droit de L'arrêter, d'autant qu'il n'étoit point hors de route, et qu'il ne portoit aucun effet de contrebande, seule et unique circonstance qui pouvoit les autoriser a L'arrêter. J'ajouterai que le pavillon doit sauver les marchandises hors le cas de contrebande, que quoique les anglois ayent annoncé qu'ils prendroient les effets appartenants a des americains sous pavillon neutre, cette declaration arbitraire ne peut detruire les capitulations formelles des traittés; que nous ne connoissons que ceux cy; que la declaration qu'a fait le passager americain, qu'il étoit propriétaire du navire et de la cargaison n'aneantit point la force de ce motif; et que la france ne connoit de vrai propriétaire que celui qui conste par les expeditions. Voila M^{gr} les raisons que je vais rassembler, et envoyer au Cap^{ne}. Legrand afin que de concert avec M. Albert il puisse fonder sa reclamation au tribunal de L'amirauté. j'enjoindray a M. Albert de me remettre une copie authentique de cette reclamation, et que M. Boyetet me dit de vous envoyer, M^{gr} Lorsqu'elle me parviene mais surtout je vais bien recommander a M. Albert de veiller a la sureté de L'Equipage de ce Batiment.

[Translation]

Extract from a letter written to de Sartine by de Mongelas, Consul General at Cadiz, dated 14 November 1777

In regards to the report I had made to the Marquis d'Ossun, about the seizure of the brigantine *Pompee*, out of Nantes, and escorted to Gibraltar by the English frigate *Enterprise*, His Excellency has just informed me through M. Boyetet¹ that I am to issue a demand for the return of this ship, its cargo, its crew, and its passengers. I shall draw up this demand, justifying it with pertinent reasons so as to overturn the seizure of this ship. I shall emphasize the point that since the vessel is French, its crew likewise, its shipping papers appropriate for a French colony, the English had no right to seize it, especially since it was not off course, and was carrying no contraband, the unique circumstance that might justify their seizing the ship. I shall add that the flag must serve as a safeguard for merchandise, except for contraband; that although the English had given notice that they would take effects belonging to Americans sailing under a neutral flag, this arbitrary statement cannot cancel out the formal terms of treaties; that we recognize only the latter; that the statement made by the American passenger, that he was the owner of the ship and of its cargo, does not destroy the force of this argument; and that France recognizes as the real owner only the one who is verified by the ship's papers. Those are the reasons, my Lord, that I must put together and send to Captain Legrand so that he, in concert with M. Albert, can justify his demand to the Admiralty Court. I shall direct M. Albert to send a certified copy of the demand, which M. Boyetet has told me to send to you, my Lord, when it reaches me. Above all, however, I shall certainly recommend to M. Albert that he see to the safety of the ship's crew.

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fol. 372. Notations: "M. Le C^{te} de Vergennes. avec la lettre de ce Min^{re} du 15 X^{bre} 1777."; and "14. 9^{bre} 1777."

1. French chargé des affaires de la Marine et du commerce at Madrid.

November 15

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO LIEUTENANT WILLIAM HILLS, R.N.

Whereas we have received information that several Privatiers, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America, are cruizing between Cape Pinas & Bilboa in order to intercept the Newfoundland Ships & other Trade of His Majesty's Subjects bound that way (which Privatiers are of very inconsiderable force), And that there is, in that Port, a Ship, call'd the *Rambler*, laden with a large quantity of Rigging Harpoons & other Goods bound, as it is said, to Hudson's Straits to whale, & Trade with the Esquimaux Indians, & furnished with English, French, Spanish and American Papers & Colours, as more particularly mentioned in the inclosed Extract of the said Intelligence; you are hereby required & directed to put to Sea, in the Cutter you command, with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed & Cruize, between the abovementioned Cape & Cape Machacaca [*Machichaco*], for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects & to use your best endeavours to take or destroy the abovementioned, or any other, Privatiers, or other Ships or Vessels, belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned, which you may be able to come up with

You are to continue, upon the above Station (to which we shall also send the *Minerva* or some other Frigate) for the space of one Month, after your arrival thereupon; and then make the best of your way back to England; Repairing into Plymouth Sound, where you are to remain until you receive further order; and sending us an account of your arrival & proceedings

You are to keep a good look out for the abovementioned Ship the *Rambler*, if she should put to Sea; and, in case you shall be convinced that she belongs to any of the Colonies abovementioned, to use your best endeavours to seize her & bring her into Port. Given &c

15th Nov^r. 1777Lieu^t Hills—*Sprightly*—Cutt^r Downes

By &c PS By Express at 9 PM

Sandwich

H Penton

H Palliser

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 423–24.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO WILLIAM EDEN

S^r:Admty Office 15 Nov^r. 1777

My Lords Comm^{rs}. of the Admty having received a Letter from M^r J: Lewis, Deputy Town Clerk of Bristol, acquainting them by direction of the Mayor of that City, that the *Levant* a Merchant Ship of that Port, having retaken a Vessel called the *Dover* which had been taken in her Voyage from Oporto to London by a Vessel called the *Civil Usage* of Newbury in New Hampshire, and that the Prize Master having delivered up to the Mayor John Trott and John Pearson, and they being charged on Oath with being part of the Crew of the *Civil Usage* at the time of taking the *Dover*, and with being on board her conducting her to some Port in America, the said Two Men are committed to the Goal of that City for the said Felony and Piracy;

I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith for Lord Suffolk's information; And am [&c.]

Php Stephens

L, UkLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 265. Addressed at foot of first page: "W^m Eden Esq^r." Docketed: "Admty Office Nov^r 15: 1777./M^r Stephens./W. E."

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Dear Sir

Paris Nov 15. 1777

I have only one moment to write you Pr this Post, M^r Chaumont writes M^r Peltier which he will communicate to you, it is really surprizing how I should be so misunderstood by M^r Peltier—but my Letter Pr M^r Ross shall explain it meantime I think with M^r Chaumont that the *Lyon* should be sold & then I hope no objection will be made to her being equipp'd as French Property

But I will also write you more particularly on this Subject, by M^r Ross who goes off tomorrow morning—Mean time I am [&c.] SD

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "M^r Williams—."

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

M^r W^{ms}

Paris 15th Nov^r 1777

Sir

Y^{rs}. of the 11th. is before Me also M^r Peltiers of y^c. same date,¹ the Letter from the Com^r. & y^{rs} I wrote on the Exped. of the Brig^a. will in gen^l. Answer them I am not a little vexed to find M^r Peltier sh^d. think me Capable of saying one thing to M^r Montieu & of writing another to Nantes It must have been in Consequence of my being misunderstand^d. in a Language which I speak but indifferently my Letter to You gave my gen^l. Idea of the best plan of getting to America in the safest manner rather than the fixing determinately the Destination of the Ships—At the same time if the Ships can be freighted to go directly for N. England it is my Opinion they should be prefer^r'd As I am still of Opinion that the Ports to the Eas^d. will be the safest the Uncertain state We are in is as distressing as the weak & inconstant measures pursued by those with whom We are Concerned I wish you w^d. make a Tryal w^t. is the most can be obtained for the *Dolphin* without putting her Absolutely to sail this will be Our guide in determinig with regard to her²—M^r Chaumont is doing every thing that can be done in the Affair of the Prizes³ I feel as much as you or any other man can on this Occasion. Y^c. S.D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "Jon^a. Williams Esq^r."

1. Not found.

2. On 19 Nov. Deane wrote Williams that the Commissioners "are of Opinion that it will be best to make sale of the *Dolphin* you will therefore put her up for sale & obtain the best price for her." If John Ross, who had expressed an interest, did not want it, and if the price was under 10,000 livres, Williams was to purchase it for Simeon Deane, "who wants such a Vessel to go out to America in." Deane to Williams, 19 Nov. 1777, *ibid*.

3. The return to their English owners of the Jamaicamen *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*, prizes to Massachusetts privateers *Fanny* and *General Mercer*. For Williams's comments on the restoration, see his letter to the American Commissioners of 11 Nov., in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 151–52.

SILAS DEANE AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

M^r Williams—Paris Nov^r 15 1777

Sir

Yours by Capt. Nicholson are before us.¹ M^r Deanes Lettres of yesterday² proposed passing a Sale of the *Lyon* & sending her out as french Property, that is that she go down the River as commanded by the french Captain, and that Captain Nicholson instead of returning to Nantes go directly to meet her, at the mouth of the River & take the Command. Of the possibility as well as practicability of Such a measure you are the best judge—As to the freight on M^r Montieu's ship we have no Objection to the price of 120³ Liv^s. ꝯ ton, payable in Tobacco at the Current Price or payable in Europe on the return of the Vessel, but M^r Peltier was mistaken in supposing that the prices of the Tobacco could be ascertained here and still more so in supposing that it could be fixed at 30 Liv^s. ꝯ quintal—as to the Destination Boston & other Eastern Port were mentioned on acc^t of their being most likely to be free from English Cruisers. M^r Peltiers Objections have weight with them on acc^t of the returns, but it will not answer on any Terms to have the Vessels go South of Virginia the Ports of N. Carolina will not admit them. if therefore M^r Peltier will agree for Virginia that Objection will be obviated, but we conceive that it would be better if possible to have more certain intelligence of the Operations of Gen^l Howe before the final Orders are given—this Cannot detain us many Days, probably not beyond the next Post from England immediately after which we will write you further—But if M^r Peltier is wholly off freighting on any Terms, you must endeavour to take up a proper Vessel for the goods, on the best Terms you can—M^r Ross has a vessel for Sale at L'orient but cannot learn either her burthen or State, he will be able to inform you soon after his arrival at Nantes You can, if necessary, make the Sale of the *Lyon* to M^r Chaumont who we prefer in this affair and let the expedition go on in his name, as you proposed in yours which indeed appears to be the only probable method left us. as to the Cutter⁴ you appear at this instant to have use for her at Nantes our final determination as to her may therefore be deferred a few days—Your Opinion respecting her is undoubtedly just. please to inform us what quantity of goods she will carry if fitted out as a packet, & what number of Seamen will be necessary for her—We shall write you as we find the situation of things here, and are [&c]

B. F.

S. D.

P.S. We say 110 Liv^s. but if it cannot be had for that you may give 120 if no vessel can be had for Less, if M^r Peltier insist on his Vessels going to Virginia the *Lyon* it is probable cannot accompany them the whole Voyage at Least we cannot at present engage farther than off the Coast of Europe, as we must prefer sending the *Lyon* Northward, unless the Situation of Affairs in America should appear to alter before her going out.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "M^r Williams."

1. Williams to Benjamin Franklin, 11 Nov., in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 151–52, and Williams to Silas Deane, 11 Nov., not found.

2. See the two letters of Deane to Williams of 15 Nov., above.

3. Arthur Lee's copy of this letter has "110," which, in light of the postscript, was probably what was intended here. ViU, Lee Family Papers.

4. Continental Navy cutter *Dolphin*.

WILLIAM HODGE TO CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM

Paris Nov^r. 15th. 1777.

Dear Sir—

This is to request that you would prepare yourself for Sea, and wait till I arrive in Spain, or till you receive orders to proceed to Sea, I shall not be able to leave this for two weeks from this time. You will please not to mention to any one that you expect me,

Nothing else particular—from your friend & Hble Ser^t

W^m Hodge

A Copy

Copy, ScHi, Henry Laurens Papers.

ARTHUR LEE TO JOSEPH GARDOQUI AND SONS

Paris, November 15, 1777.

Gentlemen: I have learned from America that there was a difficulty on the arrival of the supplies sent to America through your house in knowing whether they were for Congress or for Mr. Gerry to whom they were consigned. Possibly you explained that to Mr. Gerry, and his absence might have occasioned the doubt. At all events you will have the goodness in future to write so clearly as to prevent any mistake of that kind.

When any prize made by any Continental armed vessel in the service of the United States is sent into Bilboa or the adjacent port, you have my authority to sell her to the best advantage, reserving half the proceeds for the Congress, at my disposal, as their representative in Spain. The other half is the property of the captain and the crew.

I beg you will inform me, by return of post, what interest you give for money put into your hands. They give here at the rate of six per cent., on condition that it be not drawn out of their hands under one month's notice. If your terms are as good, I should prefer depositing what I have with you. I have the honor to be, etc..

Arthur Lee.

The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, edited by Francis Wharton, 6 vols. (Washington, 1889), 2: 424.

JACQUES-DONATIEU LE RAY DE CHAUMONT TO [GABRIEL DE SARTINE?]

M. R.

à Bordeaux le 15. Novembre 1777.

Monseigneur

J'ai été informé hier au Soir, que deux Batimens Américains, Le *Portsmouth* et l'*Industrie*, sortis depuis peu de jours, ayant eû permission de mettre dehors, après avoir été visité à Poülluc, et gardés deux jours, par la Frigate l'*Etourdie* actuellement à ce mouillage, pour donner le Tems aux Batimens Anglois, qui étoient au bas de la Riviere de prendre le large; avoient arrêté dans la passe de grave, un Batiment venant Corck, chargé de Boeuf et de Beure pour le Compte de S^r Galois, correspondant et

pourvoyeur des Régisseurs de la Marine. Je viens dans le moment d'entendre la Capitaine Anglois, et j'ai l'honneur de vous rendre le rapport qu'il fait.

Le 11. 9^{bre}. 1777. Le Navire l'*Empereur d'Allemagne* de Cork, Capitaine Robert Haukins venant de Cork chargé de Boeuf et Beure, ayant un Pilote de Royan à bord, nommé Doussier, et étant par le Travers de Cordouan pour entrer en Riviere de Bordeaux, il à aperçû deux Batimens, qui étoient dans l'ouest de Cordouan à 3 a 4 lieües au large, Le Pilote lui ayant dit que c'étoit un Corsaire americain et un Goëlette marchande qui étoient sortis de la Riviere le même jour 11., Il força de Voile pour Entrer en Riviere; mais le Corsaire voyant qu'il ne pourroit pas l'atteindre, mis sa Chaloupe a la Mer, et Arma la petite Goelette marchande qui étoit avec lui, qu'ils entrèrent dans la Riviere par la passe du Nord, et vinrent à sa rencontre à la passe de Grave, dans laquelle ils l'ont pris et mené au large à bord du Corsaire American, le *Portsmouth*, Capitaine Jean Hart, qui l'a renvoyé avec son Equipage dans la Chaloupe du Pilote qu'il avoit à bord, avec 30 freguins de Beurre qu'il lui a donnés, dont 10 pour un Passager qu'il avoit à son bord.

J'ai ecrite hier à M. de Montbas le Rapport qui m'avoit été fait par le S^r Galois, je l'instruirai aujourdui du détail que je viens, Monseigneur, de vous rendre. Je suis [&c.]
(Copie) Signé {

[Translation]

M. R.

Bordeaux 15 November 1777

My Lord

I was informed yesterday evening that two American ships, the *Portsmouth* and the *Industry*, which had departed a few days ago with permission to go outside after having been searched at Pauillac and kept two days by the frigate *Etourdie*, now at anchor here, in order to give time to English ships that were at the mouth of the river to get out to sea, had stopped in the Grave channel a ship coming from Cork loaded with beef and butter for the account of Sr. Galois, correspondent and purveyor to the Stewards of the Marine. I have just this moment interviewed the English captain and I have the honor to enclose his report.

The 11 November 1777 the ship *Emperor of Germany* of Cork, Captain Robert Hawkins, coming from Cork loaded with beef and butter, having on board a pilot from Royan by the name of Doussier and while just at Cordouan ready to enter the Bordeaux river, he saw two ships to the west of Cordouan 3 or 4 leagues toward the open sea. The pilot having told him it was an American privateer and a merchant schooner which had left the river the same day, the 11th, he crammed on sail to enter the river. But the privateer, seeing he could not make it, put his yawl overboard and manned the little merchant schooner which was with him. They entered the river by the north channel and came on him in the Grave channel in which they took him and carried him outside on board the American privateer, the *Portsmouth*, Captain John Hart, who sent him back with his crew in the yawl of the pilot whom he had on board, with 30 firkins of butter, of which 10 for a passenger whom he had on board.

I wrote yesterday to M. de Montbas sending him the report which had been made by Sr. Galois. I will send him today the details which I have just given you. I am [&c.]
(Copy) Signed {

November 16 (Sunday)

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Dear Sir

Paris 16 Nov^r 1777

I have seen M^r Montieu since my last & the following are the Articles on which we agreed, Copy of what he promised to write Mr Peltier—Viz—

“M^r Williams shall have Liberty to Ship the Goods he wants to send to America either upon the *Challotte* or *Mercury*—

“Three Vessels shall sail in Company with the Frigate (meaning the *Lyon*[]) & shall go for Portsmouth Boston or Virginia, The freight shall be at One hundred twenty livres Pr Ton, payable in France as soon as News shall be received of the Arrival & delivery of the Goods

“The Vessels to be armed & equipped & every necessary at the Expense of M^r Montieu—NB The Vessels mount one 22 Cannon Six pounders the other 20 four Pounders, & manned in Proportion”

This obviates any disputes as to the payment of the freight in Tobacco & at the same time, as to the Destination of the Vessels; if the *Marquis Challotair* is the best Sailer you can prefer her, in the disposition of the Goods—

I think the freight is rather high, it is however lower than what has in general been offerd. The Vessels are armed & load with Military Stores, which are Circumstances that ought to influence the Price and as our former authourized you to go to that Sum, & Montieu actually refusing to take less, I closed it & mention these Particulars that the present may not be consider'd as precedent in Cases different. As to the Frigate & the particular Orders I hope we shall be able to determine on both in a few Days. As it is impossible we can rest much longer in this State of uncertainty—I am [&c.]

SD—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: “M^r Williams.”

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE GOLD COAST, NOVEMBER 16.”

“For these two months past we have had about 12 sail of ships, with slaves on board, sailed from this and the other ports of Africa, bound to the West Indies, eight of whom we have already had advice of being taken by the American privateers, and carried into either Guadaloupe, Martinico, or some other of the French ports; and our Governor¹ has done all in his power to get them delivered up, but the messenger he sent has returned a few days ago, as he could get no answer.

“We now begin to feel the American war very severely, as provisions of all sorts are very scarce and very dear, having had no fresh supplies for several weeks; and if the war continues much longer, we shall not be able to carry on any trade, as the privateers are continually cruising about this place, and give a very sharp look out.”

London Chronicle, 13–15 Jan. 1778.

1. That is, the chief agent of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, at Cape Coast Castle.

MANIFESTS OF *HEUREUX*, *AMÉLIA*, AND *MARIA CATHERINE*

[After 16 Nov. 1777, London]

Vrai Chargement du Navire L'*Heureux* Capit^{ne}. Landais a Marseille—Sçavoir

50 Milliers du Souffre raffiné

48 Pieces de Cannon de Bronze a la Suedoise, de 4 livres de Balle avec leurs affects
& avantrains—

20 Mortiers de Bronze avec leurs affects.

20 Mille Boulets de 4 livres

3 Mille Granades

3 Mille Bombes

14500 Outils a Pioniers

8300 Outils tranchants aportis.

269 Outils a Mineurs

150000 Pierre a fusils

25000 Livres de plomb en Balle

2000 Liv: pesant de Mèche

6000 fusils avec leurs Bayonnettes.

1000 fusils d'officiers avec leurs Bayonnettes

500 pairs de pistolets garnis en Cuivre

The *Heureux* was afterwards called the *Flamand*, & passed the streights of Gibralter the 1st. October last.Sent in the *Amelia* by the way of the W Indies—19 Brass 4th Calibre field Cannon with Carriages4 D^o. without Carriages

6561 Cannon Balls

288 Bombs

200 Barrels powder 100^{wt}. each.

120 Barrs of Lead

A Quantity of intrenching & Mining tools.

Arrived at Martinico, & reshipped to the Continent of America.

Sent by the Brig *Maria & Catharina*, which sailed from Dunkirk the 12 July for Martinico—

34 Brass 4 pounders with their Carriages.

16872 Cannon Balls

2700 Hand Grenades

Arrived safe at Martinico early in Sept: & M^r Bingham was preparing to dispatch them to Congress.

Sent likewise lately from Dunkirk to be reshipped on the Western Coast of France for Congress

66 large Brass Cannon from 32 to 12 pdrs.	} with Carriages &c &c—
36 Brass 4 pounders—fieldpieces—	

[Translation of the French portion]

True Lading of the Ship L'*Heureux*, Captain Landais, at Marseille—As follows

50 thousand weight of refined sulphur
 48 cannon of Bronze of the Swedish style, of 4 pound balls, with their equipment
 and carriages—
 20 bronze mortars with their equipment
 20 thousand 4-pound balls
 3 thousand grenades
 3 thousand bombs
 14,500 pioneers' implements
 8,300 entrenching tools
 269 miner's tools
 150,000 musket shot
 25,000 pounds of lead in ball
 2,000 pound weight of match
 6,000 muskets with their bayonets
 1,000 officers' muskets with their bayonets
 500 pairs of pistols, trimmed in copper.

Copy, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 3, no. 306. The manifests were included in an intelligence report from Paul Wentworth to Lord Suffolk. Wentworth had the manifests by way of "Mr Ed—ds," i.e., Edward Bancroft.

November 18

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM DUDINGSTON, R.N.

By &c.

You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed in her without a moments loss of time to Kingroad (Bristol) where you are to remain until you receive further Order; holding yourself in readiness to sail at a moments notice, And, in case you shall receive any information that can be depended upon of any Privatiers belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of N^o. America being in any part of the Bristol, or St^e George's, Channel, you are immediately to proceed in quest of them; taking care to return to Kingroad when you shall have taken, destroyed or driven them away, or shall be thoroughly satisfied that none such are there, & to send to our Secretary an Account of your arrival & proceedings.

Upon the receipt of any such intelligence as is beforemention'd you are to send an Account thereof by the Post to the Officers employed on the Service of raising Men for His Majesty's Fleet at the Ports against their Names express'd on the other side hereof¹ with a request that they will communicate the same to the Commanders of any other of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels which may be in the neighbourhood of those Ports respectively to the end that such Commanders may likewise proceed in quest of the said Privatiers & use their best endeavours to take or destroy them, and you are to send a like Account at the same time to the Commanding Officer, for the time being of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels at Plymouth. Given &c. the 18th. Nov^r. 1777.

Sandwich
 H. Penton
 H. Palliser

By &c. P.S.

Capt ⁿ Worth at	Liverpool
" Botterell—	Whitehaven
" Drummond—	Greenock
" Kearney—	Cork
" McCleverty—	Waterford
" Leary—	Dublin
Lieu ^t Dobbs—	Belfast.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 431–33. Addressed at foot of letter: "Captⁿ Dudingston, *Boston*, Spithead."

1. See the list at the end of this letter, where it appears in the letter book.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM

N^o. 30

St James's 18th. November 1777

Excellency Lord Grantham Sir

I have received Your Excellency's Dispatch N^o 59 and have laid it before the King.

You inform me that the Brig *Sally* has been sent as a prize into Coruña by the rebel Privateers the *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, and Your Excellency makes no observation on this circumstance. I am commanded by His Majesty to acquaint You that He cannot doubt You have taken this opportunity of renewing your representations to M. de Florida Blanca, & strongly urging the necessity of restoring this Vessel to the Owners. The northern ports of Spain have yielded for some time a constant protection to the American Privateers, and their prizes have been sold by the collusion of the Spanish Officers. I have therefore in command from His Majesty direct Your Excellency to renew your representations on this subject, and to endeavour to obtain the earliest information of every Vessel that is carried into any of the Ports of Spain, and claim them for the benefit of the Owners with all the earnestness that so important a point requires. I am &c.

Weymouth

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 314. Addressed: "18 Nov 1777/To His Excellency/Lord Grantham/N^o 30."

THE LONDON CHRONICLE, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1777

London.

The *Two Brothers*, Elson, from Newfoundland to Oporto, was taken the 23d ult. on the coast of Portugal, by the *Revenge* privateer, Capt. Cunningham, who ordered seven of the crew to be put in irons, and threatened to keep them confined, unless they would enter on board the privateer.

The *George*, Capt. Baker, and the *Dolphin*, Capt. Postbury,¹ were both taken by the rebels on the banks of Newfoundland.

1. Both vessels were taken by Massachusetts privateer schooner *Speedwell*, Philemon Haskel. See Libels Filed in the Massachusetts Maritime Court in the Middle District, 9 and 30 Oct. 1777, above.

JOHN HART TO JOHN LANGDON

Halifax, December 23.

The following is the copy of a letter found on board a brigantine bound from Newfoundland to Bilboa. She had been taken by an armed vessel from New-England, mounting 24 guns, called the *Portsmouth*: and was retaken upon this coast, on her way to Piscataqua, by an armed vessel fitted out from this port by Sir George Collier, commanding the King's ships on this station, and brought in here last Saturday.

Ship Portsmouth, Lat. 27. 40. N. Long. 16. W.¹ November 18, 1777.

SIR,

I Take this opportunity per Mr. Pearce, to acquaint you, that I left the river of Bourdeaux the 11th instant, in company with Capt. Martin of the schooner *Swallow* of and for Maryland; we soon after fell in with, and took the brig *Emperor of Germany*, from Cork to Bourdeaux, laden with beef and butter, and as the ports of France are shut against American prizes, and she being leaky, ordered her to St. Andrio in Spain, and when sold, the money from the net sales to be remitted to Messrs. S. and J. H. Delap at Bourdeaux, and have likewise wrote them to draw for the same. N. B. As Martin was in company and has a commission, he claim'd one quarter part, and put on board her the same number of men that I did. On the 13th instant I fell in with this brig the *George* from Newfoundland to Bilboa, which I have ordered to Piscataqua. I now propose cruising between the Island of Madeira and the West-Indies, as the ship is not fit to cruise on the coast of Europe at this season of the year, and the ports of France being shut against us, should have too great a distance to send prizes to America: I have wrote you by three opportunities before this, in all of which I acquainted you with my ill success in my last cruise, having taken but one vessel, the brig *Mercury* from Newfoundland to Barcelona, with 3000 quintals of fish, which I ordered to Bourdeaux, but on her arrival there, she was not allowed to tarry; Mr. Delap therefore sent her to Bilboa, where she was selling her cargo when I left Bourdeaux; I also acquainted you in former letters of the difficulties I met with to procure the liberty to go up the river to clean the ship, and procure stores, &c. after my arrival and as soon as the ship was righted and ballast on board again, I was ordered out of the river, and strictly forbid taking on board any warlike stores or French seamen, and a frigate is kept at the river's-mouth for the purpose of over-halling all outward bound vessels. I am surprized the many people who have gone from France to America, have represented the French as being friendly inclined to us, for I am fully assured it is only where they are immediately benefited: as to a war between France and Great-Britain I see no prospect for my own part, and Mr. Delap assured me he saw none, but on the contrary, France is much afraid of Great-Britain, and are apt to think the breach between Great-Britain and the Colonies will be made up this winter, I have had it hinted to me by the first people in Bourdeaux; I can add nothing more at present, but hope our present cruise may be successful, which has been my greatest uneasiness heretofore, as a man's character of late days seems to depend and be determined by his good or ill success. From, Sir, your most obedient, and very humble servant to command,

JOHN HART.

To the Hon. John Langdon, Esq; Portsmouth, New-Hampshire.

(A COPY)

The Quebec Gazette, or La Gazette de Quebec, 26 Mar. 1778. The letter was also published, with slight differences, in the *Newport Gazette* of 19 Mar. 1778.

1. The *Newport Gazette* has "lat. 37.49 N. long 16. W.," placing the ship off of the Canary Islands rather than off Portugal.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

Ex^{mo}. S^{or}.

Mui S^{or} mio. El papel de V.E. de 18 del corr^{te} trata de tres Presas enviadas al Ferrol y a la Coruña por los Armadores Americanos y del abuso que de nuestros Puertos hace el llamado Cunningham, sobre qué ha dado sus quejas el Consul Inglés al Comandⁿ General de Galicia.

En uno y otro punto estan dadas las ordenes generales, que ofreci, claras y decisivas y se repiten cada dia los encargos para su puntual observancia. Conforme a ellas se ha verificado en muchos casos la egecucion y aun la declaracion de mala Presa de algun Bastimento y efectos. Seria justo que los que inflaman a V.E. con noticias de contravenciones le repriesen la observancia que han tenido las ordenes dadas en otros muchos casos.

Sobre las Presas de q^e me habla V.E. hai procesos y justificaciones pendientes, relativas a si pueden navegar ô nó y si la carga se pierde. Sin otras justificaciones iguales ô mayores no se puede resolver aqui con seguridad lo que sea justo. Por esta razon he dicho a V.E. que se habia mandado a los comandates y Gobernadors oir en justicia a los Interesados con apelaciones al consejo de guerra que es el Tribunal proprio de estas materias conforme a nuestros Tratados. Por este correo se repiten las mismas ordenes y V.E. podra prevenir a quien corresponda el medio que tiene de obtener justicia.

Lo mismo digo del que se llama abuso de los Puertos: pues para convencer a una Persona, tan graduada como un Comand^{te}, de colusion con los armadores ô sus factores se requieren pruebas formales. Con ellas crea V.E. que el Rei sabe hacerse obedecer, y q^e por un efecto de su justicia y de su probidad no faltará sanas [?] a lo que por mi medio se ha dado a entender a V.E: asegurandole que deseo y procuro cultivar la buena correspondencia que reina entre nuestras cortes y servir a V.E. en lo que me mandare. Nro S^r g^e la vida de V.E. m^s. a^s c^o. d^o. Sⁿ Lor^{zo} el R^l 18 de Nov^{re} de 1777 [&c.]

El Conde de Floridablanca

P.D. Estan dadas las ordenes sobre el punto del comvoi, que se recela pueda unirse en Bilbao; aunque tengo por incierta la especie, ynacida de algun espiritu inquieto, o bullicioso.

Translation

Most Excellent Sir.

Your Excellency's Office of the 18th Instant treats of three Prises sent to Ferrol & to the Coruña by American Privateers, & of the Abuse which Cunningham makes of our Ports, upon which Subject the English Consul has made his Complaints to the Commandant General of Galicia.

Upon both these points, the clear & positive orders which I offered, are given, & daily charges are made for their observance. Agreeably to these they have in many

cases been executed & even some declarations been made of the Illegality of the Captures of some Vessels & Effects.

It would be fair if the Persons who excite your Excellency with Accounts of breaches of these orders, would likewise inform you of the Instances in which they have been observed.

With regard to the Prizes of which your Excellency speaks to me, there are proceedings & Enquiries going forward, as to their sailing or not, & as to the State of their Cargoes. It is impossible to decide here without such Documents what is just. For this reason I acquainted your Ex^y that orders had been given to Commandants & governors to hear legally the Claims of the Parties interested with appeals to the Council of war, which is the Tribunal to which according to our Treaties these matters belong By this very Post the same Orders are repeated & y^r Ex^y may give notice to the proper Persons of the means of obtaining justice.

I say the same with regard to what is called, Abuse of our Ports. But to convict so dignified a Personage as a Commandant of Collusion with Privateers or their Agents, formal Proofs are necessary. Believe me, that were there such, the King knows how to make himself obeyed & that out of his Justice & Probity he will never be wanting in supporting, what has at any time been communicated by me to y^r Ex^y. I assure you at the same Time that I desire & endeavour to cultivate the good Harmony which exists between our Courts, & to serve y^r Ex^y in y^r Commands. God grant y^r Ex^y long life &c. Sⁿ Lorenzo. 18 Nov 1777.

Signed

El Conde de Floridablanca

NB. Added in the Minister's own hand.

P:S. Orders are given on the subject of the Convoy, which it was suspected was to meet at Bilbao, altho' I consider the Notion as groundless & arising from some inquiet & turbulent Disposition.

L and Translation, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 353-55. Addressed at foot of letter: "S^r Baron Grantham." Docketed: "In Lord Granthams N^o 62." Enclosed in Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 19 Nov. 1777, below.

November 19

GOUYON DE MALLÉVRE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Monseigneur

Sorti de la riviere de nantes¹ le quatorze, je suis entré à brest le soir. dans ce moment l'on travail au débarquement des bois je n'ai rien rencontré à la mer; mais pendant les derniers jours que j'ai passé dans la riviere, j'ai été dans le cas de vérifier que les américains envoient des françois, le corsaire le *mars*² particulièrement et j'ai quelque certitude qu'il en avoit trente cinq à son bord. C'est la dureté du Capitaine de ce batiment qui a donné lieu à cet eclat, leurs désirs etant alors que je les eus réclamé. j'aurois pu faire usage de l'article de l'ordonnance qui dit qu'on s'emparera de tous les françois qu'on trouvera à bord des batimens etrangers, mais les liaisons de ceux ci avec nous, les intérêts compliqués, les avantages que nous retirons de cette diversion, toutes ces réflexions m'arrêterent, et avec d'autant plus de tran-

quilité qu'il ne m'étoit revenu aucune réclamation de famille de paimbeuf, et que j'entendois dire qu'ils étoient en grande partie gens de métiers ou aventuriers, je me bornai à en rendre compte, à Monsieur Le comte d'orvillier. peu de jours après le corsaire mit à la voile, moi aussi, et à mon arrivée à brest je viens d'en faire part aux généraux qui m'ont approuvé. je désire bien particulièrement Monseigneur, avoir le même suffrage de votre part³ je suis [&c.]

Brest le 19 9^{bre}. 1777

Gouyon de Mallévre

[Translation]

My Lord,

Having departed from the Nantes river¹ on the fourteenth, I entered Brest in the evening. At this time we are discharging lumber. I met nothing at sea, but on the last few days that I spent in the river I was in a position to verify that Americans lure Frenchmen, the privateer *Mars*² especially, and I am fairly certain that there were thirty-five of them on board. It is the hardness of the captain of this vessel which caused this uproar, their desire at that moment being that I reclaim them. I might have made use of the article in the ordinance that states that we will take charge of all Frenchmen found on board foreign vessels, but the connections of the latter with us, the complicated-interests, and the advantages we draw from this diversion, all these reflections stopped me, and with even more calm as their families in Paimbeuf had made no demands reaching me, and I had heard that they were largely tradesmen and adventurers. I limited myself to reporting it to Comte d'Orvilliers. A few days later the privateer set sail and I as well. Upon arriving in Brest I have just advised the general officers, who approved. I very much desire, my Lord, to have the same approbation from you.³ I am [&c.]

Brest 19 Nov. 1777

Gouyon de Mallévre

L, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 130, fols. 61–62. Notations: "Armement à Brest/M. Goyon de Mallevre/le 19. 9^{bre}. 1777"; "Repsy du 26 [?] aussi"; "Rep le 28. 9^{bre} 1777." Mallévre commanded transport-ship *Porteuse*.

1. Nantes is at the confluence of the Loire and Erdre rivers.

2. Massachusetts privateer ship, Thomas Truxtun commander.

3. Notation in the margin: "il auroit été approuvé s'il avoit retenu, conformément à l'ordon^{ce} Les matelots français Embarqués sur le N^{re} anglo-américain": "It would have been approved if he had claimed, conformable to the ordinance, the French sailors on board the Anglo-American vessel."

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o. 70.

Corunna 19th. Nov. 1777.

My Lord.

A young Sailor whose name is John Jordan having privately made his Escape from Cunningham on Account of the severe Treatment he received because he refused to engage on board his vessel, having yesterday applied to me for Assistance to enable him to return home in order to serve on board some of His Majesty's Ships I did not hesitate one Moment to grant his Request, but sent him immediately to Ferrol on board an english vessel now ready to sail for Topsham. Cunningham having this morning complained of it to the King's Lieutenant (who in absence of the General and Governor now commands this Town) this Gentleman sent me peremptory and possitive Orders to deliver up the man immediately. I excused myself in the best

manner I could by acquainting him the Man was already gone on the Road too far to be overtaken, that I assisted him as a distressed Seaman belonging to Great Britain without enquiring where or to what vessel he belonged, and that, tho' I had known him to belong to Cunningham, I hoped he would not deem it a Fault in me to assist a British Subject to escape from Rebels who detain him by Force, and compell him with Blows to take Arms against his native Country.

The Answer which I have this moment received is that he will make me answerable for him. As I apprehend he means to confine me to my House by a Guard of Soldiers, untill the man is deliver'd up or that I can satisfy Cunningham some other way. I have lost no Time in transmitting His Excellency Lord Grantham an exact Account of this Transaction, and I hope His Lordship will be able to protect me, in the mean Time I most humbly and earnestly beseech Your Lordship will be pleased to consider the disagreeable Situation I am in, and to remove me to some better Employment when a vacancy will admit of it.

I most humbly recommend myself to the Continuance of your Lordship's Protection and Favor, having the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 377-78. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The Rt^h Hon^{ble} Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 19 Nov^r 1777/Consul Katenkamp/(N^o 70)/R. 15 December."

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o. 62:

Escorial 19th. Novem^r. 1777.

My Lord,

Having seen and conferred with M. Floridablanca in consequence of the several Instructions which I have lately received from Your Lordship, I am to acquaint you more particularly with what has passed on those Occasions than I could by the last Post.

Before the Receipt of your Lorship's Dispatch N^o. 28 by Staley,¹ I had very fully laid before the Spanish Minister such Accounts as I had received of the fraudulent Pretences under which American Prizes had obtained Entrance into the Ports of this Kingdom, and repeated to him my Complaints of the Facility with which some of them had been admitted to Sale, on which occasion I obtained from him the Promises which I acquainted your Lordship with in my last, together with Assurances that he was in earnest, that they should be executed, and I have not thought it amiss, for the sake of Precision, to recapitulate them in an Office which I have sent to him, and which goes to your Lordship under this Cover.

As M. Floridablanca had acquainted me with Orders having been given for the Restitution of the Vessel taken by Hibbert at Bilbao, I had little more to say on that Subject, than to urge my Sentiments of the Insult offered to the Spanish Coast in that particular, as well as of the Injustice done to His Majesty's Subjects. I must however observe to your Lordship, that the Account of that Transaction sent by M^r Gomez y Barreda [to his] Correspondent in London, is the first Detail of it which I have received. The first Notice I had of it being very slight, and not justifying me in saying more upon it officially, and at first, than I did in my Office to the Spanish Minister, communicated to your Lordship in mine N^o. 56.²

On the subject of the other Cases he could not but allow, that the Commandant of Galicia (General O'Neill's) Conduct was blameable, as well as that of others, who have acted on the Evidence offered by the Prize Masters, & of Persons interested in the Sales, which he would remedy by the fresh Orders abovementioned; and he could by no means attempt to justify the return of Cunningham, which I stated to him in the Office, which I have sent him.

In the course of this Conversation, M. Floridablanca expressed his own resentment at the Americans for having seized on board a French Vessel, *Le Fortune* some Goods the Property of Spanish Merchants.³ This Insult, he said, he should take proper Measures to chastize, and should contrive to have his Disapprobation of it signified to the pretended Deputies of America at Paris, not however through the Spanish Ambassador, as it would be beneath The Catholick King's Dignity to treat with them. These were the Expressions he used.⁴

This Conference did not however pass off without Renewal, on his Side, of those Fears and Jealousies which he has often affected to express at the consequence of so many armed Vessels at Sea, of their Vigilance, and of the Disturbance of Commerce, which he pretended, was become an universal Complaint. Your Lordship may be assured, that I omitted no Arguments to shew him, how groundless those Alarms were, and that the Interruption which he complained of was owing, if it existed, solely to the Abuse, which had been made of the Flags of other Nations. He disculpated that of his own, and took great Merit to himself from no Assistance having ever been as he said, given by this Court in any shape, either of Ships, Arms or Officers. I did not however neglect pointing out strongly to him, that the Connivance given to Privateers stationing themselves in the Ports of this Kingdom, and the allowing Prizes to be sold in them, was a very important Service indeed rendered to the Americans.

Upon his Return from S^t Ildephonso I executed His Majesty's Instructions very punctually; I stated to him the general Fact of large Supplies from many Ports of France being intended for America, & that several Ships, of which I had received Advice, were arming in some Ports of this Kingdom, and were intended to convoy them. It was natural for him to express a Degree of Surprize at this Intelligence, to disculpate the Court of France from countenancing any such Intention, and to throw the blame of it on the Avarice & Enterprize of private Adventurers.

With regard to the measure of their being convoyed from hence, he admitted, as fully as I could wish, the high Impropriety of it, and in short, gave me the most positive Assurances, that he would immediately write to the Commandants of the Northern Coasts, & other Officers to prevent any such Attempt: affecting at the same Time to disbelieve the existance of it. He told me, that he had seen the French Ambassador just before, and that he could answer for the Court of France not intending to do, or allow anything which could give Umbrage or Offence to us. In this Conference I found him very much in that Disposition and, I confess, that I attribute it to Advices received from France, that such a Step as suffering a great Fleet of American Ships to go from the Ports of France and Spain could not be justified, or supported, or allowed with Security. There is therefore at this Instant an Appearance that such a Measure is not likely to take place. But I can in no respect venture to suppose that anything like an active part, will be taken here against the Americans, and fear that according to Events, numberless disagreeable Discussions must still arise. In the course of which I shall endeavour to add, certainly as much Prudence as I can,

to the plain & firm Language, which I always hold upon these Subjects. I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham

P.S: Since this Dispatch has been copied, I have received an Answer to my Office from M. Floridablanca of which I enclose the Original & a Translation.⁵ Your Lordship will observe that the Postscript to it, is written in the Minister's own hand. This answer acknowledges & confirms the sending the orders which he promised me to issue. It is drawn up in the Temper in which I found him on his Return from S^t Ildefonso & seems upon the whole as satisfactory, as I could expect at this Juncture.

I am to add that upon my repeating my solicitation to M. Florida blanca on the Subject of the *Morning Star*, he assured me that M. Galvez the Minister of Indies was preparing an Extract from all the papers belonging to that business, which were very voluminous, and that he would without Loss of Time remitt it to me—G.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 344–46. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The Lord Viscount Weymouth; &c^a c^a c^a." Docketed: "Escorial 19 Nov^e 1777/Lord Grantham/(N^o 62)/R. 30th/3 inclosures."

1. Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 28 Oct. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 259–60.

2. Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 13 Oct. 1777, *above*.

3. See *NDAR* 9: 667.

4. For a further observation on Spanish views, see Marquis D'Ossun to Comte de Vergennes, 13 Nov. 1777, *above*.

5. Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, *above*.

November 20

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Monsieur

Il y a différentes Matières sur les quelles je dois avoir l'honneur d'entretenir Votre Excellence des que j'aurai celui de la voir. en attendant je crois Monsieur le comte qu'il est de mon Devoir indispensable de vous communiquer le Papier ci jointe que je viens de recevoir dans l'instant

Je me borne à réclamer le Vaisseau anglais et sa Cargaison dont je ne doute nullement que vous n'ordonniez la Restitution immédiate. Je ne ferais aucune Reflexion sur la Conduite du Pirate Americain. Je suis bien persuadé que cette Cour est trop fidèle à ses Engagemens, trop éclairée sur ses Intérêts, trop Jalouse de sa Dignité pour ne pas punir severement de pareils Attentats.¹ J'ai l'honneur d'Être [&c.]
à Paris ce 20. 9^{bre}. 1777

Stormont.

[Translation]

Sir

There are various matters about which I am to have the honor of speaking to your Excellency as soon as I have the honor to see you. While waiting, I believe M. Le Comte, that it is my bounden duty to forward to you the enclosed paper that I just received a moment ago.

I am limiting myself to laying claim to the English vessel and its cargo of which I have no doubt whatsoever that you will order its immediate return. I shall make no comment on the conduct of the American pirate. I am indeed convinced that this

court is too faithful to its commitments, too clear as to its interest, too jealous of its dignity not to punish severely such attacks.¹ I have the honor to be [&c.]

Paris, 20 November 1777

Stormont

[Enclosure]

Particulars of Captain Hawkin's Protest

Robert Hawkins Master of the Brig *Emperor of Germany* parted from Cork the 27th Oct^r and on the 11 Nov^r got in sight of the Tower of Corduan; at 2 oclock same Day got a Pilot on board who told him that two Vessels then in Sight were American Privateers who at that time were about two Leagues from him on which he immediately made Sail and was chased about one League within the Tower of Cordouan when he was boarded by the Schooner *Swallow* John Martin Master who had on board part of the Crew belonging to the *Portsmouth* Captain John Hart who's long-Boat full of Armed Men also came on board in a few Minutes After She being Ordered to row round by the Tower, in order to intercept said Hawkins in the River in case he had taken the North Channel having taken possession of his Vessel they made sail towards the *Portsmouth* on board of which they put Cap^t Hawkins and all his Crew &c

Captain Hawkins remonstrated with Cap^t Hart on the Illegality of taking Him in the River of Bordeaux to which He made no vindication but on the contrary said that his People in the Boat had orders to take Him even tho' He should reach Blaye before they overtook Him &c &c.

Early next Morning He ordered Capt. Hawkins and his crew excepting one he retained into the Pilot Boat having plundered them of most of their Cloaths about eight oclock they landed at Ryan

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 525, fols. 382–83. Addressed at foot of letter: "S. Ex^{cc}. M: Le C^{ie} de Vergennes." Notations: "20. 9^{bre}. 1777"; "rep le 20 9^{bre}. 1777"; "restitution que M^d. Stormont demande du Brigantin l'*Empereur d'Allemagne* Patron Hawkins pris par les americains dans la riviere de Bordeaux"; "20 Nov. 1777"; "replied 20 Nov. 1777"; "My Lord Stormont demands the return of the brigantine the *Emperor of Germany*, Hawkins, master, taken by the Americans in the Bordeaux River."

1. Vergennes replied on 20 Nov., stating that Sartine was making an investigation in order to confirm the deed and to order the seizure of the prize. Ibid., fol. 381.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN OF THIS PLACE, DATED AT BOURDEAUX, NOVEMBER 20, 1777."

"It is with the utmost concern that I inform you the fate of the gallant Captain Weeks—A French vessel arrived here the other day, brought in the only man¹ who was saved out of the whole crew of the *Reprisal*.—In a gale of wind which happened the 1st of November² (at which time they were three days past the Banks of Newfoundland) the ship was pooped with three heavy seas, which carried her down—This man and one more floated on the gangway ladder until the 3d, when his commrade through weakness dropped from it—He was that day picked up by the Frenchman who brought him in here—And he now goes for America with Capt. Moore."³

Dunlap's Maryland Gazette; or the Baltimore General Advertiser, 3 Feb. 1778.

1. *Reprisal's* cook, Nathan Jaquays. Abraham Whipple to John Paul Jones, 14 June 1778. MiU-C, Abraham Whipple Letter Book.

2. *Pennsylvania Packet* (Lancaster), 11 Feb. 1778, quotes the same letter, but gives 1 October as the date of the sinking.

3. Thomas Moore, master of the *Duc de Choiseul*.

November 21

J. L. DOERFELD TO THE EARL OF SUFFOLK

[Extract]

N^o. 34.Stockholm November 21st. 1777.

My Lord,

... I received lately advice from Gothenburg, that a quantity of sixty Quintals of Gunpowder had been exported from thence to Marstrand, which was afterwards laid up, together with a Parcel sent from Lubeck, at a Fishery hard by Marstrand, and that it was probably designed for the use of the Rebel Vessels now in that Harbour. M^r Erskine, from whom I had this Intelligence, wrote me at the same time several particulars relative to it, informing me likewise, that he had already requested the Governor of Gothenburg in order to have the Powder prevented from being shipped, which in answer the latter assured he would do. In consequence hereof I took the first opportunity of speaking on this subject to Count Scheffer, whom I desired to send immediately strict orders to the Governor not only for the confiscation of the Powder, but also for calling to account those who contrary to the King of Swedens express Prohibition had exported such a quantity of Gunpowder without special licence. His Excellency promised that he would write without loss of time to General Durietz ordering him to act in this Affair according to his Royal Masters positive and repeated commands, and that he would of course communicate to me his Answer as soon as it was received, adding, that he made no doubt but it would prove satisfactory in every respect, and convince me entirely of the sincerity and good faith with which this Government was always acting.

I took afterwards an opportunity of mentioning to Count Scheffer the admission of unarmed Trading Vessels belonging to the Rebels into the Port of Marstrand, calling to His Excellencys mind that he had once assured me at a certain occasion that the King of Sweden would not allow His Subjects to carry on Trade with the American Rebels. He answered, that according to the Privileges granted to Marstrand every Trading Vessel without distinction was to be allowed entrance into that Free Port; but that His Swedish Majesty would by no means permit His Subjects to carry on Trade in their own Vessels to any of the American Ports; His Excellency repeated at the same time in very strong terms, that the King his Master would at all times strictly follow His System of preventing to the utmost in His power that the Rebels may by no means get any supply of Arms or Ammunition from Sweden; that however, notwithstanding the best precautions which had always been and would for the future constantly be taken, it was impossible for every Government to prevent entirely some Contraband Trade carried on by some Individuals, but that he was sure it could not be but most insignificant from this Country. Upon my mentioning that one Woodhouse, Master of a Rebel Vessel,¹ had been received Burgher at Marstrand and his Ship made a Swedish Bottom, His Excellency said, that when that Free-Port had been established, all sorts of People had been invited to settle there, and that consequently Woodhouse could not be refused; but he had upon him the same obligation as every other Swedish Burgher not to carry on Trade to any American Port; and should he act contrary to it, he would lose of course his right, and must impute

to himself if he was then taken by some of the British Cruizers. When I asked Count Scheffer, whether His Swedish Majestys Prohibition against admitting Pirate armed Vessels into His Ports was not equally to be extended indistinctly to all Piratical Prizes; His Excellency answered, that there was not the least doubt but the King his Master would in such a case act in consequence of those Principles which He had for ever adopted in order to prove His sincere Friendship towards His Britannick Majesty to Whose arms He always wished the happiest success. . . . I have the Honor to be [&c.]

J. L. Doerfeld

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot of first page: "Right Hon^{ble}/Earl of Suffolk." Omitted portions concern the birth of an English princess and the return of the French ambassador to Sweden after thirteen months' absence.

1. Brigantine *Molly*. See Doerfeld to William Eden, 14 Oct., above.

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAIN HENRY LLOYD, R.N.

Whereas we have received Information that several Privatiers belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of North America are cruising between Cape Pinas and Bilboa in order to intercept the Newfoundland Ships and other Trade of His Majesty's Subjects bound that way, (which Privatiers are of very inconsiderable force) ¹ and that there is in that Port, a Ship called the *Rambler*, laden with a large quantity of Rigging, Harpoons and other Goods, bound, as it is said to Hudson's Straits to whale and Trade with the Esqumaux Indians, and furnish'd with English, French, Spanish & American Papers and Colours, as more particularly mentioned in the inclosed Extract of the said Intelligence: You are hereby required and directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather and proceed and cruize between the abovementioned Cape and Cape Machacaca [*Machichaco*] for the protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects and to use your best endeavours to take or destroy the abovementioned, or any other Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies abovementioned which you may be able to come with, keeping a good look out for the said Ship *Rambler* and if she should put to Sea and you should have good reason to think that She belongs to any of the Colonies abovementioned, using your best endeavours also to seize her and bring her into Port.

You are to continue upon the above Station for the space of 14 days after your arrival thereupon, and then proceed to the Coast of Portugal, and cruize for the like purposes between Cape Finisterre & Lisbon, calling off that place and Oporto to make enquiry of the British Consuls there for Intelligence.

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

You are to continue to cruize between Cape Finisterre and Lisbon as above directed until your receive further order, transmitting to our Secretary by every op-

portunity such Intelligence as may have come to your knowledge with an Account of your Proceedings and the state & Condition of the Ship, or Ships under your command, and Monthly, (or oftner if proper opportunities offer) to transmit to him a Copy of your Journal also, and you are once, in four or five Months to proceed with the Ship you command to Lisbon to heave down, taking care to get it done with all the dispatch possible, & never otherwise (except in cases of absolute necessity) to go into Port, and even then not to stay there a moment longer than you can possibly avoid: and, when you shall have occasion to go into the Tagus, you are never to go higher than the Bay of Wares, except to heave down as abovementioned.

You are to enter all Seamen being His Majesty's Subjects, who shall offer, and to bear such as may be more than sufficient to compleat your allow'd Complement: as supernumeraires for wages and Victuals until you shall have an opportunity of putting them on board any of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels which may be short of Complement, or of disposing of them, in such other manner as we shall think fit to direct.

And whereas His Maj^s. Ship and Sloops named in the Margin² have been sent out to Cruize for the same purposes between Oporto and Lisbon you are in case of falling in with the *Hussar* to take her under your command, her Captain being directed to obey your Orders, and to employ her as you shall judge best for the more effectual carrying into execution the object of these Instructions, taking care however that whenever it may be absolutely necessary for her, or the Ship you command to go into Port, that the other do remain upon the Station hereby assign'd you diligently cruizing for the purposes abovemention'd, and that they do not if it can be possibly avoided, ever go into Port at the same time, and whereas we intend that the two Sloops shall return forthwith to England, you are upon falling in with them to deliver the inclosed Pacquets to their respective Commanders containing Our Orders to them to return accordingly.

And in case any other of His Maj^s. Ships or Vessels whose Commander shall be Senior to you, shall be appointed to cruize upon the said Station while you continue thereon, you are to follow his Orders: And on the otherhand, if he shall be junior to you, he is hereby required to obey such as he shall receive from you. Given &c. the 21st. November. 1777.

Capt. Lloyd—*Pelican*—Spithead

By &c.

P.S.

Sandwich

Lisburne

H Palliser

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 437-43.

1. See Lefras and Le Mesurier to Philip Stephens, 5 Nov. 1777, above.
2. Frigate *Hussar* and sloops *Hawke* and *Alert*.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO COMMANDERS OF ARMED AMERICAN VESSELS

To the Captains or Commanders of all Ships of War, armed Vessels and Privateers from the United States of North America.

Gentlemen,

Complaint having been made of Violences done by American armed Vessels, to neutral Nations, in seizing Ships belonging to their Subjects, and under their Colours; and in making Captures of those of the Enemy, but under the protection of neutral

Coasts, contrary to the usage and custom of Nations; This is therefore to warn and request you, not to commit any such Violation of the Laws of Nations; but (according to the powers express'd in your Commission) to confine yourselves to the capture of the Enemys Vessels when not within the protection of a neutral River, Fort or Coast, and of all others whatsoever that shall be carrying, Soldiers, Arms, Ammunition, Provisions, or other contraband Goods, to any of the British Armies, or Ships employed against the united States. In every other Case you will respect the rights of neutrality, from which you expect Protection, and treat all neutral Ships, with the utmost kindness and Friendship, for the honour of your Country and of your selves. We are, Gentlemen, Your &c.

Paris Nov^r 21st. 1777.

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 85, pp. 101–4 (M247, roll 114). Docketed: "Commiss/to the Captains of Privateers/inclosed in Nov^r 30 1777/Commissioners Letter."

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO SAMUEL AND JEAN-HANS DELAP

Mess^{rs}. Delaps
Gentlemen

Paris Nov^r 21. 1777—

We are informed that the Ship *Portsmouth*, which left Bourdeaux a few days since, made Prize of a Vessel from Cork entering the River, with a Pilot onboard & after she had got into the Passage of Grave.¹

This is the Captain's Story, on which his complaint is founded. We ask you to enquire into the particulars of this Transaction and send in the Pilots Acco^t of it Attested.—Several American Vessels have been taken in the Course of the last Season by the English near the Coasts of France & one or more as we have been informed in near the same Circumstances; You will oblige us by enquiring how near the Land American Ships have been taken bound to your Port & sending us the Acco^t—We are [&c.]

B.F.

S.D.

The Pilots Name is Doussier of Royan a Copy of the Declaration made at the Admiralty is wanted if it can be obtained—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. The capture of brig *Emperor of Germany*, Robert Hawkins, by New Hampshire privateer ship *Portsmouth*, and Maryland letter of marque *Swallow*, on 11 Nov.

SILAS DEANE, FOR THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE, TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

M^r Williams
Sir

Paris Nov^r 21. 1777—

You are desired to get from Cap^t Adams a particular Acco^t of his being taken,¹ in which he must ascertain as exact as is in his Power, at what distance he was from the Coast of France when he was first Chased and when he was actually taken, he must make oath to his narration and send it up to us by the first Courier—if you have knowledge of other Vessels taken by English Ships of War near the Coast of France

I wish you to enquire into the particulars of their Capture, & at what distance it may have happened & send up the Account to the Commissioners—I am &c

SD—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. John Adams, of the Massachusetts schooner packet *Lynch*, was captured by H.M.S. *Foudroyant* off the coast of Belle Isle on 9 May. *NDAR* 9: 390–91. He later escaped and by late October was in Nantes. Silas Deane to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 24 Oct. 1777, *Deane Papers* 2: 199–200.

November 22

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *INVINCIBLE*, CAPTAIN HYDE PARKER, SR.

Nov^r: 78 [77]

I. Ush. [Ushant] EbN $\frac{1}{4}$ E 141 L^s.

Saturday 22nd

D^o: Wea^r. [Light airs & Cloudy] with Calms, with a swell from the N.W. Convoy in Comp^y with 2 Strange Sail.¹

Liz^d. [Lizard] ENE 137 L^s.

D^o: Wea^r.

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/478.

1. Continental Navy ship *Ranger*, Capt. John Paul Jones, and one of two prizes, brigantines, the *Mary* and the *George*.

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

A Versailles Le 22 9^{bre}. 1777

J'ay reçu, Monsieur, votre Lettre du 12. de ce mois au sujet des frégattes Anglo-Américaines le *Raleigh*, et l'*Alfred*, Et j'avois reçu vos précédentes lettres par lesquelles vous m'avez rendu compte des opérations qui se faisoient pour mettre ces deux Bâtimens en état de partir, et des mesures que vous preniez pour les accélérer; vous me marquez par votre dernière que le *Raleigh* étoit entièrement caréné, et travailloit à se regréer et s'équiper, et que l'*Alfred* alloit commencer très incessamment sa carène; vous continuerez à veiller à ce que ces Bâtimens partent promptement; Les deux Capitaines qui doivent les commander sont partis pour se rendre à l'orient ou ils doivent être actuellement,¹ au moyen de quoi leur départ ni peut être retardé.

Sur ce qui concern les prises qui étoient mouillées dans la Rivière de Crack, je ne doute pas que les officiers de l'amirauté n'ayent fait ponctuellement exécuter à leur égard les intentions du Roy, et je compte que vous aurez veillé de concert avec eux au débarquement des Matelots françois qui y étoient embarqués.

à l'égard du Navire la *Brune*² que vous m'avez mandé devoir être expédié avec un Capitaine et un Équipage françois sous une destination simulée pour nos colonies, et sur le quel un anglo-Américain devoit s'embarquer en apparence en qualité de passager, c'est un arrangement qu'il n'est pas possible de tolérer, vous vous opposerez au passage,³ et prendrez les mesures nécessaires à cet effet; vous avez très bien fait de me rendre compte de ce qui se passoit à ce sujet Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

vous prendrez la soumission du cap^{nc}. françois qui doit commander la *Brune* de se rendre dans nos colonies ou de faire son retour en France sous telles peines que

s. M. jugera a propos de prononcer; vous n'oublierez pas l'article des matelots conformément a la lettre circulaire que vous avés du recevoir.

[Translation]

Versailles, 22 November 1777

I have received your letter, Sir, of the 12th of this month concerning the Anglo-American frigates *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, and I had received your previous letters by which you reported on the operations which were going on in order to put these two ships into condition to leave, as well as the steps that you were taking to hasten them. You pointed out to me by your latest that the *Raleigh* had been completely careened and was working to re-rig and re-fit, and that the *Alfred* would very shortly begin her careening. You will continue to take care that these two ships leave promptly. The two captains who are to command them have left to return to Lorient where they ought to be at present,¹ so that their departure cannot be delayed.

As to the prizes which were moored in the Crack River, I do not doubt that the Admiralty officers have punctually caused the King's wish concerning them to be carried out, and I expect that you kept watch along with them on the debarkation of French sailors who had been embarked thereon.

With reference to the vessel *La Brune* which you reported on, supposedly being cleared with a French captain and crew, for a feigned destination in our colonies, and upon which there was supposed to be an Anglo-American pretending to act in the capacity of a passenger,² this is an arrangement which is impossible to tolerate; you will stand in the way of this passage,³ and you will take necessary measures to that effect. You did well to report to me what was happening in regard to this. I am [&c.]

de sartine

You will assure the compliance of the French captain who is to command *La Brune* to go to our colonies or to return to France under such penalty as His Majesty will deem appropriate to pronounce; you will keep in mind the order concerning the sailors in conformity with the circular letter which you ought to have received.

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 127. Addressed at foot of first page: "M. Gonet, a L'orient." Notations: "Classes"; "R. le 26. 9^e"; "Mariners' Registration"; "Received 26 Nov."

1. A mark here refers to a marginal notation in Sartine's hand: "ou des [*illeg.*] se rendre tres [*illeg.*]"

2. The *Brune*, which was owned by Bérard Frères & Co., was captained by M. Berube Dufraisne, who took her to Boston, where she eventually became the Continental Navy ship *Queen of France*. The American on board was John Green, captain, Continental Navy.

3. A mark here refers to a marginal notation in Sartine's hand: "de ce capitaine americain"; "of this American captain."

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

A Versailles Le 22 9bre 1777

Jai reçu, Monsieur, votre Lettre du 14 de Ce mois, par laquelle vous m'annoncés L'arrivée, a L'orient, du Batiment marchand L'*Amphitrite*¹ du havre, venant de Charlestown avec un chargement de Ris et d'indigo. Vous J avés joint les pieces, par les quelles Le Sr [?] Fautrel, Capitaine de Ce Batiment, pretend prouver quil n'a pu Executer la Soumission quil vous a donnée, Le 10 janvier dernier, au pied de La

Copie de Lordre que vous lui avés remis, de faire route directement pour Le port au prince, et de Se presenter, a son arrivée, au gouverneur general de la Colonie. Les procès verbaux, faits En mer dans de pareilles Circonstances, ne peuvent qu'etre très suspects. Le Certificat des passagers daté, du neuf fevrier dernier, decele la Collusion; mais Le procès verbal, du 21 mars suivant signé par les officiers de L'Etat major, et Certifié par les memes passagers, ne Laisse aucun doute sur la desobeissance du Capitaine qui a fait route volontairement pour Boston de L'avis et du Consentement de Ces memes officiers et passagers. Une Contravention pareille aux volontis du Roy ne peut rester impunie. Je vous envoie, en Consequence, un ordre, En vertu du quel vous ferés arrêter et detenir en prison Le S^e [?] Fautrel, jusqua Ce que sa majesté en ordonne autrement. Je suis [&c.]

de sartine

vous prendra des mesures pour que ce cap^{ne} soit gardé en prison avec sureté et vous l'interrogerez pour sçavoir de vrai, vous lui témoignerez le plus grand mecontentement de sa desobeissance.

vous previeendrez M^r de la vigne Brisson mais [*approx. four words illeg.*] que le secret soit gardé jusqu'a ce que les ordres de S. M. soient executés.

[Translation]

Versailles, 22 November 1777

I have received, Sir, your letter of the 14th of this month by which you announced the arrival at Lorient of the merchant vessel *Amphitrite*,¹ of Le Havre, coming from Charlestown with a cargo of rice and indigo. You included the documents by means of which M. Fautrel, captain of this ship, claims to prove that he was not able to execute the bond which he gave you on 10 January last, at the foot of the copy of the order which you sent him, to set a course directly for Port-au-Prince, and upon his arrival to present himself to the Governor General of the Colony. The testimonies taken at sea under similar circumstances can only be very suspect. The certificate of the passengers dated 9 February last disclose collusion. But the testimony of the following 21 March signed by the chief officers, and certified by the same passengers, leave no doubt as to the disobedience of the captain who voluntarily set course for Boston with the advice and consent of these same officers and passengers. Such a breach of the King's wishes can not remain unpunished. Therefore I am sending you an order, by virtue of which you will have M. Fautrel arrested and detained in prison until His Majesty shall ordain otherwise. I am [&c.]

de sartine

You will take steps so that the captain be kept in prison in safety, you will interrogate him to find out the truth, and you will show him your dissatisfaction at his disobedience.

You will forewarn M. de la Vigne Brisson [but take care?] that the secret be kept until the orders of His Majesty have been carried out.

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 128. Addressed at foot of first page: "M Gonet." Notations: "Colonies"; "R. le 26. 9^e"; "Colonies"; "Replied 26 Nov."

1. Nicolas Fautrel, commander of the *Amphitrite*, took her to Boston, the first of Beaumarchais's ships to arrive in America. When John Paul Jones arrived there later to take command, Fautrel refused to turn over the ship to him and would have accepted Jones only as a passenger. Subsequently Fautrel sailed to Charleston, S.C., for the cargo, with which she had just arrived at L'Orient.

LE RAY DE CHAUMONT TO [GABRIEL DE SARTINE?]

Monseigneur

Aussi tot que le Deputés du Congrès americain ont été informé de la prise faite du Navire anglois *L'Empereur d'Allemagne*, Capitaine Robert Hawkins, venant de Cork a Bordeaux, a l'adresse du S^r Gallois et qui a été pris dans la passe de Grave, par le Travers de la tour de Cordouan et ayant a bord un Pilote de Royan nommé le Dossier; ils ont écrit à leur Correspondant à Bordeaux pour interoger le dit Dossier pilote, ne doutant pas que le Capitaine anglois qui a été pris aura fait sa declaration a son avantage. D'après les Informations, Monseigneur, que les dits Deputés receveront, ils vous prieront de prononcer sur la Satisfaction que vous desirez, et ils se feront une Loix d'y contraindre le Capitaine du dit Corsaire, dont ils n'ont jamais eu de connoissance, et qu'ils vous prient de faire arrester si il paraist dans aucune port de France. Les dits Deputés, Monseigneur, sont en etat de mettre sous vos yeux Les preuves qu'une fregatte anglois a pris cette année dans la même passe un Navire americain ayant aussi un Pilot de Royan a son Bord. Je suis [&c.] Passy ce 22. 9^{bre} 1777.

(Copie)

signé { Le Ray de Chaumont

Translation]

My Lord

As soon as the deputies of the American Congress were informed of the capture of the English ship the *Emperor of Germany*, Captain Robert Hawkins, coming from Cork to Bordeaux, directed to Sieur Gallois, which was taken in the channel of Grave near the tower of Cordouan and having on board a pilot from Royan named Dossier, they wrote to their correspondent at Bordeaux and requested he interrogate the said pilot, Dossier, having no doubt that the English captain who had been taken would have made his declaration to his advantage. Depending on the information that the said Deputies will receive, My Lord, they will ask you to state what satisfaction you desire, and they will make a point of retaining there the captain of the said privateer, of whom they have never had any knowledge, and they will ask you to have him arrested if he shows up in any port of France. The said Deputies, my lord, are prepared to put before you proofs that an English frigate has taken this year in the same channel an American ship also having on board a pilot from Royan. I am [&c.]

Passy, the 22 Nov. 1777.

(Copy)

signed { Le Ray de Chaumont

Copy, PHi, Benjamin Franklin Papers. Addressed at foot of letter: "M^{gr} de Sartine Ministre de la Marine."

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO FELIX O'NEILLE

Señor Comandante General de este Reyno

Señor. Don Herman Katencamp Consul de S. M. B. en este Reyno con la major veneracion devida Digo a VS. que haviendose ausentado d'escapado (sin la menor inteligencia mia) Juan Jordan Marinero Ingles de a bordo del Corsario Americano Rebel de que se halla en este Puerto,¹ motivado del maltrato que recevia por no haver querido firmar Articulos de Servicio en dho Corsario, Cuio marinero se ha aplicado a mi para que le amparase y protexiese para su retiro a Inglaterra, en lo que no puse la menor

Objecion, mandandole al Ferrol abordo de un navio Ingles nombrado *Thomas* su Capitan Joseph Pine, quese hallava pronto a hazerse a la vela, siendo bien persuadido que hacia lo devido en amparar y assistir a los Subditos de mi Soberano que toman refugio en un Pais neutral, escampandose de los Rebel des que por violencia les tienen y obligan a tomar las Armas contra su Patria, y allo la estraña novedad y atentado que segun aviso que por proprio me acava de dar dho Capitan Joseph Pine que en la noche del dia 20 del Corriente cinco marineras de la Tripulacion del citado Corsario acompanados de dos Soldados Armados de los de la Guarnicion de la Plaza de dho Ferrol, pasaran a su bordo, y con fuerza y violencia llevaron a dho marinero Juan Jordan sin que precediese manifestacion de Orden alguna loque me veo precisado a representarlo a la Justificacion de U.S. y rendidamente suplico Se Serva tomar las mas seria Providencia mandando que dhos cinco marineros sean examinados muy por menor, y que el Juan Jordan traído ante al Tribunal competente a donde pueda libramente hazer su defensa en Forma legal respecto no tiene Segun me ha informado echo Obligacion alguna, y en cas de salir inocente, castigar a los delinquentes o a su Capitan por haver les mandado cometer semejante violencia, y Ultraxe en un Puerto neutral, Merced que con Justizia espero recibir de la notoria Justification de VS. Corunna 22^d Nov: 1777.

H Katencamp

[Translation]

Commanding General of this District

Sir. Mr. Herman Katencamp, consul of his Britannic Majesty in this district, with the greatest veneration, informs you that John Jordan, English seaman, having absented himself by escape (without my least knowledge), from on board the rebel American privateer that is in this port,¹ motivated by the bad treatment that he received because of not wanting to sign the articles of service in the said privateer, has applied to me to shelter and protect him. For his return to England, to which he has no objection, I sent him to Ferrol on board an English ship named *Thomas*, Captain Joseph Pine, which was soon to set sail, being well persuaded that he ought to protect and assist the subjects of my sovereign that take refuge in a neutral country, escaping from the rebels that by violence take them and oblige them to take up arms against their country. And I learn the strange news and offence that according to information that the said Captain Joseph Pine has just given me by messenger that in the night of the 20th of this month, five seamen of the crew of the said privateer, accompanied by two armed soldiers from the garrison of the plaza of the said Ferrol, came on board, and with force and violence took the said seaman John Jordan without first showing any orders. I have the necessity to represent this to you for your explanation and humbly entreat you to take the most serious steps to have the said five seamen examined very closely, and John Jordan brought before a competent tribunal where he could freely make his defense in a legal form in respect to having not—according to what he has told me—undertaken any obligation, and in case he is found innocent, to punish the delinquents or their captain for having sent them to commit unjustified violence within a neutral port. Your honor, with justice I wait to receive your explanation from the notary's office. Corunna 22^d Nov. 1777.

H Katencamp.

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 390. Notation: "Copia."

1. Continental Navy cutter *Revenge*, Gustavus Conyngham, at Corunna.

FELIX O'NEILLE TO HERMAN KATENCAMP

Muy Senor mio

Para atender a lo que Um^d me representa con fecha de oy, quedo en tomar los conducentes Informes en punto a los motivos que el marinero Juan Jordan que servia en la Embarcacion de las Colonias Americanas que Um^d apresa haya tenido para reclamarle, como de los procedimientos que segun dice Um^d hubo en Ferrol (que ignoro no obstante que estube alli hasta el dia de hayer) abordo del navio Ingles nombrado *Thomas*, a donde le ha embiado Um^d cauthelosamente (como me ha informada el Theniente de Rey de esta Plaza a my regreso) y en su Vista providenciasé lo que sea mas correspondiente anadiendo entretanto que el paso dado por el Marinero, y lo praticado por Um^d (seduciendolo para que saliese de dho Embarcacion segun me hallo noticioso) no lo considero arreglado pues qualquier queja que tubiese quedar del referido Capitan devia hacerlo a mi sin entramenterse Um^d a tomarse una Autoridad que no lo competi. D^s Gu^e. a Um^m: m^s: a^s: Corunna 22^d. Nov. 1777.

Felix O'Neille.

[Translation]

Dear sir,

In order to attend to what you represented to me, under today's date, I made inquiries of the informed officials on the matter of the seaman John Jordan, who served in the ship of the American colonials, whom you seized in order to reclaim him. As to the proceedings that according to what you told me took place in Ferrol (of which I know nothing, although I was there until yesterday) on board the English ship called *Thomas*, where you had sent him (as the king's lieutenant of this place has informed me at my return) and he ordered that which in his view was more suitable; furthermore insomuch as the passage given for the seaman and what you did (seducing him to leave the said ship, according to information I have) I do not consider proper, inas-much as any complaint you have concerning the captain referred to you ought to make to me without interposing yourself to take on yourself an authority to which you have no claim. May God keep you many years. Corunna 22d. Nov. 1777.

Felix O'Neille.

Copy, UklPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 390. Notations at top: "In Consul Katenkamp's N^o 71"; "Answer."

November 23 (Sunday)

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO MIDSHIPMAN JOSEPH GREEN

By John Paul Jones Esq^r Captain of the American Navy &^{ca}.—

M^r Joseph Green

Sir

You are hereby Appointed Commander of our Prize the Brigantine *Mary*, you are to Navigate her with all possible dispatch to Nantes Bourdeaux, or some other of the most convenient and Safe Ports in France, should you be able to hold way with the *Ranger* you are to keep Company, untill I give you Orders to make the best of your Way, either by hailing you, or if at a distance by hoisting a Jack at the Maintop-gallant Mast head, I depend on your being particularly careful that no part of the

Cargo be Embezzled or destroyed, on your Arrival you are to make Application by Letter, or Personally to W^m: Lee, or Thomas Morris Esq^{rs}. American Agents at Nants and Bourdeaux, who are Authorized to make Sale of the Prize, should you meet with any of the Enemies Ships, you are to personate the late Master Tho^s. Riches, Hail from Malaga, and let One of your Men pass for the Mate, the rest for the Crew, you are not to leave the Vessel, yourself untill you see her Cargo delivered of which you are to take a particular, and exact Account, you are also to take an inventory of the Vessels Stores, and you are to return the Mideterranean pass to me together with any other papers which you may discover on board, you are notwithstanding to Obey all future Orders from me however different the foregoing.

Given on board the *Ranger* at Sea 23^d day of November 1777.

Jn^o P Jones

DS, DNA, Records of the Veterans Administration, Revolutionary War Pension File of Joseph Green, No. S 37044.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE FRENCH AND SPANISH COURTS

The Commissioners from the United States of America are extreemly concerned to understand that the Courts of Spain and France are offended with said States, on Account of the taking of the French Ship *Fortune* by an American Privateer, which Ship was bound from England to Cadiz, and is represented to have had Spanish Property on board. The Commissioners are confident that nothing can be more distant from the Intention of the said States; than that their Subjects should profit by making such Prizes (as they have no War with those Nations but consider them as real Friends,) and have moreover the greatest personal Respect for their most Christian & Catholic Majesties with the strongest Desire of meriting & cultivating their Friendship. The purpose of the Congress in commissioning armed Vessels, as well as the Measures taken in their several States by establishing Courts of Admiralty to prevent or remedy irregular Captures (in which Courts all Prizes brought there are to suffer a regular Trial) appears on the Face of the Commissions granted, an authentic Copy whereof is hereunto annexed,¹ By which Commission also it will appear that the Congress have not authorized any Act that may be contrary to the Law of Nations.² The Commissioners tho' they have no Concern or Correspondence with the Captain who took the Prize in question, are of Opinion, that knowing it to be a common Practice with English Merchants to cover their Property in Ships bound to Spain under the Names of Spanish Subjects, he might conceive the Goods consigned to Cadiz from London in the *Fortune* were of that kind; & that it was therefore right to have a Trial on them by sending the Ship to Boston, where it is not doubted but that the Ship will be discharged and her Freight and Damages paid, as belonging to France, and the Goods reclaimed, or their Value on the Proofs appearing that they belong to Subjects of Spain, be delivered to the Claimers. By this means only the Irregularities & Inconveniences of such Captures, (which in no War can possibly be entirely prevented) will be rectified and remedied.—And in this Confidence the Commissioners hope the Displeasure conceived against their Country on the present Occasion will subside, and that the United States will obtain and preserve the Favour of their Catholick and most Christian Majesties which of all things is most earnestly desired. They also submit it to consideration whether the Appointment of an Agent or Consul

to reside in America and take care of the Interests of the Merchants of these Nations, by making Reclamations when necessary, and supporting such Claims in the Courts of Justice, would not be useful, not only in obtaining more speedy Justice but in preserving that good Intelligence between the People of the different Countries which may be advantageous to all: To prevent Misunderstandings for the Future, we purpose to write immediately to the Congress acquainting them with this Transaction, and urging them to give strict Orders to all who act under their Commissions to Respect the Flags of every neutral or friendly Power, under severe Penalties for Disobedience.

And in the meantime we shall recommend it to our Correspondents at the several Ports, to warn the Captains of American armed Vessels to conduct themselves as if such Orders were already given.—

Paris, Nov^r. 23. 1777.

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Etats-Unis, vol. 2, no. 142, fols. 361–62. Notation: “23 9^{bre}. 1777.” A nearly identical signed letter was sent to the court of Spain: SpVAS, legajo 4612, pp. 99–101.

1. The enclosed printed commission, signed by John Hancock but with the blanks not filled in, is reproduced in *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1746. Portions of the text that concern prize adjudication, posting of bonds, and observance of the laws of nations are underscored.

2. The commissioners omitted the following passage that occurs at this point in the draft. The omission was requested by Vergennes. Conde de Aranda to Conde de Floridablanca, 26 Nov., below. See also *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 184–85. “And it is to be wished that when Ships are taken by such armed Vessels in Seas remote from America but near to the Ports or Dominions of neutral Powers, those Powers would permit the Entrance and Trial of such Prizes by their own Courts of Admiralty, to the Decision of which Courts the Congress is willing and desirous they should be submitted, as will appear by the same Commission. In that Case the Necessity the Captors seem to be under of sending their Prizes to America for Trial, when ever sufficient Suspicion arises that the Property of their Enemies may be cloaked under the Names of Friends would be avoided; and the Ships or Goods reclaimed by the Subjects of France or Spain, would be tried in their own Courts, and Justice more speedily rendered than it can well be from a Country so distant as America; where nevertheless it will certainly be obtained, (tho’ with greater Trouble and Loss of Time by reason of that distance) on due Proof being made that the Property reclaimed belongs truly to the said Reclaimant & not to the Subjects of Great Britain.” NjP, Franklin Papers.

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

A Versailles, le 23. 9^{bre}. 1777.

J’ai l’honneur, Monsieur, de vous remettre, ci joint, le précise que vous m’avez communiqué, de la protestation du Capitaine Haukins, Maitre du Brigantin l’*Empereur d’Allemagne*, au sujet de sa prise par le Senault l’*Hirondelle*, qui étoit commandé par John Martin, ayant à son Bord une partie de l’Équipage du *Portsmouth*: J’ai fait des démarches sur ce qui concern cette prise, même pour la restitution du Brigantin s’il est possible. Je reçois au surplus une lettre de M. le Marquis de Montbas datée du 12., à Bord de la Frégate qui étoit au bas de la Riviere de Bordeaux et qu’il commandoit,¹ par laquelle cet Officier me mande qu’il venoit d’apprendre que dans la nuit du 10. au 11., hors de la vue de Cordouan, le Capitaine Jean Hart, commandant le *Portsmouth*, avoit pris un Bâtiment Anglois qui cherchoit à entrer en Riviere, et en m’observant que s’il pouvoit approfondre cette affaire, il m’en rendroit compte, il a ajouté que c’étoit un Pilote de la Riviere, qui l’avoit du aux Gens de l’Équipage de la Frégate, et que suivant son rapport, l’affaire s’étoit passé tout à fait au large. J’ai l’honneur d’être [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, the 23rd of November, 1777.

I have the honor, sir, to remit to you enclosed herewith, the summary which you have sent me of the protest by Captain Haukins, Master of the brigantine the *Emperor of Germany*, regarding its capture by the snow the *Swallow* which was commanded by John Martin, having on board part of the crew of the *Portsmouth*. I made some inquiries concerning that prize, even for the restitution of the brigantine, if possible. Moreover, I received a letter from M. the Marquis de Montbas, dated the 12th, on board the frigate he commands¹ which lay downstream in the Bordeaux River, by which letter this officer advised me of his having just learned that in the night of the 10th to the 11th, out of sight of Cordouan, the Captain John Hart, commanding the *Portsmouth*, took an English ship which tried to enter the river, and calling to my attention that if he could thoroughly examine this affair he would report to me about it, he added that it was a river pilot who told the people of crew of the frigate about it, and that according to his report, the affair took place entirely on the open sea. I have the honor to be [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, fol. 335. Addressed at foot: "M. Le Comte de Vergennes." Notations: "M de Rayneval"; and "protestation du Cap^m Haukins m^c du Brigantin l'*Empereur d'Allemagne* pris par le Senault l'*hirondelle*"; "protest of the Capt. Hawkins master of the brigantine the *Emperor of Germany*, taken by the snow the *Swallow*."

1. *Etourdie*.**November 24**

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

By &c

Whereas His most Christian Majesty hath ordered the two Merchant Ships named in the Margin¹ lately taken by an American Privatier on their Passage from Jamaica & carried into Nantz to be restored to the Owners who have applied to Us for a Convoy to bring them in safety to England & informed Us that they are nearly ready to sail; And Whereas we think fit that the Ship you command accompanied by His Maj^{ty} Ship the *Thetis* now at Plymouth shall perform that Service & have ordered each of them to be supplied with a Pilot properly qualified for the Coast of France, You are hereby required & directed to proceed without a moments loss of time off Plymouth Sound & taking the *Thetis* under your command (her Commander being directed to follow your Orders) put to Sea again with the very first opportunity of Wind & Weather & proceed with her & the Ship you command with all possible expedition to St Nazier Road in the Entrance of the River Loire where you are to enquire for the said two Merchant Ships & taking them under your Convoy see them in safety as far as Spithead at which place you are to remain until you receive further orders sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings
Given &c 24th Nov^r 1777

Sandwich

Lisburne

H Palliser

By &c PS.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 446-47. Addressed at foot of letter: "Cap^t Stott—*Minerva*—Spithead."1. "Clarendon Hanover Packet," i.e., *Hanover Planter*.

MEMORIAL OF THE MERCHANTS, TRADERS, AND SHIP OWNERS OF LONDON
TO LORD WEYMOUTH

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Weymouth
One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State,
The Memorial of the Merchants, Traders, and Ship Owners of London
whose Names are hereunto subscribed.
Humbly sheweth:

24th. November 1777

That there have been already laid before your Lordship by the individual parties injured, many and various Cases of the Depredations committed against the Trade of this Kingdom, by American Privateers being permitted to carry British Ships and Cargos into French and Spanish Ports, and there to sell them, in violation of a fundamental and uncontrovertible Maxim of the Law of Nations, vizt

“**That** before the Ship or Goods taken, can be disposed of by the Captor, there must be a regular judicial Proceeding, wherein both Parties may be heard, and Condemnation thereupon as Prize in a Court of Admiralty judging by the Law of Nations and Treaties: and the proper and regular Court for these Condemnations in the Court of that State to which the Captor belongs.”

That notwithstanding the Orders which your **Memorialists** have been informed have been issued by the Court of France, prohibiting American Privateers from bringing Prizes into their Ports, the Practice has been and is now continued in a much more alarming and dangerous Shape; for they now carry them into the Bays of France and unload the Cargos by means of the Assistance afforded them by the Inhabitants, which your **Memorialists** apprehend could not be executed if the Court of France were sincere in their Proffessions to the Court of Great Britain, or serious in those Orders issued to their own Subjects.—

That many Ships, particularly those returning from the Newfoundland Fishery, have lately been taken by American Privateers, and carried into the very Ports of their destination in Spain, where they have been disposed of with their Cargos, by the Captors; and that no Court in that Kingdom will take Cognizance of the Complaints and Claims of Restitution made in behalf of his Majesty's Subjects the right Owners.—

These are Practices to which your **Memorialists** could not apprehend they were exposed from those two civilized States, either in the principle of the Law of Nations or the feeling of Amity between Great Britain & France, and Spain; they are practices which must be productive of general Piracy, and leave a Train of that most dangerous and worst of Crimes, for Years to come, even after a Reduction of the present Rebellion.—

They are Practices, which if not immediately put a Stop to, must sap the Vitals of this Kingdom; for to such a Price has the Premium of Insurance already arisen, in Contemplation of those Hazards, that many of the most valuable Branches of the Navigation of the Kingdom cannot support so heavy a Charge and must therefore be greatly impaired in their Extent, if not totally foregone and laid aside.—

The great Importance of the Subject renders any further Arguments unnecessary, to engage your Lordship's immediate and serious Attention to the Redress of an Evil, replete with the most fatal Consequences to the Prosperity and Security of the Navigation of this Kingdom, on which it's natural Strength and Safety must ever depend.—

John Wombvell	Herries & C ^o .	Joshua Readshaw	W ^m . Greenwood
R ^t Buller & Comp ^a .	Tho ^s . Sutton	Geo Curling	Joseph Nutt
Henry Seward	Jn Fletcher	John Ewer	Tho ^s . Fraser
Bingley & Pitt C.	Sam ^l . Gist	Thomas Walker	Rob ^t . Hunter
Benj ⁿ Bewicke	John Staples	Ja ^s . Dunlop	Matt Carrell
James Mowbray.	Caly. Bewicke	Thomas Bell	W ^m . Crichton
Will ^m Halhed	Philip Jackson.	Peter Harmon	James Mather
John Julius Ingerstein	John Walter	Joseph Watkins	Joshua Green
	James Woodbridge	Sam ^l . Beachcroft	Davis, Thracken & C ^o
	Caralet & Cook C ^o	Tho ^s . Newnham	Abel C macaulay
	Alexand ^r . Grant		
Rob ^t . Martin	James Graham		Brook Watson
Jn ^o Taylor Vaughan	Pagret Herring		Pinney & Sibley
			Benjan Blundell
DeGruchy & Fiott	John Campbell		Clark & Milligan
Peter & John Berthon	Charles Bern ^d . Higgins		Jas Mill
James Phyt	Tho. Haddock		Noah Lefras
Josiah & Jam ^s . Beydell	Rob ^t . Woodmass		Jam ^s . Baillie
			Geo Hooper
Isaac Thompson	Roebuck & Henckell		Tim ^o & W ^m Curtis
Thomas Croft	Nath Modegleani		John Weskitt.
John Fraser	Rob ^t . Wilson		Hurbbert & Donovan
Mich ^l . Power & Comp ^y	T S Jackson		Jn ^o Shoolbred
Rob ^t . Stupart	John Sherer		John Batnes
John Stevens	Weave & Aislabri		Tho ^s . Eden
Will ^m . Spurrier	Thomas Sedgwick		Benjamin Eyre & C ^o
Ja ^s Bennett Son's & Cure	Greg ^{ry} . Olive & C ^o		Chris ^t . Court
John Sowerby	Robert Thornton		Rob ^t . Barnewall
Joseph Ballmer	G. b De Morsier for B Lurguand		Joseph Denison
Chris ^t . Hake	John Whitmere Sen ^r & Jun ^c		Vander Meulen & Jowett
D Gilet Co	Tho ^s . Carter		Henry Wildman
Ja ^s Bradley	John Alder		Thwait & Ridley
Ja ^s . Seager	Hibbert Purrier & Horton		Jn ^o . & Tho ^s . Kirwan
W ^m . Webster	Thomas Gildart		Camdens & Co.
Read Rigby & Darby	Sam ^l Bean		W ^m . Ward
Quarles Harris C	Langston & Dixon		
And ^w . Thimean	And. Donaldson		
John Fergusson			
Joseph Jaques Co.			

DS, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 78/305, 139.

JAMES GARDOQUI TO ARTHUR LEE

[Extract]

Hon^{ble} Arthur Lee Esq^r

Dear Sir

Madrid 24th. Nov^{re} 1777.

Your much esteem'd favours 20th. ult^o. & 6th. Ins^t. are now before me, in answer to which you may depend on my best efforts towards serving our mutual freind M^r Ross to whom shall inform of what occurs with his cargoe of flour, which thus farr I find remains in Coruna to the number of 2009. Bils.

I doubt not but the Conductt of some of the Privateers must have given you concern, but hope you have 'ere now settled this delicate point to the entire satisfaction of all parties, & that no such accidents will happen in future.

In mine of the 27th. ult^o. I promis'd you that as soon as I shou'd receive orders to ship the sundry articles for the other side of the watter, I shou'd without loosing a moment begin to ship them, & I once more repeatt the same, but must inform you that no such order have as yet reced, & cou'd wish to have it as soon as possible, as the latter it comes to hand it will be the worse, so pray consider.

With respectt to the value of the fifty thousand Livres you desire me to employ, I have given orders to my house in Bilbao to comply therewith doubting not but their bills to said sum will be punctually paid as you tell me, so refer you to my said house on this head. By letters from said house I find a prize made by an American Privateer is gott there from Burdeaux consign'd to an Irish house call'd Lynch & C^o. who are on the other side of your question, & as I understand that the same & another that was sent before were recomended to said L. & C^o. by your Burdeaux freinds Mess^{rs}. Delaps, I beg you wou'd exert yourself in getting those Gentlemen to recomend in future to my said house, as I think my attachment & services to the cause deserves it, & besides shou'd any difficulty arrise about the vessells, I shall not dare to serve the owners unless they are under my own people, & pray excuse it. Your private or particular advise about the sailors in England was comunicated as you desir'd. . . .

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (84). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

November 25

JOHN AND THOMAS KIRWAN TO LORD WEYMOUTH

My Lord

At the request of our Correspondents Mess^{rs}. Pat McGuire & Sons of Dublin We beg Leave to trouble your Lordship with the following relation respecting the Capture by an American Privateer of the Ship *Brothers*—Cap^t. Nich^s. Kelly bound from Dublin to Oporto. which Vessell our said Correspondents had put under Portugeese Colours hoping thereby to avoid such Capture. By the Captains Protest at S^t. Andero & his Confirmation thereof here it appears that the Ship saild from Dublin on the 16th. of Sep^r last Laiden with Linnen's Butter &c. for Oporto & on the 24th. day of said month fell in with a Large Cutter whom he endeavoured to avoid but the Weather becoming Calm the Cutter soon came up with her & fird a Gun under English Colours on which the Cap^t. hoisted Portugeese Colours & brought to. when he was ordered from the Cutter to get his Boat out & come on board with his papers which he did. the papers he brought on Board were his Portugeese pass & his Clearance from the Custom house of Dublin as a Portugeese Ship which Clearance was Granted by the Commissioners of his Majesties Customs there. the Privateer (who proved to be the *Revenge* Commanded by G Cunningham) Detaind the Captain on board for about 7 hours during which time they searchd his Ship for English papers & not finding any dismissd Him, with orders to keep Company all night detaining on board the Cutter two of Cap^t. Kellys Crew who he believes informd against the Ship as being an

English one. for on the 25th. between 7 & 8 OClock in the morning the Cutter (who stuck close all night) orderd Cap^t. Kelly to hoist his Boat out & send her on Board which he comply'd with & in a short time after they put 9 or 10 men in the Boat, Took possession of the Ship & orderd all the Ships Crew, on board the Cutter & by what Cap^t. Kelly could Learn they were directed to carry her into Nantes on the 28th. Sepr. they met with a Spanish Brig from the Havannah to S^t. Andero on board of which they putt the Cap^t. Mate & passengers who were Landed at S^t. Andero on the 2^d. Oct^r. by advices receivd afterwards from Mess^{rs}. McGuire & Sons we find the Ship was sent into Coruna in Spain & there Claimd by part of the Crew as Portugeese property as this Claim cannot be maintaind (tho we are in hopes has servd as a detention of the Ship) till there Can be a proper one made in the support of which we request the favour of Your Lordships protection We have the honour to be [&c.]¹

Riches Court Lime Street

Jn^o & Tho^s. Kirwan

25th. Nov^r. 1777—

L, UklPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 336. Addressed: "To—/The R^t Honb^{le}. Lord Visc^t. Weymouth & c. c. c./These—." Docketed: "Riches Court Lime Street/25 Nov^r 1777/Mess^{rs} John & Tho^s Kirwan/R. 26th." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 28 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 330–31.

1. For Conyngham's account of the capture see Gustavus Conyngham to Silas Deane, 3 Oct. 1777, above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON

Captⁿ Thompson

Paris 25th Novem^r 1777

Sir

We advise you on your return to L'Orient to put your Ship in readiness for Sea, Cap^t Hinman will do the same, and after you have obtained the best intelligence to be had, of the British Merchant Ships, & Commerce to pursue the Course, which you judge best for intercepting and making prizes on Our Enemies Ships, & property. As it is by no means safe to return into the Ports of France, you will calculate your Stores, so as to have a sufficiency for your cruise, which we cannot indeed be particular in the Direction of; it was been suggested that one or more of the India Ships returning may be intercepted—That part of the West India homeward bound Ships are expected about This Time, as well as Transports returning from Newyork, and elsewhere in America and that by cruising in the proper Latitudes You may meet with them.—That the British Factories and Commerce on the African Coast are at this Time without any Force sufficient to protect them, and that by running along that Coast you may greatly annoy, and distress the Enemy in that Quarter, and afterwards go for the West Indies. As you & Cap^t Hinman, have already considered these several plans for a Cruise, We leave with you to determine which to prefer, & the manner in prosecuting either, or any other that may appear more likely to Answer the design of your Commission.

We are happy in observing the harmony, & Confidence which subsists between you and Cap^t Hinman, and hope the same prevails among your Officers & Men which we are certain you will attentively cultivate through the whole of your Expedition, in which We recommend to you, to avoid giving any offence to the Flags of Neutral powers, & to shew them proper Marks of Respect, & Friendship. As you may meet with Vessels of the Enemy, so near the Coast of Europe, that you may be under the

Necessity of sending them into some Port of France, advise you to agree with Mess^{rs}. Goulade &c on the method of conduct in such Case previous to your departure, and give Orders to the Officers, to whom you give the Command of such Prizes, accordingly thereto—whenever You judge it prudent to dismiss Prisoners, subjects of his Brittannic Majesty, We advise you To take from Them in writing an Acknowledgement of their having been your Prisoners, their Quality, Place of Residence, and that they are dismissed by you in Confidence that an equal Number of the Subjects of the Thirteen United States of the same Rank that Now are or may hereafter be Prisoners to his s^d Brittannic Majesty will be set at Liberty. You are also to deliver a Copy of such Writing to The Prisoners enjoining them to deliver the same on their Arrival in Brittain, to the Lords of the British Admiralty, and by the first Opportunity, inclose a Duplicate to the Committee or Board of Marine in Boston, and another to Us, with an Acc^t of your proceedings. We shall Deliver Cap^m. Hinman Copy of this Letter, who will proceed in Concert with you in the Cruise. With best Wis[hes]

Copy, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 2, 390. Another copy is in the Arthur Lee Papers, MH-H.

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

Paris 25. 9^{bre}. 1777.

Vous avez reçu, Monsieur, les ordres d'arrêter le S^c [?] Fautret Capitaine du Navire l'*amphitrite* et Je compte que vous les aurez mis à exécution. Il sera nécessaire maintenant de l'interroger sur les points ce-après.

1^e. Savoir les raisons qu'il a eut, de changer la destination de son Batiment. les Procés Verbaux qu'il a remis et que vous m'avez envoyés ne prouvent outre chose qu'une condescendance déplorée de sa part—d'autant plus reprehensible, qu'il ne pouvoit ignorer qu'il étoit le maître absolu de son Batiment et qu'en conséquence il devoit faire usage de son autorité en S'oposant a toute assemblée et a tout avis contraires.

2^e. Pourquoi il a pris une Cargaison de Ris et d'indigo et pourquoi il n'a pas été dans la Baye de Cheapeach prendre un chargement de Tabac; point Capital sur lequel il faut s'étendre.

3^e. lui demander quelles étoient les nouvelles quel'on avoit reçues des américaines lors[q]u[e] son départ de Charles-Town.

Enfin le questionner surtout cequi peut être relatif à son expedition et à l'inexécution de ses instructions; et aussitôt que vous aurez fait subir cet Interrogation de ce Capitaine vous voudrez bien me l'adresser sans delai. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

Vous Jugez bien que cet Interrogation ne doit pas être Juridique.

[Translation]

Paris 25 November 1777

You have received, Sir, the orders to arrest the Sieur Fautret, captain of the ship *Amphitrite*, and I am relying on you to carry them out. It will now be necessary to question him on the following points:

1) To ascertain the reasons that he had in changing the destination of his ship. The official reports that he submitted and which you sent to me prove nothing else than

a deplorable condescension on his part, all the more reprehensible since he could not be unaware that he was the absolute master of his vessel, and that consequently he ought to have made use of his authority in opposing all assembly and all contrary opinions.

2) Why he took on a cargo of rice and indigo and why he was not in Chesapeake Bay to take on a cargo of tobacco, a capital point upon which we must enlarge.

3) To ask him what was the news that they had received of the Americans at the time of his departure from Charleston.

Finally, to question him about everything that can be relative to his voyage and the non-execution of his instructions, and as soon as you shall have questioned this captain, you will please inform me without delay. I am [&c.]

de sartine

You understand well that this questioning-ought not to be judicial.

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 153. Addressed at foot of first page: "M. Gonet." Notation: "R. le 1^{re} X^e"; "Received the 1st of December."

VERBAL INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO JEAN HOLKER

[Extract]

Instruction verbale donnée à M. Holker le 25. 9^{bre}. 1777

... On doit l'attendre qu'on Se plaindra du peu de faveur que prouvent les Corsaires. Mais on doit faire sentir que toute Puissance que se respecte, se doit à Elle-même de remplir les obligations qu'elle s'est imposée par les traités; et qu'en rendant ces traités communes aux américains, c'est les mettre au niveaux de toutes les nations indépendantes; d'ailleurs les prises que ces Corsaires peuvent faire dans les mer d'Europe n'enrichement point les Etats-unis, tandis que la présence de ces même Corsaires inquiète le commerce, donne l'éveil aux anglais, les oblige à des croisières plus nombreuses et plus serrées, ce qui intercepte le commerce des américains mêmes, et les prise des ressources qu'ils entroient.

Il ne faut pas omettre de faire connoître combien la France et l'Espagne ont lieu d'être blessés des différents atteintes commis par des Corsaires contre leur pavillon. des bâtiment François ont été pris en Europe et conduit en Amérique sous prétexte que leur cargaison étoit angloise; exception à la quelle les deux puissances ne peuvent souscrire; d'autres ont été visités, maltraités, spoliés dans différents parages: on s'attend que la réparation la plus prompte aura lieu.

Sinformer. . . .

Qu'elle est la situation de sa marine: qu'els fonds en y employe: Quels sont les prix auxquels on y Construit, Combien on peut lever de matelots; qu'el seroit le nombre des matelots François à leur service? Qu'els sont les articles dont on pourroit avoir le plus grand besoin pour l'usage de la marine. . . .

Qu'elle est la situation de la marine Angloise? qu'elle croisiere tiennent leurs navires armés en guerre; Combien elle employe de matelots.

Qu'elle est la situation des ports de mer américains, s'il y a des forts érigés pour en défendre l'entrée; si on établit quelque croisiere pour éloigner les vaisseaux de guerre anglais & protéger les vaisseaux marchands. . . .

[Translation]

Verbal instruction given to M. Holker on the 25th November 1777

... It may be expected that complaints will be made [*by leaders in Congress*] of the little favor which the [*American*] privateers experience [*in French ports*]. But they must be made to feel that every power which respects itself owes it to itself to fulfil those obligations it has imposed on itself by treaties; and that by making these treaties common to the Americans they are put on a level with all other independent nations; besides, the captures which these privateers may make in the European seas do not enrich the United States, whilst their presence disturbs commerce, gives the alarm to the English, obliges them to make more numerous and more intense cruises, thus intercepting the commerce of these very Americans, and depriving them of the resources they were drawing from it.

It must not be omitted to make known to them how much France and Spain have reason to be offended at the various outrages committed by privateers against their flag. French vessels have been captured in Europe, and taken to America, on the pretext that their cargo was English, a distinction to which the two powers cannot subscribe: others have been searched, ill-treated, despoiled in various regions: it is expected that most prompt reparation will be made. . . .

To find out. . . .

What is the condition of its [*Congress's*] navy; what money is used for it; what are the prices at which they build; how many sailors can be raised; what would be the number of French sailors in their service? What are the articles which would be most required for the use of the navy? . . .

What is the condition of the English navy? What route are their armed vessels following? How many sailors are employed?

What is the condition of the American seaports; whether there are any forts erected to prevent entrance thereto; whether cruisers are despatched to keep off the English warships and protect merchant vessels? . . .

D, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1748. Notation: "Etats unis 25 9^{bre}. 1777"; "United States 25 Nov. 1777." The French ministry had asked Jean Holker, a French merchant planning to sail to America, to report on conditions in America and, in an unofficial capacity, to let leaders there know that the French government was doing its best to oblige American commerce. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 238.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen.

(N^o 90)

Nantes Nov. 25. 1777.

M^r Peltier has recv^d his Instructions from M^r Montieu, but they are not exactly similar to yours, M^r Montieu intending to put all his Goods on board the *Chalotais*, & I prefer putting as much of yours as I can on board of this Ship, which by the tenor of your agreement it appears I have liberty to do; however rather than have any further Difficulty or delay, I have consented to go on loading provided that M Peltier will insure me a place on board of this Ship for at least 240 Cases of arms. I did this because I think both Ships equally good except some advantage the *Chalotais* has in point of Sailing, and because your agreement being a better one than I imagine we could make again were it now to be broken, I think it best to obviate difficulties rather than make them; we are therefore loading all three Ships and we shall go on with all

possible dispatch. I must however observe to you that it does not appear to be the Intention of M^r Montieu to send his Ships to the Northw^d of Virginia. The *Lion* therefore cannot accompany them the whole way.—

As it will be impossible to release the *Dolphin* 'till I have some other place to keep my men, I cannot put her to sale 'till the *Lion* goes away.—I have in the mean time ordered an Inventory of her to be taken and shall try for a purchase.—

I have just recvd M^r Deans favour of the 21st, and shall next post send you Cap^t Adams's narrative properly authenticated.—I have the Honour to be [&c.]

J Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Hon^{ble}/The Commissioners of/the United States." Docketed: "M^r Jon^e Williams Nantes/Nantes 25 Novem^r 77/to/Hon: Com^{rs}: U.S." and "(N^o 90)."

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGBAM TO SILAS DEANE

Sir.

Crona. [*Corunna, Spain*] Nov^r. 25. 1777

I have wrote Several times Since we have Come into this part of Country Acquainting As fully as the times will permitt, I have had no Answer to any one Letter, this I partly Can Account for. you have been inform^d by m^r Lagoanere of the proceedings heare the Last prize I brought in heare, A Vessell from Newfound^l And have Dispos^d off And Sorry to enforme you at A Low prise At my Arrivall heare I petitiond for Dischargd as the Vessll Was Leaky it Would not be Granted Untill Orders from Court, in the time I was Offerd. They Sums of And they weare to Run All risque Whatsoever, in Consequence of your Letter to m^r Lagoanere² I Consented to the prise Offerd, tho much Against my Inclinations, I have the pleasure to enforme you that the order from Court Arrived With the Liberty to Discharge and Sell. this itselfe is Some Small Satisfaction as it partly paves the Way for Others, I am know [now] Ready and fitted for Sea the Vessell I must enforme you is not fitt for to Cruze in those Seas in the Winter, After I go out if I find the Weather Mod^s. I Shall Continue on this Coast to the Middle of next month in hopes to be able to intercept the fish men but if the Weather will not permitt I Shall push for the west indies or the Continent, the Brig I took in the North Seas that Cap^t Bailey went Master of I Can not learn any thing off³ I am much Afraid She is taken Or Some Accident is happend: if She is taken I must beg of you to Make enquirries of a young Lad the Name of Redmond henderson born in phil^d. and his mother lives theare and Much Respected in the City She will Really Go Distracted if She Comes to heare he is taken my Motive for Sending him in the Brig to be Out of the way of Dangere, I have Seen in the papers that An American the name of hodge is Released Out of the Bastielle if so I Congratuated him I am Sure he will have recompense for his Captivity, You may Assure him I Shall Do all in my power—I wrote you Some time Agoe in Respect of my people I have Assurd them that for the Distruction the[y] have Done and for what the[y] Can do the[y] will be recompenced At their Arrivall in the Continent, as m^r Carmichel Diserd I Should ensure them this I have Done I have not the least Doubt but you have represented to the honourable Congress the Nessity their is to take this into Consideration for the encouragment of Seamen, the Disbursments heare is pay^d. Out of the prise of the prize, the rest to the Am^t of &c. is to be at your Order, I⁴ have not time to write you fully on this hear, theare being An english Ves-



Captain Gustavus Conyngham

sell in the Offing And I am trying if possible to be Able to pays my Respects to her before She Can Gett in—

LB, UKLPR; H.C.A. 32/441/7, pt. 1.

1. Ship *Two Brothers*. See Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 7 Nov. 1777, above.
2. See Silas Deane to Lagoanere and Company, 19 Oct. 1777, above.
3. Brig *Northampton*, Thomas Hall, was retaken by the tender *Kitty*, Lieutenant John Moore, R.N. See NDAR 9:517–19.
4. The rest of the letter is crossed through.

JOSEPH HARDY TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o. 29.

Cadiz 25th Nov^r. 1777

My Lord,

In my last I mentioned to your Lordship my suspicion of two French Vessels fitting out in this Port as Privateers. One of them an American built Sloop called the *Esperance* Pierre Reynowe Master has been compleatly equipped with ten carriage Guns, and upwards of fifty Men. She sailed from hence this morning cleared out for Port au Prince but, I am certain she is bound to Charles Town in Virginia, and has on board a considerable quantity of Arms and Ammunition. inclosed I send Your Lordship a Copy of the Office I passed to the Governor on this occasion to which I have received no answer.¹ I have since had a long conference with the Captain General Count O Reilly on the Subject, who plainly told me that neither He nor the Governor could do any thing to prevent proceedings of this nature with regard to the French Ships having no Orders from Court. the Other Vessel calld the *Marquise de Cassigny* Pierre Falmont Master is still here ready to sail, she is mounted with Sixteen Guns and has on board fifty men. I am assured by the French Consul that she is bound to S^t Domingo.

I have acquainted his Majesty's Ambassador Lord Grantham with every particular of this affair and have given the necessary information to Vice Admiral Man at Gibraltar. . . . I am [&c.]

Jos^h Hardy

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 391–92. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The Right Hon^{ble}. Lord Visc^t. Weymouth." Docketed: "Cadiz. 25 Nov^r. 1777./Consul Hardy/R. 20 Dec^r/(N^o. 29)/1. Inclosure."

1. Joseph Hardy to the Spanish Governor in Cadiz, 22 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*, fol. 393. That letter adds that the sloop arrived in Cadiz from Beaufort, N.C., under a French flag with no cannon and only eleven men. Hardy asserted that it now was equipped with ten guns and fifty men and requested that the governor order the vessel to leave Cadiz equipped the same way it entered.

November 26

THOMAS ERSKINE TO THE EARL OF SUFFOLK

[Extract]

N^o. 11—

Gothenburg 26th. Novem^r. 1777.

My Lord—

Since I last had the honour of writing your Lordship, A quantity of Upwards of 200 Casks of Gun-Powder has been shipped on board of a Swedish Sloop at Marstrand;

I have certain Intelligence that she Accompanys Cap^t Woodhouse Vessell¹ to Sea, where he receives the Powder, or if the Weather does not permit, he carries the Sloop with him to some port in Norway there to Unload her—

In the Swedish Pasport which he lately got from Stockholm, he is called Cap^t Trähus & his Brig the *Sjörene*, she has now got quarter Cloths, painted blau & Yellow, her head (as formerly described) a Woman with a Secpter [*Scepter*]; he is very poorly manned; if he meets bad Weather in going North about, I think it probable that he will be oblidged to put into some Harbour in Shetland or the Orkneys—²

The two American Schooners are not offering yet to stir! The Herring Fishing on this Coast is very successfull this Season—. . .

Tho^s. Erskine

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 95/127. Addressed at foot: "The R^t Hon^{ble}. Earl of Suffolk." Marginal notation: "Extract Sent to the Admiralty." This entire extract was marked to be copied for the Admiralty. The portion not printed here is a brief paragraph acknowledging news of the birth of a British princess.

1. Brigantine *Molly*.

2. Woodhouse sailed from Marstrand on 9 Dec., accompanied by the sloop with the powder on board. Erskine had "strong suspicion that his Crew will force him to put into some Harbour in Britain, most likely the Orkneys." Erskine to Suffolk, 20 Dec. 1777, *ibid*.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN AT GOTTENBURGH, IN SWEDEN,
TO HIS FRIEND AT EDINBURGH, NOV. 26."

"I wrote you formerly, that the Americans had begun a considerable trade with this country. Three American vessels still remain here. The *Molly*, Treehouse,¹ who has taken on board a Swedish mate and several Swedish sailors, is now at Mastrand ready to sail for America. He was stopped some days, owing to the Agent for the Congress here sending on board some cannon, which appeared to give offence to the Governor of Mastrand. However, that is got over, and Mr. Treehouse is taking in his powder, consisting of 300 barrels.

"It is true, gunpowder is not allowed to be publicly shipped on board the American ships, but to remedy this, it is put on board a Swedish sloop which goes along with Mr. Treehouse's ship a little to the offing of Mastrand, where it is now shipping. Treehouse threatens to pay a visit at Orkney or Shetland as he goes north about. The other two American vessels are loading in the same manner, but will not be ready to sail before Christmas."

London Chronicle, 3–6 Jan. 1778.

1. Woodhouse.

THE LONDON PACKET, OR NEW LLOYD'S EVENING POST (LONDON),
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, TO WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1777

London.

The *Edward*, Cheevers, from London to St. Ubes, in ballast, was taken off Cape Finisterre the 19th by a rebel privateer called the *True American*, who plundered her of sails, cables, and most of her rigging, and intended to burn her, but after being solicited by capt. Cheevers, gave her up to him, and he arrived at St. Ubes the 27th ult.

INTERROGATION OF CAPTAIN ARY KUNST

Copy.

Translation.

Appeared before the Commissaires of the College of Admiralty of the Maese, Capt. Ary Kunst, commanding the Ship *Jan Gerard*; who hath answered, as is noted to each Article.

Interrogatories made by the Council of the Admiralty of the Maese, in the Name and for M^r Gerard Daniel Denick, Councillor & Advocate Fiscal in the said College of Admiralty, to examine Capt. Ary Kunst, commanding the Ship *Jan Gerard* upon.

1.

Ary Kunst says he is about 52. Years of Age, Native of Schiedam, being a Seaman from his Youth.

1.

Name, Age, Place of Birth and Profession.

2.

Yes.

2.

If he does not command the Merchant Ship the *Jan Gerard*?

3.

About 6. Years in this Ship, and before in a Ship of the same Owner about the Space of 17. Years.

3.

How long he has been Captain of her?

4.

Yes, that he was freighted at Nantes, but that he loaded a part in the Road of Quimperlee, & the rest in the River of Quimperlee, lying Westward of Vannes, known to the Seafaring People by the Name of Craak, about 6 or 7. Miles by Guess from the River of Nantes.

4.

If he comes last from the River of Nantes?

5.

Says to have sailed from Corke in Ireland with Ballast to Nantes, to get a Freight there.

5.

If he sailed from hence directly to Nantes, & if he then came from any other Place; & if so, from where?

6.

Answered in the former Article.

6.

If he is able to say with what Goods he arrived at Nantes?

7.

To M^r Odiette at Nantes.

7.

To what House he was consigned?

8.

He arrived there in Ballast.

8.

If he discharged his Loading at Nantes which he carried there?

9.

Yes.

10.

Says as in Article 4. partly in the Road of Quimperlee, or Craak, & in the River of that Name.

11.

Answered as before.

12.

Out of a Frigate.

13.

Says, that he loaded it out of a Frigate, but does not know, if it was an English Frigate, that the whole Crew was French, & That the French Flag was flying above. Says further, that the French Flag was not flying above, but a Stern, & that she appeared English built, but is not however able to say, that it was an English Ship, & all that he can say, is, that it was a large Ship, upon which he did not see any Name.

14.

Says, he knows nothing about that.

15.

No.

16.

Yes.

17.

Yes, that both the Bills of Lading & Passports are with his Bookkeeper M^r Adrianus Dubbeldemuts.

9.

If he is freighted from the same House with the Loading, with which he is now arrived.

10.

If he did not take in this Loading without the River of Nantes at Sea?

11.

In what Latitude he took in this Loading?

12.

If he is able to say, out of what Vessel or Vessels he loaded the Sugar & Campechy Wood?

13.

If it is not true, that he loaded the Sugar out of an English Frigate called the *Manning*?

14.

If this Frigate was not taken [by] an American Privateer?

15.

If he did not hear that she was formerly commanded by Capt Brewer of London?

16.

If he had proper Passports from the Admiralty at Nantes, for [his] taking in of this Sugar?

17.

If he had un Acquit à Caution? & if he hath also proper Bills of Lading of his Cargo?

18.

No, and does not know whether this Ship was at Nantes or not.

19.

Yes.

20.

Says, that he does not know the real loader, that there was a Commander on board, but that he did not hear him named, & that he imagines, that a Frenchman, whose Name he cannot recollect, had the chief Direction of it Says further, that the Name of the Frenchman (as he now remembers) was M^r de Coenen, living at Nantes. Says also further, that he cannot recollect what Name is in the Bills of Lading, but that he received his Papers from M^r de Coenen, and the Passports from the Broker Odiette.

21.

He knows nothing about that.

22.

Answers as before, he knows nothing about it.

23.

That the Gentleman that he remembers to have had the principal Direction in the unloading was now & then on board his Ship, but that the other, whose Name he never knew, but he was a Frenchman, remained always on board, and that he must declare he knows nothing about the Privateer.

24.

Yes, at Nantes, and it was also lying at his Bookkeeper's.

18.

If he did not know that the Privateer which brought this Frigate up to Nantes, was departed with her Prize?

19.

If the Sugar came out of the same Vessel as the Campechy Wood.

20.

If he knows the Name of the Person that loaded the Sugar, and if so, to name him?

21.

If he has any Knowledge of the Name of the Privateer, that took the English Frigate.

22.

If the Ship had been taken a long time, before the Sugar was unloaded?

23.

Whether the Person that unloaded the Ship was on board the Privateer, or in the Ship which the Sugar was taken out of?

24.

Whether a Charter Party was made out for this Loading, & if so, where [is it?]

25.

Says no, that he sailed from Corke to Nantes to look for a Freight, & that he lay above three Weeks at Nantes, before this Freight offered.

26.

At the same Place, in or near Craak out of the same Ship.

(Signed) Ary Kunst.

Thus examined, answered and undersigned after all the Answers were repeated over again, to the Person examined, who Persisted in them.

Held before the Court of Admiralty of the Maese this 26th November 1777.

(Signed.) L. V. Berg.

W. Count of Hogendorp

In my presence, in the absence of the Secretary

(Signed.) A. Nahuys.

Collated with the Original, Secretary being absent

(Signed) Seger Terens

25.

If he was not sent directly out of the River of Nantes to take this Cargo on board, without the River?

26.

Where he loaded the three Bales of Wool, that stand upon his General Invoice.

Translation, UkLPR, S.P. Foreign 84/558. Enclosed in Sir Joseph Yorke to the Earl of Suffolk, 28 Nov. 1777. On receiving information that American privateers were attempting to surmount difficulties in disposing of their prizes in the ports of France "by unloading the Cargoes into Dutch Vessels in the open Sea," and that a Dutch vessel had just arrived at Rotterdam from Nantes with a cargo of sugar suspected to have been obtained in such a manner, Sir Joseph Yorke, British ambassador to the Hague, asked the Grand Pensionary of Holland, Pieter van Bleiswijk, to intervene and frustrate this fraud. (Yorke to Suffolk, 25 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*) On 28 Nov. Yorke sent Suffolk this translation of the admiralty court's examination of the master of the Dutch ship, the text of which the Grand Pensionary had provided. (Yorke to Suffolk, 28 Nov. 1777, *ibid.*) On 2 Dec. Yorke learned that the Amsterdam owners of the ship had had the sugar unloaded and secured in town, where the admiralty court had no jurisdiction. (Yorke to Suffolk, 2 Dec. 1777, *ibid.*)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO BÉRARD FRÈRES & CO.

Gentlemen,

Paris Nov^r 26. 1777—

Yours of the 17th is before us, our Letter by your Express will direct you how to proceed with the Cargo of the *Amphitrite*, The Ship herself is at the Order of M^r Peltier, and the sooner he has her the better, but the Cargo is at ours

In regard to which we have nothing to alter from the Directions given in our former untill you favour us with an Answer to our last—The Expences of repairing &c the Two Frigates¹ Cap^t Thompson will settle with you, to whom we refer on the Subject—The Expence of sending the Prisoners to England must be taken out of the Gross amount of the Prizes before the division is made

We observe what you propose as to the Ship lately bought by you and others but are of opinion that an Exchange between that Ship & Cap^t Hinman cannot be effected without too much delay, & loss of Time—By the description given us of the Ship it appears to us, that if she were loaded out with Salt or other heavy Goods for Boston & the Vessel sold there, it will be the best Plan that can be pursued on which we refer you to Cap^t Thompson & Cap^t Hinman whom we have Consulted on the

subject, and shall be glad that you will write to us after your Conferring with them what you determine upon—

Cap^t Thompson & Cap^t Hinman will direct the Division of the Prize Money agreeable to the Rules of Congress in such Cases

We are [&c.]

BF—SD

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "Mess^{rs}. Berrard freres & C^o. L'Orient."

1. Continental Navy ship *Alfred* and Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*.

CONDE DE ARANDA TO CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA

[Extract]

N^o. 1178

Ex^{to}mo S^{or}.

Mui señor mio: En la expedicion de V.E. de 23. Octubre que recibió Dⁿ. Ignacio Heredia en mi ausencia, los n^{os}. 2. y 11. tratan de asuntos de los Americanos; en aquel¹ se manifiestan las intenciones del Rey de ayudarlos competemente; y en este² se explica S.M. justamente disgustado del exceso cometido por un Corsario Insurgente³ apresando la embarcacion Francesa la *Fortunée* cargada con generos para el Comercio de Cadiz, por la sola razon de serlo Ingleses, y venir de aquellos puertos.

Mandabame S.M. hacer à ésta Corte la explicacion correspondiente; y la evacuó inmediatamente Dⁿ. Ignacio Heredia con copia que entregó del Oficio de V.E. à M^{re} Devergennes. Igualmente queria el Rey que yo hiciese entender à los Diputados no solo la restitution de la presa con total resarcimiento de los perjuicios causados, sino tambien unas eficaces providencias para que en lo sucesivo se evitasen iguales atentados.

Para evacuar ésta parte, luego que me restituí, llamé à M^{re} Grand el interlocutor reconocido como V.E. sabe; le comuniqué quanto debía, y desde luego el mismo me manifestó el sentimiento con que se hallaban Franklin, Deane, y Lee, habiendosabido por el S^r Conde Devergennes el suceso, y el sumo desagrado del Rey Catholico: quedó en trasladar à dichos Diputados mi explicacion, y sus requisitos, y volvió en el siguiente día à manifestarme de parte de ellos la mas sumisa disposicion, à quanto pudiese satisfacer à S.M., y contribuir à evitar que se repitiesen semejantes desordenes.

Aseguróme M^{re} Grand que por primera ocasion escribirían al Congreso para la restitution de la presa, y resarcimiento de sus daños, como tambien para que con el mayor rigor impusiese à los Corsarios la continencia debida; y aun para remediar de pronto en lo posible comunicarían à sus corresponsales en los diferentes puertos de Europa una orden, para hacerla saber à todos los bastimentos Americanos que arribasen a fin de instruirlos, y encargarles que à quantos encontrasen de su Nacion en sus navegaciones, les previniesen la conducta que debían observar, para no incurrir en acciones de ésta naturaleza.

En uno de los dias pasados me trajo M^{re} Grand el borrador de una Memoria que pensaban pasarme los Diputados para dirigirla à mi Corte como en satisfaccion de lo ocurrido, manifestando su sentimiento, y ofreciendo practicar quanto les fuese dable en prueba de su respeto por los Soberanos de Borbon. Preguntéle si la habia visto M^{re} Devergennes, y respondiendome que no, le dixe que practicasen con S.E. el mismo paso de exponersela; y que aquello que M^{re} Devergennes aprobase, ò corrigiese, sería igualmente mi dictamen.

El 21. estube en Versailles, y pregunté à M^r Devergenes si el Banquero Grand había cumplido con mi encargo de hacerle ver la Memoria dispuesta por los Diputados, diciendole al propio tiempo que yo me remitía à lo que S.E. arreglase; y me aseguró que si, y haberle prevenido, que suprimiesen la proposicion que hacian de que entrasen en los puertos de ambas Coronas abiertamente sus corsarios con las presas, y que los Almirantazgos juzgasen desde luego las que fuesen hechas en debida forma, y las que practicadas fuera de las reglas corrientes; porque el admitir francamente los armadores con las presas hechas, era autorizar su Corso; y para que los Almirantazgos de por si tomasen conocimiento de las que se introdugesen, no necesitaban del permiso ò consentimiento de los Insurgentes.

Volviome à ver M^r Grand, y habiendo quedado en que yo recibiría la Memoria que por M^r Devergenes se hallase corriente, me ha trahido la que acompaño à V.E.⁴

Ha estado à verme M^r Lee, para hacerme saber, que había recibido letras credenciales del Congreso, que lo autorizaban directamente para España, y me indicó si pasaría personalmente à noticiarlo: Respondile, que en ninguna forma, por subsistir las propias razones que anteriormente, y por ser suficiente que me Corte lo supiese para algun caso necesario. . . .⁵

Dios g^c. à V.E. m^s. a^s. Paris 26. de Nov^{bre}. de 1777.

Ex^{mo}. S^r B. L. M. de VE. su seg^o. ser.

El Conde de Aranda

[Translation]

Dear Sir

In Your Excellency's packet dated October 23, received by Sir Ignacio Heredia in my absence, numbers 2 and 11 deal with the subject of the Americans. The former¹ expressed the King's intentions to give them adequate assistance and in the latter² His Majesty expresses justified displeasure with the immoderate act committed by an insurgent privateer³ in capturing the French ship la *Fortunée* laden with goods to sell in Cadiz, for the sole reason that these goods were English and it had come from English ports.

His Majesty asked me to make the proper explanations on this to this court, and Sir Ignacio Heredia did this immediately, sending a copy from Your Excellency's office to M. de Vergennes. The King also wanted me to ensure that I made the deputies realize, not just that they must return the spoils with total compensation for damages caused, but also that measures must be taken to ensure that such attacks will not happen again in the future.

To fulfill this part of the request, as soon as I returned, I called on M. Grand, their acknowledge spokesman, as you know. I spoke to him about that which was required and immediately he himself passed on to me the opinions held by Franklin, Deane and Lee, having learned through the Comte de Vergennes the result and the extreme displeasure of the Catholic King. He agreed to give my explication and its stipulations to these deputies and returned the next day to tell me that they had taken a very submissive stance with regard to satisfying His Majesty and avoiding a repetition of these disruptions.

M. Grand assured me that they would take the first opportunity to write to Congress to return the spoils, make compensation for damages, and impose due restraint on the privateers. Also, to remedy the situation as soon as possible, they would order their correspondents posted throughout Europe to inform all arriving

American ships and charge them, when they meet others from their nation sailing, to warn them of the conduct they must observe to avoid committing an act of this type.

In the last few days, M. Grand brought me the first draft of a memorial which the deputies thought to send me, to pass on to my court as an apology for the occurrence. It contained their sentiments and an offer to do whatever was possible as proof of their respect for the sovereigns of Bourbon. I asked him if M. de Vergennes had seen it, and he answered that he had not. I told him to show to His Excellency the same text of apology, and whatever M. de Vergennes would approve or correct would be my judgment as well.

On the 21st, I was in Versailles and I asked M. de Vergennes whether M. Grand the banker had complied with my request to show him the memorial submitted by the deputies, telling him at the same time that I was referring to the one His Excellency was to check. He told me yes, and that he preferred to delete the proposition they were making that their privateers could enter the ports of both crowns openly with the prizes and that the admiralty courts be allowed to judge at that time which items were taken rightly and which taken illegally, because openly to receive the privateers with their prizes would be to sanction their act, and the admiralty courts themselves did not need the insurgents' consent to take cognisance of the prizes they brought in.

I went back to see M. Grand and having agreed to receive the report that M. de Vergennes emended, I have brought the one I am enclosing to Your Excellency.⁴

M. Lee came to see me to let me know that he had received letters of credence from Congress, which authorized him directly for Spain, and asked me if he should come personally to notify me of it. I told him no, to continue as before, and it was enough that my court knew of it if needed. . . .⁵

God keep your Excellency many years. Paris November 26, 1777.

Most Excellent Sir, I kiss the hand of your Excellency, your devoted servant

El Conde de Aranda

L, SpVAS, legajo 4612. Addressed at foot of last page: "Ex^{mo}. Sr Conde de Floridablanca." Docketed: "Paris 26 de Nov^{bre} de 1777/El Conde de Aranda/Sobre varios puntos relativos a los Americanos; sus explió con los Diput^{os}. de ellos y tambien con el Ministerio Incluyo una memoira presentada por los primeros"; "Paris November 26, 1777/The Conde de Aranda/On various items relating to the Americans: the explanations from their deputies and also from the Ministry; includes a memorial presented by the Americans." The omitted passages deal with the French government's promises of support to the Americans, and its instructions to the emissary it was sending to Congress. For the instructions, see Verbal Instruction Given to Jean Holker, 25 Nov. 1777, extracted above, and, for the full text, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1748.

1. SpMAA, legajo 4072, expediente 201, pt. 2, no. 2.

2. Conde de Floridablanca to Conde de Aranda, 23 Oct., above.

3. Massachusetts privateer brigantine *Civil Usage*, Andrew Giddings, commanding.

4. American Commissioners in France to the French and Spanish Courts, 23 Nov. 1777, above.

5. Floridablanca's response is below, at 9 Dec.

ARTHUR LEE TO JOHN ROSS

The First

Abstract. part of a Letter received by John Ross from the Hon^{ble}— Arthur Lee Esq^r dated Chaillot 26 Nov^r 1777.

"M^r Deane has informed me that you have taken upon yourself to answer for the public Share in Cunnyngghams Vessel, I shall be obliged to you for informing me whether you understand it so."¹

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 83, vol. 2, p. 511 (M247, roll 110).

1. For the answer see John Ross to Arthur Lee, 3 Dec. 1777, below.

JOSEPH GARDOQUI & SONS TO ARTHUR LEE

[Extract]

Arthur Lee Esq^r

Bilbao the 26th. Nov^r. 1777.

Honour'd Sir

... We observe the directions you are pleased to give us in case any arm'd vessel in the service of the United States should send in here, or the adjacent Ports any prize,¹ which depend will Endeavour to follow with the strickest punctuality, butt as there is positive orders² loadg'd here, not to permitt the disposall of any prizes or prize goods, you can hardly Imagine the dificultys arizing from those dispositions, as such have now been ordered to Reship Two fish cargoes of the Kind landed for sale & see of cource no probability of Success.

We are offered almost weekly here any sums of money at the moderate Ratte of 3 ₤C^t ₤ anum, which have never admittted as thank God our Capitall is at present more than sufficient to carry on the commerciall Branches we are Engag'd in, however, should the Sum you Intend to deposit have the destination of being Invested in Articles to be shipt off from this port we would advance as farr as 4½ ₤C^t assuring you that this commerce is at present so limmitted, that it would be out of our power to draw out any proffitt on any other terms or yet suficient to pay the Interest thereof—... We are [&c.]

J: G. &^{ca}.

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (87). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1. See Arthur Lee to Cardoqui and Sons, 15 Nov. 1777, above.

2. The orders came from the Spanish crown. See Conde de Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

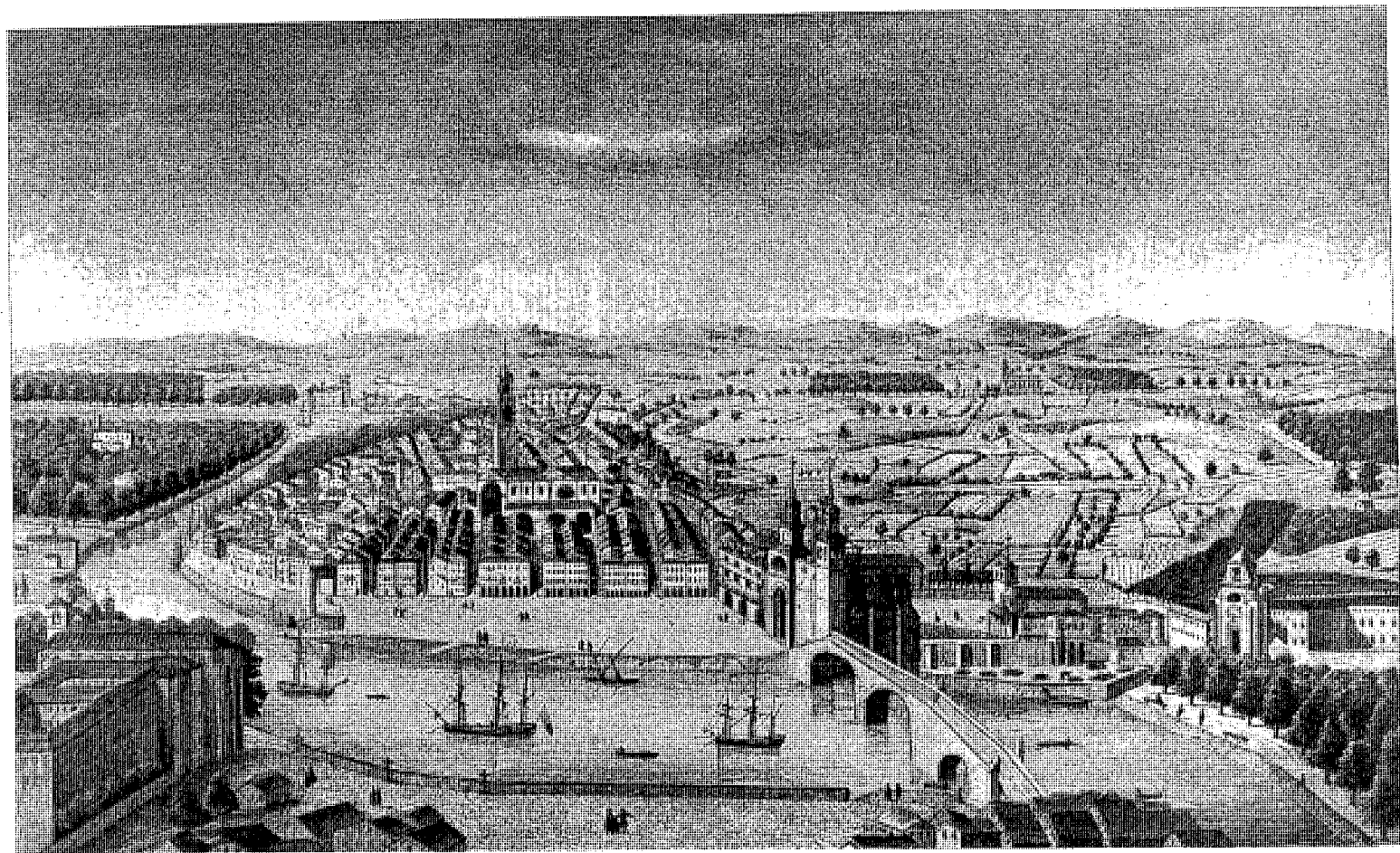
N^o. 71

Corunna 26th. Nov^r. 1777

My Lord.

I most humbly beg leave to refer to my last of the 19th. Instant.

The Next Day the Captain General being returned from Ferrol where he had been to inspect that Garrison, the Kings Lieutenant refer'd to him what had passed between us respecting the Seaman who made his Escape from Cunningham, I also waited upon him on the same Errand when he was pleased to tell me in Very good Humour that he thought the Kings Lieutenant had acted wrong, that if the Seaman was gone there was no help for it, and that he had just sent Cunningham fresh Orders to depart, and heartily wished him away. After such Language Your Lordship may judge how great was my Surprise the next Morning when I received Advice from



Ferrol that on the 20th: Instant at midnight the Seaman was forcibly carried away from on board the vessel to which I had sent him in order to take his Passage home by five of Cunningham's Crew assisted by two Soldiers, and that it appeared on Enquiry these men were sent to Ferrol the same morning in a Boat with Letters from the said Cunningham, and the Kings Lieutenant to the General, who thereupon gave Orders for committing this Outrage.

Tho' I have a great deal to apprehend from this Gentleman's Resentment, yet I could not pass over so flagrant an Act of Injustice and Partiality without taking some Notice of it, accordingly I drew up and immediately sent him the Representation of which I have the Honor to Inclose a Copy, together with a Copy of his Answer¹ the whole Tenour of which is without the least Foundation, for I knew nothing of the Seaman's Escape from the Privateer untill he applied to me for Assistance, and I beg Leave to assure Your Lordship that the General himself gave the Orders of which in his Answer he declares himself ignorant. It is impossible for me My Lord to push Things to further Extremity to obtain Redress here, but I have transmitted Lord Grantham the fullest and most exact Account of this Transaction in hopes His Excellency will be able to put a Stop to the further Continuance of such unfair Proceedings. I shall nevertheless continue on all Occasions to furnish the General and proper Officers with every Document with which I think I can counterbalance the false Returns under which the Rebels bring in their Prizes, but I do not know how this can be done in Bilboa where there is no British Agent of any Kind,² but I humbly conceive My Lord the private Appointment there of a Person with a small Salary to give immediate Information to the Proprietors of such Prizes as are brought in there, and to transmit regular Intelligence to His Majesty's Ambassador in Madrid would greatly contribute to His Majesty's Service. If Your Lordship shall think proper to confide the appointment of such a Person in me I flatter myself I shall be able to find a Person perfectly well qualified for it, and one whom I believe would give general Satisfaction.

I most humbly beg Leave to inclose a Letter for the Admiralty Office, and have the honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 388–89. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The Rt Hon^{ble}: Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Corunna 26 Nov: 1777./Consul Katencamp/R. 20th Dec^r/(N^o. 71.)/1 Inclosure."

1. See Herman Katencamp to Felix O'Neill, 22 Nov. 1777, and Felix O'Neill to Herman Katencamp, 22 Nov. 1777, above.

2. The British government was represented in Bilbao by Ventura Gomez de la Torre. See Lefras and Le Mesurier to Philip Stephens, 5 Nov. 1777, above.

November 27

VICE ADMIRAL JOHN MONTAGU TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN

Romney at Spithead
27th November 1777

My Lord

I have the Honor to acquaint you that I left my Government¹ the 31st of October, that every thing was very quiet, nor did I hear of any Privateers being on the Banks for near three Weeks before I sail'd

The Merchants suffered greatly in the first part of the Season by having many of their Bankers Plundered, and several taken away, the latter part of the season they have been much more successfull then they expected, and I believe their greatest distress is a want of Ships to carry their Fish, and Oil to market. from which large quantitys of both must remain in the Country until next Year

I am sorry it is not in my power to transmit your Lordship a State of the Fishery this Year, being obliged to keep the Men of War constantly Cruising on the Banks, which has prevented their going to collect the particulars in the several Harbours as usual.

The Fort on the South-Head at the Enterance of the Harbour² is completed, and ready for the Guns, which I expected, and was given to understand, was to be out this Year. for the want of which it remains useless, and may easily be destroyed by a Privateer for want of Guns, and Men. as both the Company of Royal Highland Emigrants, and the Company of Invalid Artillery Men, are mostly Old, and infirm, and not fit for Duty in so Cold a Climate as Newfoundland.

I beg leave to inclose to your Lordship the proceedings of the Court of Oyer, and Terminer, held at Saint Johns in October last,³ and am [&c.]

J: Montagu

L, UKLPR, C.O. 194/33, 138–39. Addressed at foot of first page: “Right Honble Lord George Germain.”

1. Montagu commanded the Royal Navy's Newfoundland Station and was governor of Newfoundland.

2. St. John's, Newfoundland.

3. Not printed.

November 28

THE DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1777

Admiralty-Office, Nov. 28, 1777. . . .

Vice-Admiral Montague, who is arrived at Spithead from Newfoundland, has likewise given an Account of the Ships of his Squadron having taken the following Prizes, viz.

The *Rebecca* Schooner, from North-Carolina, laden with naval Stores and Tobacco.

The *Favourite* Schooner, from Virginia, laden with Tobacco.

The *Scarborough* Sloop, from South-Carolina, laden with Rice, Tar, and Turpentine.

The *St. Paul* Brig, from South-Carolina, with Rice and Logwood.

The *Live Oak*, a Brig, from South-Carolina, laden with Rice, Indigo, and Staves.

LORD WEYMOUTH TO LORD GRANTHAM

[Extract]

N^o 31

His Exc^{ty} Lord Grantham.

My Lord

St. James's 28th. Nov^r. 1777.

. . . I inclose to your Exc^{ty} Extracts of a Letter from E. Gerry, of Philadelphia, to Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui, of Bilbao, by which it appears that the latter are engaged in a Trade with the Colonies in Rebellion very injurious to this Country and that they pretend to have the Protection of the Court of Spain for this Purpose, as appears by an Arti-

cle published in the Public News Paper, a Copy of which is inserted. The original Papers were taken on board an American Ship, and are in my Possession.¹ . . . I am &c
Weymouth

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 330–31. Docketed: “St. James’s 28 Nov^r 1777./To His Exc^t Lord Grantham./(N^o 31).”

1. In the margin: “1 Sep^r 1777.” For Elbridge Gerry’s letter to Joseph Gardoqui & Sons of 1 Sept. 1777, see *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789*, edited by Paul H. Smith (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1976–), 7: 582–84. In the letter Gerry wrote: “I have delivered to the commercial Committee of Congress the invoice of Goods which You shipped by this Opportunity, & have furnished them with an Extract of your Letter relative to Remittances.” He also reported placing in the public prints, at the Gardoqui’s request, an extract of their last letter “relative to the Indulgence of your Court to Adventurers in the Article of Tobacco.”

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

28th. of Nov^r Saturday blowing w^e the People in the L. Prison detected again in Mining for an Elopement. Here is Various Aco^{ts}. of the taking of Philidelphia; but not from any Authority.¹

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

1. On 2 Dec. the prisoners had confirmation of the fall of Philadelphia. On 8 Dec. they learned of the taking of Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga, N.Y. Ibid.

MIGUEL LAGOANERE & CO. TO LASSORE FRÈRES & CO.

M. Lassore freres & Comp^{te} a Cadiz
Messieurs

La Corogne le 28. 9^{bre}. 1777

Le Cap^e Gustave Cunyngham commandant le Cotter de guerre nommé la *Revanche* appartenant au Congrès des treize Provinces unies d’Amérique nous ayant demandé une recommandation pour votre ville, nous lui donnons la presente par laquelle nous vous prions de vouloir lui rendre tous les services que dependront de vous dans le cas ou il se trouveroit forcé de relacher dans vôtre port et de lui compter l’argent qu’il pourroit avoir besoin pour se mettre en état de reprendre la mer, il vous en fournira ses traitès sur les deputés du Congres a Paris où sur ses autres correspondants, où sur nous même Nous vous aurons la plus grande obligation de tous les services que vous voudrès bien lui rendre & nous avons l’honneur detre [&c.]

Lagoanere & Comp

[Translation]

M. Lassore brothers & Co. in Cadiz
Gentlemen

Corunna the 28 November 1777

Captain Gustavus Cunyngham commanding the Cutter of War named the *Revenge* belonging to the Congress of the Thirteen United Provinces of America having asked us for a recommendation for your city, we are giving him this letter by which we beg you to be so kind as to render him every service within your power in case he should find himself obliged to put into your port and to furnish him with whatever money he may be in need of to refit his vessel. He will hand you drafts on

the deputies of the Congress in Paris or on his other correspondents, or on us. We shall be under the greatest obligation to you for the services you may be able to render him & have the honor to be [&c.]

Lagoanere & Comp.

L, NHi, NHSC: Gustavus Conyngham Papers. Translation from *Letters and Papers Relating to the Cruises of Gustavus Conyngham, A Captain of the Continental Navy, 1777–1779*, edited by Robert Wilden Neeser (New York: Naval Historical Society, 1915), p. 115. Addressed: “Messieurs/Messieurs Lassore freres & C^c/Neg^{ts}/a Cadiz.”; “Messieurs Lassore brothers and Co., merchants at Cadiz.”

November 29

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN

My Lord,

Your Lordship having, in your Letter of the 21st August last, acquainted us that as the Issue of the present Campaign in North America cannot be known here in time to prepare for the Operations of another, if another shall become necessary, His Majesty had come to the Resolution of making every preparation for the further Prosecution of the War that depends upon this Country, so early that in case the Rebellion is not subdued this Campaign, the next may open the Moment the Season will admit, and Your Lordship having, in your aforesaid Letter, signified His Majesty's Pleasure, that we do give the necessary Orders for providing Ships of sufficient Strength to defend themselves against any of the Rebel Cruizers, for the Conveyance of 3,000 Tons of Tents, Camp Equipage & other Stores to North America, to be in readiness to receive the same by the End of December, it being His Majesty's express Commands that the whole should be assembled at Spithead in readiness to sail from thence, under the Convoy of such of His Majesty's Ships as we shall think proper to appoint, on the 1st. Day of Febry; We are to desire you will be pleased to acquaint His Majesty, that the Navy Board have, in Obedience to Directions we gave them, in pursuance of His Majesty's Commands aforementioned, acquainted us that they have purchased six Ships whose Names are in the Margin,¹ to perform this Service, which Ships are Armed with 26 Guns and will be provided with a Complement of 160 Men each. We are further to inform His Majesty that the *Nabob* one of the aforementioned Ships is arrived at Longreach and ready to receive such part of the aforementioned Camp Equipage & Stores as may be thought fit to be sent on board; that the rest are equipping with all possible Expedition in order to proceed thither also, and that so soon as they are arrived there, we shall not fail to give Your Lordship immediate Notice thereof. We are &c

Sandwich
Lisburne
H. Penton

LB, UKLPR, C.O. 5/259, 206–7. Docketed: “Admiralty Office 29th Nov^r 1777/Lords of the Admiralty/R same day.”

1. In the margin: “*Nabob Greenwich Lioness Pacifick Supply Dromedary.*”

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

à Versailles le 29. 9^{br}. 1777.

M. Le Moine m'a rendu compte, Monsieur, qu'il vous avoit informé de l'avis qui lui avoit été donné que le Corsaire anglo-americain le *Portsmouth*, Cap^{ne}. Hart qui avoit paru dans le Port de Bordeaux, et qui en est sorti depuis peu, d'avoit se rendre à l'Orient, joindre plusieurs Batimens anglo-americains armés en Course; je ne doute pas que, sur cet avis, vous n'avez déjà pris les mesures convenables pour tacher de découvrir Si en effet il y a en ce Port quelques Batimens qu'on puisse Soupçonner d'avoir cette destination, afin de mettre à exécution à cet égard, les ordres qui vous ont été donnés a diverses reprises, au Sujet de ces Sortes d'armemens dans nos Ports, concernant lesquels vous connoissez quelle Sont les intentions du Roi; je vous recommande de veiller avec la plus grande attention Sur les armemens qui se font à l'orient, de même que Sur l'artillerie que les d. Batimens qui arment, peuvent avoir, et celle qu'on voudroit y embarquer, ainsi que des munitions de guerre, afin du vous conformer exactement à ceque je vous ay marqué, tout par rapport à cet objet, que par rapport à la formation de Equipages, pour que le nombre dhommes que doit les composer, n'excede pas la quantité des Matelots indispensablement nécessaire pour les navigner; vous me rendrez compte de ce qui peu se passer à ce Sujet, et de ceque vous aurez fait. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 29 November 1777

Monsieur LeMoine has told me, Sir, that he had apprized you of the information that had been given to him that the Anglo-American privateer *Portsmouth*, Captain Hart, which had put into the port of Bordeaux, and which left there a short while ago, is supposed to arrive at Lorient to join several Anglo-American ships fitted out as privateers. I do not doubt that, acting on this information, you have taken the necessary steps to try to discover if, in fact, there are in this port some ships that might be suspected of having that destination, in order to put into execution in this regard the orders which have been given to you several times with respect to this sort of fitting out in our ports, concerning which you know what the King's wishes are. I recommend that you keep close scrutiny on the fitting out that is being carried on at Lorient, on the artillery which the said ships which are fitting out might have, and those they might want to embark, as well as munitions of war, so that you will conform exactly to that which I have pointed out, as much with regard to this purpose as with regard to the formation of crews, so that the number of men who would compose them does not exceed the number of seamen absolutely necessary to sail them. You will send me a report of what might happen concerning this subject, and what you will have done. I am, Sir, [&c.]

de sartine

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

à Versailles le 29. 9^{br} 1777.

pour vous Seul

Je suis informé, Monsieur, qu'il soit venir à portée en nos côtes quelques Vaisseaux de guerre que la Cour en Londres a donné ordre d'expédier, qui doivent croiser et qui Setiendront vraisemblablement au large; ces dispositions exigent qu'il soit pris en notre part des précautions relativement aux Batimens qui peuvent armer pour l'Amerique Septentrionale; vous ferez venir à cet effet chez vous les Nég^{ts}. du Port en L'orient qui font de ces armemens, ceque vous ferez avec toute la circonspection possible; vous les prendrez en particulier, et vous les préviendrez de n'être point étonné en la rencontre que les Cap^{nes}. de leurs navires pourront faire de ces vaisseaux; vous les avertirez en même temps de se mettre bien en regle pour leurs expéditions et autres papiers relatifs aux Batimens qu'il feront armer, et qui auroient cette destination pour objet et d'apporter la plus grande attention tant sur la nature de leurs chargemens, que pour ne point embarquer d'artillerie et des munitions qui puissent les exposer; vous Sentez avec quelle prudence vous devez vous conduire Sur cet objet, et celle que les Nég^{ts}. de leur côté doivent apporter pour prendre leurs précautions Sans qu'ils paroissent avoir été avertir; je m'en rapporte à vous pour la parfaite exécution des ordres que je vous donne a ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

P.S. Agisséz prudentment, et informéz moi de ce que vous aurez fait; Vous exigerez des Armateurs des soumissions de se rendre en droiture dans nos Colonies, et d'en revenir; Les Matelots qui passent en Amérique manquent ici au service du Roi.

ds

[Translation]

Versailles, 29 November 1777

For you alone

I have received information, Sir, that several warships under sailing orders from the Court of London have come within range of our coasts, which are to cruise and will very likely keep themselves well to the open sea. These dispositions require that on our part we take precautions regarding ships that might be bound for North America. Therefore you will summon to you the merchants of the port of Lorient who are in the shipping business, something that you will do with utmost circumspection. You will take them aside privately and warn them not to be at all surprised to learn that the captains of their ships have met these warships. At the same time you will warn them to put all of their ship's papers in order, and other papers relating to the ships that they are having filled out, and which might be bound for that destination, and to pay the closest attention to the nature of their cargo so as not to load artillery and munitions which might expose them. You are aware how prudently you must conduct yourself in this matter, and what precautions the merchants in their turn must take without their appearing to have been alerted. I shall rely on you for the perfect execution of the orders that I have given you on this subject. I am [&c.]

de sartine

P.S. Act prudently and inform me of what you have done. You will require guarantees of the shipowners to head straight for our colonies, and to return therefrom. The sailors who go over to America are taken away from the king's service here.

ds

L, FrLAL, Series I, E¹ 80, fol. 159. Addressed at foot of first page: "M. Gonet." Docketed: "R. du 3 x^b"; "Received 3 Dec."

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO LIEUTENANT-GÉNÉRAL COMTE DUCHAFFAULT

A M le C^{te} Duchaffault
Commandant L'Escadre du Roi A Brest
En Mer Le 29 9^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, M, la Lettre que vous m'avez l^r l'h^r de m'écrire le 24 de ce mois.

J'approuve que vous ayez autorisé M de Montperoux Command^t La frég^{te}. *L'Oiseau*, à prendre les mouillages qui seront le plus à sa portée, dans le cas où il prouveroit des mauvais tems dans la Croisiere qu'il va occuper de Belle isle à Oleron.

Je compte que M de Kergariou ne tardera pas à se rendre à la station de Nantes aussitôt qu'il aura embarqué les 6 mois de vivres qui ont été ordonnés.

Vous recommanderez à M de Montperoux et aux Commandans des Corvettes que vous avez destinées pour observer les frégates Angloises de donner avis des frégates ou Vaisseaux de cette nation qu'ils pourroient rencontrer en Croisiere au large, et de se conduire avec prudence et de maniere à ne pas compromettre le Pavillon du Roi.

Vous informerez les Commandans des frégates de Bordeaux et de Nantes, aussi que ceux des Bâtimens en Croisiere que d'après les avis qui me sont parvenus, j'ai lieu de présumer que six Corsaires Anglois doivent croiser dans le Golphe de Gascogne à 3 lieues de distance des Côtes à dessein d'interrupter les Bâtimens Insurgens, et qu'en cas de remonte des V^x du Roi, ils doivent arborer le Pavillon des Colonies unies de l'Amérique. Comme je vous ai fais connaître dans différentes circonstances les intentions de sa M^{te}. pour ce qui concerne les Corsaires de quelque nation qu'ils soient, je n'ai rien à ajouter à cequi vous a été prescrit à cet egard: et vous recommanderez aux Commandans des Bâtimens du Roi de se conformer aux instructions que vous avez du leur donner.

D'après ceque je vous ai mandé par mes précédentes Lettres, vous jugerez assez que le réarmement du *Magnifique* ne doit point être pressé, à moins que sa M^{te}. ne jugeât à propos de donner des ordres particuliers à ce sujet.

Le Roi ayant reconnu que le nombre des Bâtimens attachés à l'Escadre ne seront pas suffisans pour fournir avec facilité aux Croisieres et aux Stations de l'hiver, S. M. a décidé qu'il seroit ajouté deux frégates à l'Escadre. J'en fais passer l'ordre à M. le C^{te}. D'Orvilliers. J'ai l'h^r d'être [&c.]

[Translation]

To M le Comte Duchaffault
Commanding the King's Squadron at Brest
At sea, 29 Nov. 1777

I was privileged to receive the letter you wrote me the 24th of this month, Sir.

I approve your authorizing M. de Montperoux, Commander of the frigate *L' Oiseau*, to anchor in the nearest place he can find in case he encounters bad weather during the crossing he will make from Belle Isle to Oleron.

I expect M. de Kergariou not to tarry in proceeding to the Nantes station as soon as he has brought on board the 6 months of supplies which were ordered.

Recommend that M. de Montperoux tell the commanders of the corvettes you sent to observe the English frigates to give warning of frigates or ships of the line of that nation that they may encounter cruising on the open sea, and to act cautiously and in such a way as not to compromise the king's flag.

Inform the commanders of frigates from Bordeaux and Nantes, along with those of cruising ships, that according to the reports I have been given, I have reason to presume that six English privateers are supposed to cruise through the the Gulf of Gascony three leagues from the coast for the purpose of intercepting insurgent ships, and in case of meeting any of the ships of the line of the king, they are supposed to hoist the flag of the United Colonies of America. As I told you under various circumstances his Majesty's intentions regarding privateers of any nation whatsoever, I have nothing to add to the orders already given you in this respect: and you will recommend to the commanders of the king's ships that they conform to the instructions you must have given them.

According to your instructions by my former letters, you will judge that the rearmament of the *Magnifique* is not to be hurried unless his Majesty gives special orders on this subject.

The king having realized that the number of ships attached to the squadron will not be enough to provide sufficiently for cruises and winter stations, his Majesty has decided to add two frigates to the squadron. I will pass the order on to Comte D'Orvilliers. I have the honor to be [&c.]

LB, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 134, fol. 404. Notation: "Croisiere de Six Corsaires Anglois dans le Golphe de Gascogne. deux frég^{tes} ajoutées à l'Escadre." "Cruise of six English privateers in the Gulf of Gascony. Two frigates added to the squadron."

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

Hon^{ble}. Gentlemen

(N^o 92)

Nantes Nov. 29. 1777.—

Agreeable to the orders of M^r Dean & M^r Lee¹ I have the honour to transmit Cap^t Adams's Deposition properly authenticated.—

I have no american News, there being no Arrivals since my last, but I have just heard a melancholy Acco^t of Cap^t Wickes having foundered on the Banks of Newfd-land. This I am much disposed to disbelieve, and the more so as I think the acco^t does not carry with it an air of certainty. I have it in this Way. Cap^t Ashburn who sailed from Bordeaux the 22^d bound to St Martins & thence to america with a load of Salt, was risen upon the 25th by his Crew and himself with two people who continued faithful to him were put into a Boat and sent a drift; they were taken up by a french Sloop and are now at this Place; this Cap^t Ashburn tells me, that the Tuesday before he sailed which must be 18th a man arrived in a french Vessell from the Banks who called himself the Steward of the *Reprisal*, and said that when the Ship foundered he saved himself by the gang Ladder which supported him, 'till the french Vessell took him

up; Cap^t Ashburn does not remember the name of this man; The Name of the *Reprisal's* Steward is Thomas Glenn,² if therefore you have the name of the Reporter of this News thro' any other Chanel you may ascertain its truth, for my own part I must repeat my disbelief of it, tho' I think it my duty to communicate it to you.

I every day see the necessity of some proper place to keep my men as they begin to grow very discontent with their Situation. I do not pretend to say what is proper to be done, but I am sure if the *Raleigh* was here we should keep them with less Expence, less noise, & more satisfaction on allsides. The weather growing cold makes the *Dolphin* a very uncomfortable Habitation, & many are obliged to stay on shore at expence for want of sufficient room on board. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Hon^{ble}/The Commissioners of/the/United States." Docketed: "M^r Jon^a Williams/Nantes/Nov^r 29 1777," and "(N^o 92)."

1. See Silas Deane, for the American Commissioners in France, to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 21 Nov. 1777, above.

2. The survivor was the *Reprisal's* cook, Nathan Jaquays. Abraham Whipple to John Paul Jones, 14 June 1778. MiU-C, Abraham Whipple Letter Book.

November 30 (Sunday)

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF COMMERCE

Gentlemen,

Passy Nov^r 30th. 1777—

In a former Letter¹ we acquainted you, that we had engaged an Officer one of the most Skilful in naval Affairs that this Country possess'd, to build us a Frigate in Holland on a new Construction, (Drafts of which we sent you) and to go over in her to America and enter your Sea Service. The Frigate is almost finished. She is very large, is to carry 30–24 pounders on one Deck, & is suppos'd equal to a Ship of the Line: But the infinite Difficulties we find in equipping and manning such a Ship in any neutral Port, under the Restrictions of Treaties, together with the want of Supplies from you, have induced us to sell her to the King, who by a large Pension offer'd to our Officer, has engaged him to remain in his Service, and pays us what we have expended on her.

We have built a small Frigate² at Nantes, which we hope to get away soon laden with Supplies of various Sorts. We meet with Difficulties too in shipping Arms & Ammunition in her, but hope they will be surmounted. Several other Vessels, some under the Direction of M^r Ross, others belonging to French Merchants, are almost ready to sail for America, and we had thoughts of sending them in a little Fleet under Convoy of the *Rawleigh* & *Alfred*; but on Consultation, considering the Spies maintained by England in all the Ports, and thence the Impossibility of making up such a Fleet, without its being known so as to give time for a Superior Force to lie in wait for it, we concluded the Chance better of their going off singly as they should be ready. In these Vessels are Cloaths ready made for 30,000 Men, besides Arms, Cloths, Linnens & naval Stores to a great Amount, bought by us and M^r Ross. The private Adventures also will be very considerable. And as we shall continue our Endeavours to compleat your Orders, we hope if the Ships have common Success in passing you will be better provided for the next Campaign than you have been for any of the preceding.

How we are enabled to make these Supplies must be a matter of some Surprise to you, when you reflect that little or nothing from you has been received by us, since what came by Capt. Wicke's, till now by the Arrival of the *Amphitrite*; and that the seeming uncertainty of your publick Affairs have prevented hitherto our obtaining the Loan proposed. We have however found or made some Friends, who have helped, and will we are confident continue to help us.

Being anxious for supporting the Credit of Congress Paper Money, we procured a Fund for Payment of the Interest of all the Congress had proposed to borrow. And we mentioned in several of our Letters, that we should be ready to pay all Bills drawn for the Discharge of such Interest to the full value in Money of France, that is 5 Livres for every Dollar of Interest due. We were persuaded that thus fixing the Value of the Interest would fix the value of the Principal, and consequently of the whole Mass. We hope this will be approved, tho we have yet no Answer. We cannot apply that Fund to any other Purpose, and therefore wish to know as soon as may be the Resolution of Congress upon it. Possibly none of those Letters had reached you, or your Answers have miscarried: For the Interruptions of our Correspondence have been very considerable. Adams by whom we wrote early in the Summer was taken on this Coast, having sunk his Dispatches. We hear that Hammond shar'd the same Fate on your Coast. Johnson by whom we wrote in September was taken going out of the Channel; and poor Capt. Wickes, who sail'd at the same time & had Duplicates, we just now hear foundered near Newfoundland, every man perishing but the Cook. This loss is extremely to be lamented; as he was a gallant Officer & a very worthy Man. Your Dispatches also which were coming by a small Sloop from Morris's River, and by the *Mere Bobie* Packet, were both Sunk on those Vessels being boarded by English Men of War.

The *Amphitrite's* Arrival with a Cargo of Rice and Indigo, near 1000 Barrels of the one & 20 of the other, is a seasonable Supply to us for our Support, we not having for some time past (as you will see by our Former Letters) any Expectations of farther Supply from M^r Morris; and tho' we live here with as much frugality as possible, the unavoidable Expences and the continual Demands upon us for Assistance to Americans who escape from English Prisons, &c. &c, endanger'd our being brought to great Difficulties for Subsistence. The Freight of that Ship too calls for an enormous Sum, on Acc^t of her long Demurrage.

We begin to be much troubled with Complaints of our armed Vessels taking the Ships and Merchandize of neutral Nations. From Holland they complain of the Taking the Sloop *Chester* Capt. Bray, belonging to Rotterdam, by two Privateers of Charlestown, called the *fair American* & the *Experiment*. From Cadiz of the Taking the French Ship *Fortune*, Capt Kenguen, by the *Civil Usage* Privateer, having on board Spanish Property: And here of the Taking of the *Emperour of Germany* from Cork with Beef belonging to the Marine of France, just off the Mouth of Bourdeaux River. We send herewith the Papers that we have received and Answers given relating to those Captures and we earnestly request that if upon fair Trials it shall appear that the Allegations are true, speedy Justice may be done & Restitution made to the Reclaimers: It being of the utmost Consequence to our Affairs in Europe that we should wipe off the Aspersions of our Enemies who proclaim us everywhere as Pirates, and endeavour to excite all the World against us. The Spanish Affair has already had very ill Effects at that Court, as we learn by [the] Return of the [Cou]rier mentioned [in] our last. We

have by Letters to our Correspondents at the several Ports done all in our Power to prevent such Mischiefs for the Future, a Copy of which we herewith send you.³

The European Maritime Powers embarrass themselves as well as us by the double Part their Politicks oblige them to act. Being in their Hearts our Friends and wishing us Success, they would allow us every Use of their Ports consistent with their Treaties, or that we can make of them without giving open Cause of Complaint to England. And it being so difficult to keep our Privateers within those Bounds, we submit it to Consideration whether it would not be better to forbear Cruizing on these Coasts and bringing Prizes in here, till an open War takes place, which tho' by no means certain seems every now and then to be apprehended on both Sides: Witness among other Circumstances the Recall of their Fishing Ships by France;⁴ and the King of England's late Speech.⁵ In Consequence of this embarrass'd Conduct, our Prizes cannot be sold publicly; of which the Purchasers take Advantage in beating down the Price. And sometimes the Admiralty Courts are obliged to lay hold of them in consequence of Orders from Court obtain'd by the English Ambassador. Our People of course complain of this as unfriendly Treatment, and as we must not counteract the Court in the Appearances they seem inclined to put on towards England, we cannot set our Folks right by acquainting them with the essential Services our Cause is continually receiving from this Nation: And we are apprehensive that Resentment of that supposed unkind Usage, may induce some of them to make Reprisals, and thereby occasion a deal of Mischief. You will see some Reason for this Apprehension in the Letter from Capt. Babson,⁶ which we send you herewith; relating to their two Prizes confiscated here for false Entries: and afterwards delivered up to the English: for which however we have hopes of obtaining full Satisfaction, having already a Promise of Part.

The King of England's Speech bulsters [*blusters*] towards these Kingdoms as well as towards us. He pretends to great Resolution both of continuing this War, and of making two others if they give him occasion. Yet it is conceived he will with Difficulty find Men or Money for another Campaign of that already on his Hands; and all the World sees that is not for want of Will that he puts up with the Daily known Advantages afforded us by his Neighbours. They however, we have Reason to believe, will not begin the Quarrel as long as they can avoid it, nor give us any open Assistance of Ships or Troops. Indeed we are scarce allowed to know that they give us any Aids at all; but are left to imagine, if we please, that the Cannon, Arms &c. which we have received and sent, are the Effects of private Benevolence and Generosity. We have nevertheless the strongest Reasons to consider that the same Generosity will continue; and it leaves America the Glory of working out her Deliverance by her own Virtue & Bravery; on which with God's Blessing we advise you chiefly to depend.—You will see by the Papers and a Letter of Intelligence from London, that the Continuance of the War is warmly condemn'd in Parliament by their wisest and ablest Men, in the Debates on the Speech; but the old corrupt Majority continues to vote as usual with the Ministers. In order to Lessen their Credit for the new Loans, we have caused the Paper,⁷ which we formerly mentioned, to be translated and printed in French & Dutch by our Agent in Holland. When it began to have a run there, the Government forbid the farther Publication, but the Prohibition occasions it to be more sought after, read and talked of.

The Monument for General Montgomery⁸ is finished and gone to Havre in nine Cases to lie for a Conveyance. It is plain but elegant, being done by one of the best Artists here, who complains that the 300 Guineas allow'd him is too little: and we are obliged to pay the additional Charges of Package &c.—We see in the Papers that you have voted other Monuments, but we have received no Orders relating to them.—

The *Rawleigh & Alfred* will be well fitted and furnished with every thing they wanted, the Congress Part of the Produce of their Prizes being nearly equal to their Demands.

Be pleased to present our Dutiful Respects to the Congress, and assure them of our most faithful Services. We have the honour to be [&c.]

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

L, DNA, PCC, item 85, pp. 93–100 (M247, roll 114). Docketed: “Commissioners/to the Comtee/Nov 30th. 1777/rec^d May 2^d. by/Capt^t Young/Via Baltimore.” Notation: “rec^d. May 2^d 1778.”

1. American Commissioners in France to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, 12 March 1777, *NDAR* 8: 672.

2. *Lyon*, subsequently the Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

3. The American Commissioners in France to Commanders of Armed American Vessels, above at 21 Nov.

4. In August, expecting a British declaration of war, the French government had ordered the Newfoundland fishing fleet home. Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774–1787* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 78–80.

5. For the speech on the opening of a new session of parliament, 18 Nov., and the debates on the speech, see William Cobbett and Thomas C. Hansard, eds., *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to 1803*, 36 vols. (London, 1806–20), 19 (1777–78), 354–445.

6. James Babson to Benjamin Franklin, 12 Nov., above.

7. “Comparison of Great Britain and America as to Credit, in 1777,” *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 508–14.

8. By resolution of 25 Jan. 1776, Congress voted £300 sterling to have Benjamin Franklin procure from France a suitable monument to Brig. Gen. Richard Montgomery. Franklin engaged Jean-Jacques Caffiéri to execute the work. *JCC* 4: 89–90; *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 23: 522; 24: 160–61.

December

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO BENJAMIN PEEL

Cap^t. Peale¹

[December 1777]

Sir You are to Stay by the Brig to such time as all the formallity is Accomplish^d. And I you must Petition for A Survey on the Vessell And I beg you will take Special Care at the time the[y] Are on board^d. that the Vessell Shall make What is Sufficient And What materials is Wanted. When every thing is Completed go to the Groine.² Apply to m^r. Lagoanere and follw his instructions to you heare from me which with Gods help will not be Long I am

G.C.

LB, UKLPR, H.C.A. 32/441/7, pt. 1.

1. Benjamin Peel may have been prize master of *Syren* or *Dispatch*.

2. The area of the Spanish coast that includes the ports of Ferrol and Corunna.

December 1

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

[Extract]

December 1st 1777.

... The *Pacifique*, a frigate of 14 guns, twelve-pounders, and a new ship¹ lately launched at Nantes, carrying 24 guns on one deck, are now fitting with the utmost dispatch for Boston and will sail about the 20th of this month. They take in 400 bales of woollen goods, 15,000 suits of ready-made uniforms, and a quantity of arms; they both sail under French colours.

The captains of the American ships of war are gone to Lorient and are ordered to intercept if possible part of the West India convoy. They have received every necessary whatever from the King's stores at Lorient. ...

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1771-1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932-38), 1: 255.

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

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

[Extract]

Treasury Chambers, ½ pt 1 P.M.

My dear Lord—With the information you have recieved, I have no difficulty to advise that the captains of the ships which were going to sail for the protection of the convoys should be expressly directed to take the *Pacifique* if they can. ...

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1771-1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932-38), 1: 255-56.

SILAS DEANE TO JOHN ROSS

Dear Sir

Paris, Dec^r 1st, 1777.

I received yours of the 25th ultimo and should have replied two or three Days since, but M^r Moyland setting out I chose to refer you to him who will better explain personally than can be done by Letter his plan.

I am happy to find there will not be any misunderstanding between M^r Williams & him—Respecting the *Dolphin* I find by M^r Williams that she cannot be dismissed until the *Lyon* sails, without great Prejudice; M^r Hodge proposes to be at Nantes in a few Days who will consult you on the Spot & to him I refer as I shall leave it with him to make use of the *Dolphin* or not as you shall Judge Prudent. Cunningham has lately carried another Prize into Spain, loaded with Fish, and Suffer'd himself in a Gale of Wind on acco^t of his Mast being too large, he was altering it & getting ready for another Cruize—The Letter from thence was dated the 12 Nov^r—I shall be glad to hear of Greens¹ being ready to sail & to know the arrangements you make as to freight, Consignments &c What Concern I have expect to share like others & have full Confidence in your Direction of it—I will only hint what occurs to me at present—That the Primary object is to ob-

tain a Cargo of Tobacco for the Ship back. To do which if the Salt & freight are not sufficient you must write Mess^r Willing & Morris to whom you will probably Consign her, to draw on my Brother, Barn^a. Deane Esq^r to make up my proportion of the Cargo back, in the next Plan if the Ship can not be loaded back and it should be found best to sell her to the Publick, my Interest in her as well as in her Cargo I desire may be paid to my Brother Simeon Deane at Petersburg Virginia should he be arrived there, if not to my Brother Barnabas Deane Esq^r in Connecticut—I propose this should the Vessel be sold, as its possible she may be Changed with the Publick for another In that Case I should incline to continue my Interest, as a return of the Effects here is my Principal object—Please to let me know how soon the Ship will be ready & I will write you again on the Subject—Refer you to M^r Moylan for on which I know not what Judgment to form except that Burgoyne is undoubtedly ruined, but affairs to the Southward do not look so favorable, tho I do not think them really bad. I am &c.

S D—

M^r Jn^o. Ross—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. John Green, in the *Brune*.

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

A Versailles le 1^{er} X^{bre}. 1777.

Je serois bien aise d'avoir, Monsieur, des informations précises sur l'origine du S^r Bérard qui réside a l'Orient ou je crois qu'il est négociant. Vous voudrés bien me marquer s'il est regardé comme Citoyen de cette ville, ou comme Etranger, et quel est le genre de son commerce. Je vous prie de prendre ces éclaircissements sous main et en secret, et de me les adresser promptement.¹ Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 1 December 1777

I would be pleased to have, Sir, precise information as to the background of one M. Bérard, who resides at Lorient, where I believe he is a merchant. Would you be so kind as to inform me if he is considered a native of that city, or if he comes from elsewhere, and what is the nature of his business. I beg you to seek this information covertly and in secret, and to forward it to me promptly.¹ I am [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, Series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 174. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet Comm^{re} Ordinaire des Ports et Arsenaux a l'Orient." Notation: "R. du 8 X^{re}."

1. On 19 Dec. M. de Sartine acknowledged receipt of M. Gonet's letter of 8 Dec., clarifying the status of M. Bérard, but as he did not recall "on what occasion I madé the request, nor from which bureau my letter was dispatched, I am asking you to return it to me; the handwriting alone being able to put me back on the trail." *Ibid.*, 225.

December 2

THE LONDON CHRONICLE, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, TO TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1777

London.

Letters from Corke, dated Nov. 20, mention, that a large Dutch ship had, two days before, been boarded by the crew of an American privateer, of 26 guns,¹ off the Old Head of Kinsale, who plundered her of seven barrels of powder, several muskets, and other articles, under pretence of her being bound to America, with warlike stores for the use of the British *troops*.

1. Perhaps Massachusetts privateer ship *Mars*, Thomas Truxtun, commander, which had sailed from Nantes about 14 Nov. and by 15 Nov. was taking prizes. Gouyon De Mallévre to Gabriel De Sartine, 19 Nov., above; Captain's Journal, H.M.S. *Greyhound*, 23 Dec. 1777, above.

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON), TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1777

The *Mary*, of Biddiford, was taken by the *True Blue* Privateer, and retaken off the Island of Terceira by the *Experiment* M. W.

DEPOSITION OF JOHN PEARCE, LATE MASTER OF THE BRIG *MERCURY*

The *Mercury* Brig^t about 150 Tons belonging to John Green Esq^r & C^o of Poole, whereof John Pearce was late Master Sailed from Newfoundland the 25th of August bound for Barcelona, with Three Thousand Two Hundred & Sixty two Quintals of Fish and on the 8th of September, was taken by the *Portsmouth* Privateer of Portsmouth in New England, commanded by John Hart, and after taking Captain Pearce & all his Crew out of the *Mercury*, they dispatched her for Bordeaux; where Captain Pearce arrived about Eleventh of October in the Privateer as will more fully appear by his Protest made at Bordeaux the 20th of the same Month; and on their Arrival he was informed by Captain Hart, that the *Mercury* had been sailed Some days before for Bilboa and about a week after that Captain Hart told him she was arrived at Bilboa where the Cargo was selling, and which was confirmed by the People belonging to the Privateer receiving Prize Money for the *Mercury* and also by Captain Simmonds's Affidavit herewith,¹ in which He mentions the Name of the *Mercury* wrote in her Stern had been erased.—

Captain Pearce was at Bordeaux for about a Month, and during his Stay there, He saw the Privateer cleaned, & compleatly fitted for the Sea, and She sailed on a Cruise a Day or Two before he left Bourdeaux which was on or about the 12th day of November last.—

The foregoing is a true State of Facts relating to the capture of my late Brig^t *Mercury*.—

Witness my Hand

London Dec^r 2^d 1777

John Pearce

at Poole.—

or

at Mess^{rs}. Bingley & Pitt
Berchin Lane

DS, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 364. Endorsed: "Bingley & Pitt/[illeg]." Docketed: "Papers relating to/the *Mercury*. Pearce/from Newfoundland/to Barcelona/taken by the *Portsmouth*/Privateer. John Hart/and Carried to Bilboa/R. 3 Dec^{br} 1777 from/Mess^{rs}. Bingley & Pitt." Enclosed in Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 5 Dec. 1777, *ibid.*, fols. 361-62.

1. See Deposition of Edward Symonds, 10 Nov. 1777, above.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG

Capt. Young

Paris 2^d. Dec^r 1777

Sir

You will receive by M^r Moylan dispatches for Congress, which you will secure ready for sinking in Case of Danger—On your Leaving the River Nantes it has been recommended as the safest to Keep well in with the Coast of France until you can leave the Continent intirely—Of this you will be the best judge. We advise you to avoid speaking with every Vessel on your Passage, and to make the first safe Port you can in the United States; if the wind & weather permit some port near Boston appears to be the best. But must submit it to your Judgment as the winds may serve or as other Circumstances may occur. Capt. Bell will take a Passage with you, & we recommend to you to trust the Case of y^e Dispatches to him in Case of accident to yourself (which God forbid,) or on your arrival if the Care of your Vessel or other Circumstances prevent your going yourself express to Congress therewith, that you intrust them to him, but the Dispatches for Congress are not to be given to other persons than one of you, before they are delivered to Congress. Private Letters may be delivered or forwarded as you find Opportunity. Your Bills of Disbursments and Expences at Nantes you informed us would be settled by M^r Morris; we have only to say that the Hon^l W. Lee Esq^r being joint Agent with him ought to have an Acc^t of the Disbursments at Least for his Direction in his acc^{ts}. This is not a matter of ours and we mention it as we are Confident you will do every thing proper to avoid any misunderstanding in that Affair. We most heartily wish you a safe & speedy Passage, and recommend you to the Notice of Congress for your services. We are &c

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

SILAS DEANE TO CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM

Capt. Cunningham

Paris Dec^r 2^d. 1777

Sir^e

The Sloop *Revenge* now under your command being put under the direction of Mess^{rs} John Ross, & W^m Hodge you are directed to render them an Account of your Proceedings, and Disbursments in the Sloop from the Time of your leaving Dunkirk, and also of what, you may have received in sales of Prizes, that they may adjust and settle the Same—and you are to attend their orders in future respecting the Sloop &c—I am [&c.]

Silas Deane

A Copy

Copy, ScHi, Henry Laurens Papers.

SILAS DEANE TO MIGUEL LAGOANERE AND COMPANY

Gentlemen

Paris, Dec^r. 2^d. 1777.

Yours of the 12 of Nov^r. I rec^d. & return you my thanks for your kind attention to our Affairs in your Port—This will be handed you by M^r. Hodge a Gentleman of Philadelphia, whom I recommend to your Civilities. He is empowered to take the Care and direction of Capt. Cunninghams Vessel, and it is with pleasure I assure you that you may rely on him as a person well acquainted with american affairs and on whose information you may depend. I shall be happy in the Continuance of y^r. correspondence. I am &c.

S. D.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at the foot of the page: "Mess^{rs}. Leoganere & C^o."

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

Versailles 2. X^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, vos deux lettres des 17. et 26. du mois dernier.

Vous m'informez par la p^{re}. du Projet qu'ont M^{sr}. Dessaudrais Sebire et Compagnie d'armer leur Vaisseau le *Beaumont* de 11. à 1200. Tonneaux pour Cadix ou pour nos Colonies de l'amérique. Rien ne peut empêcher cette Spéculation. quoique ces Négociants vous ayant assuré qu'il n'entreroit point de Munitions de guerre dans la composition de Son armement, vous avez bien fait de leur deffendre a tout evenement d'en charger ce vous y tiendrez exactement la main. J'approuve par cette raison l'observation que vous faites sur l'artillerie que ce Vaisseau doit avoir pour sa defense. il est certain que si elle était dans sa calle on pourroit la Soupçonner de cargaison. d'après cela il faut absolument que les Canons Soient monter en batterie.

Quant à l'Equipage qu'ils proposent de lui donner, dès que vous trouvez que 200. hommes ne sont pas un nombre trop considérable en égard a l'artillerie du V^{au}. Je concens qu vous en permittrez la levée en faisant cependant en sorte de conserver pour le service les meulleurs matelots.

Vous me rendez compte par votre seconde Lettre de la suite de l'expédition des frégates américaines les *Raleigh* et l'*alfred* et du changement de destination du Navire la *Brune*. Je ne puis que me référer a lettre que je vous ai écrite le 22. 9^{bre}. au Sujet de ce Batiment et vous ne la laisserez pas partir que vous n'ayiez retiré du Capitaine sa Soumission de n'aller que dans nos Colonies et de faire son retour en france.

Les raisons que ont déterminé cette précaution pour ce Batiment doivent être apliquées au *Beaumont* et vous exigerez également du Capitaine une semblable soumission. En général vous en userez de même pour tous les Batimens d'une certaine marque destiner pour les Colonies; et comme vous l'observez fort bien Je donais le même ordre dans tous les Ports.

a l'égard des Commissions en guerre que vous ête instruit que le Congrès donne a nos Capitaines votre réflexion est très Juste: une parielle conduite est contraire aux vuës du Gouvernement et il ne peut l'autoriser en aucune façon. vous aurez donc soin de signifier aux Capitaines de votre département que l'intention du Roy est qu'ils n'acceptent pas ces Commissions, que leur désobéissance sera très sévèrement punie et que dans le cas de prise ils n'auront à espérer aucune protection de la part

du Gouvernement. J'écrirai aussi a ce Sujet circulairement dans les autres départemens. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 2 December 1777

I have received, Sir, your two letters of the 17th and 26th of last month.

You informed me by your first of the plan of Mssrs. Dessaudrais Sebire and Co. to load their ship *Beaumont* with from 1100 to 1200 casks for Cadiz or for our colonies in America. Nothing can prevent this speculation. Although these merchants have assured us that there would be no munitions of war entered into the makeup of her cargo, you did well to forbid all instances of their loading any, and you will keep it under your control. For this reason I agree with the observation you made about the artillery that these ships ought to have for their own defense. It is certain that if it were in the hold one might suspect it to be cargo. Accordingly, it is absolutely necessary that the cannon be mounted in broadside.

As for the crew that they plan to put on her, as soon as you find that 200 men are not too considerable a number in regard to the artillery on the ship, I consent to your promising a levy, making efforts, however, to conserve the best sailors for the service.

You reported by your second letter about the result of the sailing of the American frigates *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, and of the change of destination of the vessel *La Brune*. I can only make reference to the letter which I wrote you on 22 November concerning this ship, and you will not allow her to depart without procuring from her captain his pledge to go only to our colonies, and to return to France.

The reasons which have determined these precautions for this ship should be applied to the *Beaumont*, and you will require a similar pledge from the captain. In general you will make use of it as well for all ships of a certain mark destined for our colonies, and therefore you will observe it fully. I issued the same order in all ports.

In regard to the letters of marque which you learned that the Congress is giving to our captains, your views are very accurate. Such conduct is contrary to the views of the Government and cannot be authorized in any way. You will be very careful, therefore, to point out to the captains of your department that it is the king's wish that they not accept these commissions, that their disobedience will be very severely punished, and that in case of capture they will not be able to expect any protection on the part of the government. I shall also write a circular letter on this subject to the other departments. I am, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, Series 1, E⁴ 80, fols. 175–76. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet." Docketed: "R. du 8. 9^e 1777." "Received 8 November [December] 1777."

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

[Paris, 2 Dec. 1777]

L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre vient de recevoir des Informations exactes touchant le Vaisseau Anglois *Ann Susanna* Cap^e Taylor que des Pirates Americains ont pris il y a quelques tems et Conduit d'abord a l'Orient; ce Vaisseau se trouve actuellement à Pelerin à trois Lieus de Nantes. L'Ambassadeur parle d'après la de-

position d'un Homme tres digne de foi qui a vu ce Vaisseau à Pelerin le Vingt Six du Mois de Novembre, on a effacé le Nom qui étoit peint sur la poupe et on travaille a le defigurer tant que l'on peut Il y a actuellement beaucoup d'ouvriers occupés a l'équipement de ce Vaisseau qui doit porter donnevant le Nom de la *Mignonne*.

L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre qui ne peut pas douter de l'exactitude de cette Information, proteste, comme il est de son devoir, contre l'irregularité de ce procedé, et demande, que le dit Vaisseau avec tous ses Mats, Agrets Voilles &c et toute sa Cargaison soit mis en sequestre pour être restituée aux Propriétaires Anglois ou leur Ayant cause des qu'ils Auront produit Leurs Titres de propriété.

Il est tres persuadé que la Cour de France reconnoitra d'abord la Justice de cette demande et qu'elle sera toujours bien éloigné d'Autoriser ces Ventes fraudulenses.

Stormont.

[Translation]

The Ambassador of England has just received exact information dealing with the English ship *Ann Susanna*, Captain Taylor, which American pirates seized some time ago and took first to L'Orient. The ship is now at Pelerin, three leagues from Nantes. The Ambassador says, according to a statement from a very reliable source who saw the ship at Pelerin on the 26th of the month of November, the name painted on the ship's stern has been removed and workmen are working to alter its appearance as much as they can. There are now many workmen busy outfitting the ship that will bear henceforth the name la *Mignonne*.

The English Ambassador, who does not question the accuracy of this information, protests, as it is his duty, against the irregularity of this procedure, and demands that the said vessel, together with its masts, rigging, sails, and cargo, be sequestered in order to be returned to the English owners or their representative as soon as they have produced their titles of ownership.

He is very certain that the French Court will recognize, at first sight, the justice of this demand and that it will always be anything but inclined to authorize these fraudulent sales.

Stormont

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, fol. 138. Notations at top of letter: "Envoyé copie à M. de Sartine le 4 x^{bre} 1777."; "note au sujet du Batiment anglois *ann-suzane* pris par un Corsaire americain et qu'on equipe à Pelerin pres Nantes." "Copy sent to M. de Sartine 4 December 1777"; "note concerning the English ship *Ann-Suzane* seized by an American privateer."

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Genⁿ.

L, Orient Dec^r 2^d. 1777

Inclosd is a Letter which I most earnestly desire you will deliver to the minister of marine—You will Judge from the Contents we have not been Treated in a manner agreeable to the Character we appear in—I think the Honour of the united states violated in this Instance—and must if Possible demand satisfaction; in my Person, as their officer I represent the States and whatever Ill Treatment I meet with as an officer, is an Insult offered to them. the Commissary here took upon him to accuse us of delay, of being at Paris on Pleasure, and that we did not design to go to sea, that we was not doing anythng toward fitting the ships &c &c and said the ships should go to

sea, and that Instant he orderd Two Pilots onboard to Carry the ships out don or not don (is this Friendship or Insolence of office?) we stay'd here on Promise of assistance and protection and now thy want to turn us out in the face of an enemy without guns and provisions—I am satisfyd our officers have used the utmost dispatch their vile Coustoms will allow of—had they given us free leave As have taken our own method we should have been long ago ready—the ships are now in the Road, with their Ballast and water, tommorrow shall begin to take in the Guns and Provisions—I am exceedingly vexd to think I Cannot Convince them that we are heartily rid of them and that we want to get away, full as much as they want to have us gon—they had better debar the american ships of war any access, not play this fast and looss game it is Trifeling with Serious things—you will please to Translate the Letter and give it a proper adress—you have nothing to fear from any rash act of ours here; no, I will hold a Candel to—a Little Longer for the sake of Conveniency to those that are obligd to be in their Clutches; neither am I insensable we have hitherto been obligd to the French, nor do I doubt to see the day they will be obligd to us—for they soon must Joyn us to thrash the English; or we Joyn England to help to thrash them—I am [&c.]

Tho^s. Thompson

So I Leave you to Judge the Consistancy of delivering the Letter but urge it exceedingly, as to myself The Commissary in very Insolent terms told me our delays would make us forfeit the Love of the King and government and deprive us of that Indulgence they wish'd to Shew us

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 126. Addressed: "To/The Hon^{le} Benj^m: Franklin/Silas Dean & Arthur Lee Esq^r/Passy." Docketed: "Captⁿ. Thomas Thompsons Letter/Dec^r 2 1777."

December 3

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

3^d. [Dec^r] Wednesday Rainy weather the People in the L. Prison Once More Detected in Mining, which is the 4th. Attempt they have made

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

Secret N^o 172

Paris December 3^d. 1777

My Lord

... On Monday Last I received the inclosed Letter from M^r Liege,¹ and in Consequence of the Information He gives me drew up a little Memorial—which I delivered to M de Vergennes yesterday. He read it aloud, made some general Remarks upon the fraud, and Artifice employed by Individuals to elude the Orders of Government, and promised me that the Matter should be attended to.

I then told Him that there was a subject of much greater Importance on which I should give in no Memorial, but should state it to Him plainly and strongly in a very

few Words, being persuaded that the bare stating it would be sufficient. I have good reason to believe Sir, that a vast Quantity of Arms, purchased for the use of the Rebels, is going to be shipped on board of the American Privateers that are at Nantes and L'Orient: If my Intelligence is exact there is no less than fifty thousand Stand of Arms M de Vergennes seemed surprized at so large a Quantity. I know very well Sir how difficult, how improbable it is to procure such a Quantity without extraordinary assistance but that is a Point I will not enter into Now, as I could not bring direct positive Proof what share M de Montieu has in all this I will not pretend to inquire, but confine myself to this plain Proposition which applies directly to the present state of the Case

Such Quantities of Arms cannot be shipped in your Ports without the Knowledge of those who command there, and those Officers never can, or dare suffer a thing of this Nature, if the Intentions of this Court are agreeable to its friendly Professions. I said this shortly and Strongly, and left the Matter there. M de Vergennes did not Attempt to contravert the Principle I had advanced, but affected to doubt of the Truth of my Information, said that He would speak to M de Sartines on the Subject, and took a short note to Assist his Memory.² He added that positive Orders had been sent to oblige the two Privateers the *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, to put immediately to sea, so that he imagined they were actually sailed. I had no Opportunity of seeing M de Maurepas alone. . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont

L., *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1751. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Paris 3 December 1777 Lord Stormont/(N^o 172) Secret/R. 11th by Mann/3 Inclosures."

1. P. Liege to Lord Stormont, Nantes, 27 Nov. 1777, "announcing that an English vessel taken by American pirates was at Pellerin being repainted, renamed and otherwise disfigured to prevent her being recognized." Ibid. The ship was the *Anna Susannah*, John Taylor, master, prize to *Alfred* and *Raleigh*.

2. Sartine wrote Vergennes the same day: "Lord Stormont very easily exaggerates, but with regard to the arms, he is mistaken as to the quantity. I think he is not ill-informed as the fact itself." Ibid., no. 1750.

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

Most Confidential

Paris Decr 3: 1777.

My Lord

I enterd into no particulars with M de Vergennes but I think it my Duty to communicate to y^r Lordship all that I have learnt with Regard to the Arms that are shipping at Nantes for the use of the Rebels. Some Months ago Mr Deane purchased of Mons^r Montieu a very large Quantity of these arms that were reformed in that Transaction of M. de Bellegarde which made so much Noise.¹ He purchased about Eighty thousand Stand of arms at a very low Rate. They were deposited in a large Warehouse which the Rebel agents have hired at Nantes and which is situated directly over against the Exchange, but on the other Side of the River. In the lower Part of this Warehouse are many Bales of Cloth and other Goods for the use of the Rebels I have spoken to a Person who has been often in this Warehouse and seen and examined the arms many of which are fit for Service. These arms are not Shipped in great Quantities at a time, at least have not been so hitherto. They are put up in chests of which Every Ship that goes from Nantes to North America takes some many of these chests will I am assured be sent on Board the *Raleigh* and *Alfred* now at Lorient and the *Pacifique* a French Vessel purchased by the Rebels, which was equipped at Havre and is now at Nantes. These Ships will Sail very soon—Some Americans who are to go on board the

Pacifique set out from hence for Nantes a Day or two ago. This *Pacifique* is one of those french-american ships that have double Captains.

I hope, My Lord that I do not go out of my Province when I take the Liberty of observing to your Lordship that it is of great Importance to His Majestys Service that Some Frigates should be stationed this winter on the Coast of Carolina as I have very good Reason to believe that a Number of French trading Vessels that were designed for Philadelphia have now changed their Destination & will make directly for Charles Town The Privateers that are going from Nantes and Lorient will endeavour to make some Port in New England. I am [&c.]

Stormont

L., *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 19, no. 1752. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Visct Weymouth." Docketed: "Paris 3 Dec^r 1777/Lord Stormont/most confidential/R. 11th by Mann."

1. Alexandre Cassier de Bellegarde, inspector general of artillery, and his brother-in-law Montieu were accused of trying to pass off to the royal arsenal a large number of old and faulty muskets. See *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 22: 463–64.

JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE

Abstract. John Ross answer to the foregoing¹ dated
Nantes 3^d. Dec^r 1777.

"Respecting the Cutter² mentioned to you by M^r Deane M^r Hodge part owner, was the first who spoke to me of her from some Causes of discontent on acc^t of the unsuccessfull expensive Cruizes of that vessel, when he intimated to me his beliefs, that M^r Deane wished to get ride of her, & was willing to dispose of the part owned by the public.—At same time pressing me to become purchaser I concluded in Consequence thereof to speak to M^r Deane, & know his Sentiments, who confirmed it but from the impossibility of adopting any regular conclusive mode of Settlement, he told me that the Vessel could not be considered equal to the first Cost, nor practicable to ascertain her value, but proposed to give directions to the Captain & to M^r Hodge to have the hull & materials examined, & the Vallue or Condition of them Mentioned in an Inventory, & if approved of by me to take the public part of her on my own Acct. I shoud only be charged what the Committee of Congress & I agreed on in America for the Interest they had in the Cutter, which he doubted not woud be agreeable to all parties—Upon those Conditions, I accepted of the proposal, merely to oblige M^r Hodge, as the Vessel might be employed more to his Interest under private Instructions than that of the present, & left it interely to M^r Deane & M^r Hodge to settle it in this Manner, assigning me the orders—This business not being final, the Commissioners may approve or disapprove as I want no favor or Interference to the prejudice of the public—but is³ disposed to be relieved of this vessel, leaving the Settlement on M^r Deanes plans M^r Hodge being at Paris will receive the Instructions necessary to give the private owners possession of her—I have lengthened this epistle to give you the particulars. In the mean time I have &c &c."

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 83, vol. 2, pp. 511–12 (M247, roll 110).

1. Arthur Lee to John Ross, 26 Nov. 1777, above.

2. Continental Navy cutter *Revenge*.

3. Another copy has "if". ViU, Lee Family Papers.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

No. 72.

Corunna 3^d December 1777

My Lord.

I am honor'd with your Lordship's circular Letter of the 4th: of last month, and sincerely rejoice at the happy news contained therein.

On Friday last the 30th: Instant several english vessels being seen off this Harbour Cunningham put to Sea, and in less than thirteen Hours from his Departure, within Cannon Shot of this Harbour, took and sent into Ferrol the Brig *Syren* Captain James Renolls from Newfoundland with 2500 Quintals of Codfish. The master and all the Crew excepting three were brought in here the same night, and have made their Protest,¹ an attested Copy of which I immediately sent to the Captain General with a strong memorial representing the Affront Cunningham had offer'd to His Catholick Majesty's Rights by seizing a vessel under the Protection of his Cannon and praying that the Ship and Cargoe might be restored to its real Owners since it could not be consider'd a legal Capture.

The Answer he returned was to the same Purpose as those he has constantly hitherto been pleased to amuse us with, viz that he will examine into it. He promised the same in his Answer to the Representation I made about the forcibly seizing and carrying off the Seaman John Jordan (of which I had the Honor to acquaint your Lordship in my last No: 71)² yet never made the least Enquiry about it. It is in vain to expect Redress here, I am rather inclined to think that imediate Permission will be given to land and dispose of the Cargoe without even once examining our Claim as has already been done with the Cargoe of the *Two Brothers* (mentioned in my Letters No: 68, & 69,)³ for the Sale of which Leave has been obtained from Madrid. Nevertheless I flatter myself His Majesty's Ambassador to whom I have transmitted the necessary Documents will meet with better Success, and obtain the Restoration of the Brig *Syren* to the master and Crew, who remain here in expectation of the Result.

It is said Cunningham has sent two other Prizes into Ferrol⁴ but I have not yet received any certain Information thereof, however he continues cruizing at the mouth of this Harbour within the Headland that not a vessel can escape him. His principal Object at present is a french vessel named the *Gracieux*⁵ Cap: Emanuel de Tournois which is every moment expected from London with a valuable Cargoe of woolens.

The *Cantabria* Packet is just arrived from Buenos Ayres, and brings Intelligence that on the Arrival there of the *Diana* Packet, which left this Harbour six Months ago, Peace was proclaimed and all Hostilities ceased.⁶ I have the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

P.S. The Brig *Dispatch*, Emanuel LeGeyte of Jersey bound to this Place from Newfoundland with Codfish is taken and this moment sent in here by Cunningham.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 396–97. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The R^c Hon^{ble}: Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 3 Dec^r: 1777/Consul Katencamp/(N^o72)/R. 26th."

1. See also Gustavus Conyngham to the American Commissioners in France, 4 Dec. 1777, below.

2. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 26 Nov. 1777, above.

3. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 1 and 7 Nov. 1777, above.

4. Conyngham had sent a total of four prizes into Corunna by 3 Dec. 1777: brigs *Brothers*, *Syren*, and *Dispatch*, and ship *Two Brothers*.

5. This vessel was taken by Congyngham in *Revenge* on 21 Dec. 1777.

6. This refers to termination of hostilities in the Spanish-Portuguese War, 1776–77.

December 4

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CORKE, DEC. 4."

"On the 11th ult. the brig *Emperor of Germany*, Capt. Hawkins, of this port, was taken near the tower of Courdelong, in the river of Bourdeaux, by the *Portsmouth* privateer of Portsmouth in North America, Capt. Hart, master, mounting 26 nine pounders and 150 men. The crew were carried on board the privateer, and asked to enter, which, on refusing, they were sent on board a pilot boat and carried into Bourdeaux. On arrival there, three of the said crew entered on board an American letter of marque, the *Hetty*,¹ of Philadelphia, mounting six carriage guns and four swivels, bound from Bourdeaux to Philadelphia, with tea, bale goods, and cordage, but were to take in salt at St. Martin's. The three men of the *Emperor of Germany*'s crew, with four others shipped at Bourdeaux, concerted a scheme to take the said ship, which they effected in the night of the 25th ult. having had the Captain, with three of his men tied, sent them on shore in the ship's boat; the remainder of the crew joined them in bringing the said prize safe into Dungarvan on Monday last. The ship and cargo, it is thought, will bring near 7000l."

London Chronicle, 13–16 Dec. 1777.

1. Perhaps the brigantine *Hetty*, Joseph Ashbourn, master, of Philadelphia, mounting 10 guns, belonging to John Pringle and Blair McClenachan. P-Ar, Record Group 27, Records of the Supreme Executive Council, bond dated 31 July 1777.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Nantes Dec^r. 4th. 1777.

Inclosed you have copies of letters which I had the honor of writing you from Portsmouth¹—the latter of which could not have reached your hands as I understand that the mail was destroyed—I sailed from Portsmouth the 1st. Ult^o. and arrived safe in this River in the *Ranger* the 2^d. Curr^t. having taken two Brig^{tines}. from Malaga laden with Fruit for London²—I ordered them for this Place or Bourdeaux—I did not meet with an Oppertunity of making a greater number of captures my orders were not to Cruise unless I saw a fair Oppertunity—I however brought too a great number of Vessels which did not appear to be English property.

I fell in with a Fleet of Ten Sail about 80 leagues to the Westward of Ushant under a strong Convoy—but they were kept so close together that I found it impossible, notwithstanding my endeavours, to detach some of them from the Convoy.—³

The *Ranger* wants Iron Ballast and spare sails—she is rather Crank owing to the want of the former—and to her being somewhat-over-Masted—I think it will be necessary to reduce her lower Masts and her bottom is very foul—I shall loose no time but go on with the necessary Outfit in order to have her as soon as possible in order for Service.—I wait your orders which I shall obey with particular pleasure—I have sundry Orders which I shall forward with the dispatches now in the hands of Mr Williams for your perusal.

As the post is Just going I must curtail my letter.—Our affairs in America I left in the most promising Situation. I have the honor to be [&c.]

Jn^o P Jones

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 129. Docketed: "Captⁿ Jones Decr 1777/Aug^t—30—/containing a Plan for/the Navy."

1. Dated 3 June and 30 Aug., NDAR 9: 9–10, 849–50.

2. *George and Mary*.

3. H.M.S. *Invincible*, Captain Hyde Parker, Sr., with the home-bound Gibraltar convoy.

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

[Extract]

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen

(N^o 96)

Nantes Decem^r 4. 1777.

I have at present to inform you of the arrival of the Frigate *Ranger* Cap^t Jones with the Duplicates of the Dispatches I sent you by M^r Austin.¹ This Ship left portsmouth the 1st of November but brings not a syllable in addition to what we have had, and as Cap^t Jones tells me that his Dispatches were on board before M^r Austin sailed, I conclude that the Expence of a Courier Express may be saved, and accordingly shall keep them a day or two in expectation of a private hand. If I am disappointed in this I shall then send off a man and horse.—If you do not intend that Cap^t Jones shall immediately sail I shall be glad to send my men on board of his Ship as I am afraid of uneasiness among them so little Room is there for them on board the *Dolphin*. Cap^t Jones made two prizes² in his way hither, but they are not yet arrived here. . . . I am [&c.]

J Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Honourable/The Commissioners of the/United States." Docketed: "M^r Jon^a Williams/Nantes Dec^r 4/1777/(N^o 96)." The paragraph not printed deals with debts of the Congress to two French officers.

1. Jonathan Loring Austin, sent by the Massachusetts Board of War, left Boston on 31 Oct., arrived at Nantes on 1 Dec., and reached the Commissioners at Passy on 4 Dec. with news of the American victory at Saratoga and the British capture of Philadelphia. Francis Wharton, *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, 6 vols. (Washington: 1889), 1: 630–31.

2. Brigantines *George and Mary*.

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Si^r

ferroll. Decemb. 4th.

I was Yesterday Oblidg^d to put in hear being Chased all the forenoon by A frigate, & the Weather Being Bad I thought it most prudent to put in, I See by your Letter to the prize master of the Brig heare¹ that you imagine theare will be Some Dispute by the reason of the Cap^t protest She was So nyh [*nigh*] the Shore this every body is Sure it his interest So to do, but will not our protest be of equal force I think it Ought to be and funder neither Vessels or from the shore Can be any Witness one way or Other but to Close all I have Sold her and Cargoe to the same man that bought the *two Brothers*, for the Sum of Six thousand hard Dll. [*dollars*], the half to be paid Directly to me the Other half to you in 30 Days. With Giving you sufficient Suerty and he to run all risque Whatsover in every Case, and I beleive will Close the Bargaine with him for the Other Brig that is with you if not Sold, On this head Shall Write you if Concluded on, the next Newfoundland fleet will be on the Coast in 8 or 10 days if winds will Answer—

LB, UKLPR, H.C.A. 32/441/7, pt. 1.

1. Brig *Syren*, James Renolls master. See Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 3 Dec. 1777, above.

December 5

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Nantes Dec^r. 5th. 1777.

I had the honor of writing to you yesterday by post under cover by M^r Williams—I inclosed copies of two letters which I wrote you previous to my departure from Portsmouth—together with a plan which I drew up at Philadelphia on the Regulation and Equipment of our infant Navy.—I now inclose you a letter which I had the honor to received in charge from the Secret Committee in May last ¹—My then orders were to deliver it into your own hands—but as M^r Williams Assures me that he will send it by an Opportunity Altogether certain—and as I think my presence here is necessary for a few days until the Equipment &^{ca}. of the *Ranger* is fairly begun I have taken the liberty of putting the letter into his care.

I am here ready to receive and to pay cheerful and prompt Obedience to your Orders. It is my first and favorite Wish to be Employed in Active and Enterprizing Services When there is a prospect of rendering Acceptable Services to America. The singular Honor which Congress hath done me by their generous acknowledgements of my past Services hath inspired me with Sentiments of Gratitude which I shall carry with me to my Grave—and if a life of Services devoted to America can be made instrumental in securing its Independence I shall regard the continuance of such Approbation as an honor far superiour to what Kings ever could bestow.—

I am ready to lay before you my Orders which I have received from Congress—at present I take the liberty of inclosing for your inspection a very honorable and Unexpected Appointment which I received in Feberuary last the intention whereof was rendered Abortive by the Jealousy of the then Commodore Hopkins.²

I have always since we have had Ships of War been persuaded that small Squadrons could be employed to far better Advantage on private expeditions and would distress the Enemy infinitely more than the same force could do by cruising either Jointly or Seperately—were strict Secrecy Observed on our part the Enemy have many important Places in such a defenceless Situation that they might be effectually Surprised and Attacked with no very considerable Force—We cannot yet Fight their Navy as their numbers and Force is so far Superiour to ours—therefore it seems to be our most natural Province to Surprize their defenceless places and thereby divide their attention and draw it off from our Coasts. but you see that my honorable Correspondent is, and I know that many others are of the same opinion.

I wish for opportunites to testify with how much respect I have the honor to be
[&c.]

L, DNA, PCC, item 58, pp. 133–36 (M247 roll 71). Addressed at foot: “The Hon^{ble}/B. Franklin, S. Deane and/A. Lee Esq^{ts}.” Docketed: “Nantes 5th Dec^r. 1777./To the Hon^{ble}. B. Franklin/S. Deane, and A Lee Esq^{ts}. Paris.”

1. Secret Committee of the Continental Congress to the American Commissioners in France, 9 May 1777. *NDAR* 8: 941.

2. On the unrealized plan to have Jones command a squadron in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, see *NDAR* 7: 1109–12, 1315–16, and 1318–20.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Honored Sir

Nantes Dec^r 5th. 1777.

I take the liberty of inclosing two introductory letters¹ Addressed to you in behalf of my Lieutenant²—Who since his embarkation into the Service in July last under my Command hath behaved with becoming dilligence and Attention to duty.—should I have the honor of being called to Paris—or should any Alteration immediately take place in my Command I shall have an Opportunity of giving you further information on this head meantime I am [&c.]

Jn^o P Jones

L, MH-H, Autograph file. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Addressed at foot: "The Honorable/B. Franklin Esq^r." Docketed: "J. P Jones Nantes/Dec^r 5. 1777."

1. Not found.
2. Thomas Simpson.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM AN OFFICER ON BOARD THE *RANGER* CONTINENTAL SHIP OF WAR, JOHN PAUL JONES, ESQ; COMMANDER, DATED NANTZ, DECEMBER 5, 1777."

"We arrived here after a pleasant Passage of 32 Days—Near the Land's End, a Man at the Mast Head saw 17 Sail, which we gave Chace to, and they proved to be the Gibraltar Fleet, under Convoy of a 74 Gun Ship;¹ and we had then got under his Command with the two Prizes we had taken,² and knew not what to do, but our Captain took a very wise Step, which was, to heave to with the Convoy, and there lay with our Prizes, 'till the Commodore of the Fleet made Sail, which was in about two Hours; we then made Sail with the Convoy and tarried with them until almost Night, and then tackt Ship to the Southward, and got clear: had he suspected us to be Americans, we must have been captur'd, but he took us and our Prizes to be Part of his Convoy. I believe Capt. Jones will get a Frigate, he is a Gentleman of great COURAGE and CONDUCT, and is deserving of the best Ship in America; his men greatly like him, I expect we shall have bloody Noses before we return, especially if Capt. Jones keeps the *Ranger*, for he had as lives run along-side of a Frigate as a Merchantman. A Brig arriv'd from Boston³ the Day before us and brought the News of Burgoyne's Surrender."

Freeman's Journal, or New-Hampshire Gazette (Portsmouth), 14 Apr. 1778.

1. H.M.S. *Invincible*, Captain Hyde Parker, Sr.
2. Brigantines *George* and *Mary*.
3. Brigantine *Penet*, John Harris, master, engaged by the Massachusetts Board of War to transport Jonathan Loring Austin with dispatches to the American Commissioners in France.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *BEDFORD*, CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO

1777

December

Friday 5thCape Finesterre S 32° [*illeg.*] Dis^t 12 Leagues

Mod^e and fair at 7 AM saw and gave Chace to a Sail in the SW^t.
Q^r at Cape Finestere bore SBW Dis^t 12 L^s. at Noon spoke with the
Chace found her the *Annie* Brig from Newf^d. which had been
taken by the *Sturdy Beggar* 11th Nov^r and was going to Bilboa or
Bourdeaux

Cape Finestere EBS Dis^c 8 Leagues
 Mod^c and Fair W^r at 1 PM gave Chace to a Sail in the NW^t Q^r
 at 2 spoke with and found her the *New Amelia* from London bound
 [to] Madira.

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/94.

December 6

WILLIAM MORAN TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Reverend Sir

Both my duty and present Situation oblige me to take the liberty of writing to you; Had I been treated as any man of my station should Expect here At Dunkirk, I could have been of some Service to the Cause long since, moreover there is no greater Sign of Our Departure at present than was ten days Ago as the wind still continues in the same point, besides Our Going to Nants by Sea is very precarious, as there are so many people here who make it their business to inform the English of the most minute things that Are here transacted And who very well know we are for Going there, however should the wind Serve we must go, as for my part, which is in some Respect Shamefull, I have not the Second shirt to wear nor much of Any other Apparel, however I must content myself untill I get to Nants, where I earnestly Reacommend myself to your protection. I have Served since the year Seventy five,¹ And Sailed from Philadelphia in the month of february last, honoured with The Commission of first Lieutenant on board the *Hornet* A Continentol Sloop Commanded by John Nicholson Esq. Now in Forton prison from whence I have made my Escape with five others all Safe Arrived; I have met with M^r Johnston² of London who treated me most kindly and payed my Expences to Dunkirk And Gave me An order upon M^c Blake³ here, which he should have Accepted had M^r Hodge not been here, who took no more notice of me than of the lost Sailor. I have the honour Sir of Subscribing myself [&c.]

Dunkirk 10^{bre} y^c 6th. 1777

W: Moran

L, PPAmp, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 135. Addressed: "A Monsieur/Mons^r le Docteur Franklin/À Pasty/À l'Hôtel de/Valentinois/A Pasty/pres de Paris." Docketed: "W. Moran."

1. Moran earlier had been a master's mate in *Andrew Doria*. NDAR 4: 712, 1329; 5: 29, 727; 9: 1007.

2. Joshua Johnson, a Maryland native, living as a merchant in London. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 209.

3. Perhaps William Blake of South Carolina, merchant at Nantes.

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

à Versailles le 6. X^{bre}. 1777.

J'ay reçu, Monsieur, votre lettre du 1^{er} de ce mois par laquelle vous m'informez que les Cap^{nes} des frégattes anglo américaines le *Raleigh* et *Lalfred* sont arrivés à L'Orient, et que vous leur avez notifié de mettre en mer au premier vent; j'approuve ce que vous avez fait à ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 6 December 1777.

I have received, Sir, your letter of the first of this month by which you inform me that the captains of the American frigates *Raleigh* and *Alfred* have arrived at L'Orient, and that you have notified them to put to sea with the first wind. I approve of what you have done on this subject. I am, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 187. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet à l'orient." Docketed: "Classes R."; "Mariners' Registration Received."

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

Versailles 6. X^{brc.} 1777.

Je reçois des plaints, Monsieur, que vous voulez forcer les Capitaines des frégates américaines de partir sans leurs vivres et leur artillerie. Si cela est vous allez trop loin: il suffis que vous exigiez leur départ dès qu'elles seront en stat de reprendre la mer. Je vous prie de me mander ce qui en est; et en faisant executer les ordres que Je vous ai donnés ci-devant, de ne point donner lieu à des plaints sur la maniere dont vous les exécutés. Rappelez vous ceque Je vous ai dis moi même à ce Sujet. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 6 December 1777

I am receiving protests, Sir, that you wish to force the captains of the American frigates to leave without their provisions and their artillery. If this is true, you are going too far: It suffices that you require their departure as soon as they are in readiness to put to sea. I ask you to inform me what the situation is, and in putting into execution the orders which I have given you formerly, do not give occasion for protests over your manner of their execution. Call to mind what I have told you personally on this subject. I am, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 183. Addressed at foot: "M Gonet." Docketed: "R. le 10 X^e"; "Received 10 December."

DU BOISVIOLETTE GENEVOIS & CIE. TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Sir

Having made an agreement with M^r John King in behalf of the Common Wealth of Wirginia for a quantity of Salt to be deliver'd in James River, & our Ship the *Algonquin*, as you'll be pleased to See by the inclosed Contract, this Ship is quite ready Since a fortnight to put in Sea, only expecting a fair Wind, having for Pilote for the American Cost M^r Joseph Pryce from Philadelphia who is returning to america after having been a Six months time detained Prisoner in England by the Treachery of his Crew.¹

The merit of this is to ask the Favour of you, to give us the Signals that we are to use upon the Cost of America for to avoid running in to any harbour where there may

be any English Men of Wars riding for ancor, and as We are intirely unknown to you, we Send this under the Cower of our Friends Mess^r Dupont & Fils Banq^{rs}. at Paris, who will inform you that We are not able to abuse of the favour we asks, and We dare Say that our ship in the present Circonstances, will be much desired in Virginia.

We Expects the favour of few words in answer ꝓ the first post, and return of the Contract, remaining most respectfully [&c.]

Nantes Dec^r 6th 1777.

du Boisviollette Genevois & Co

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 132. Addressed at foot: "Benj. Francelin Esq^r at Paris." Docketed: "Du boisviollette/Dec^r 6 1777."

1. For Joseph Price's capture and imprisonment, see *NDAR* 8: 869–70; 9: 371–72.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen

Nantes 6 Dec^r 1777.

I have kept the Duplicates of the Dispatches to this Time in Expectation of a private Hand, that failing I am now obliged to send a Man on purpose, but in the least expensive way. If you have no further commands for him please to discharge him directly; he is not to return Post unless you order him so to do.—

The minister lately sent orders to stop the *Lion*, after that, orders came to allow but a certain number of men to each Ship, and now to compleat our ruin, Orders have arrived at the Commissarys, that the french merchant who fits out Ships for the French Islands shall give security at the Office that they shall go directly thither. . . . and the Captains and Crews shall return to France, in failure of which he is to answer in his proper Person.¹ This stops every Expedition that is now preparing as French Property for america as neither M^r Peltier nor any other Frenchman will subject himself to the penalty. I presume that the late good news from america and the present prosperous State of our military affairs will operate to obtain from ministry a repeal of these orders, in expectation of which I shall go on loading the Ships (which are continually taking in, but if you cannot obtain an alteration in these orders, we shall not be able to dispatch any of them. I therefore hope that the present moment of our prosperity will be employed to procure a permission to sail, For we are already much too far advanced in the Season.

You have never recalled your orders to me relating to the management of the Ships of War Prizes &c. I was therefore on the arrival of the *Ranger* at a loss how to act. I will never disobey your Directions and yet I wish to avoid disputes, which can do no good, and may do hurt to our affairs; in this Situation M^r Ross undertook to settle the matter between M^r Morris & myself and desired him to empower me by Letter to act.—M^r Morris spoke to me about it himself, and expressed his wish for a good understanding between us, I told him I desired to preserve it, and wished only to do my Duty to you and the public. He then wrote me a Letter by which he gives me the management of concerns in future, in the manner he has hitherto done to Mess^{rs} G and P.² I in answer accept it, requiring him to furnish me from Time to Time with the necessary Funds.³—These we shall no doubt be obliged to apply to you for, over & above what we may be able to get out of the hands of the above mentioned House, and the proceeds of prizes; one arrived to day, a small Brig with Lemons Raisins & 11 quarter Cask of Wine, which we have run off at 12500 Livres; this is as

much as I expected to get for her.—The Frigate will want many supplies, and must have them from some where, it was therefore necessary that some steps should be taken, and let who will transact the Business I suppose the money must in the end be paid by you. My Object therefore in consenting to this arrangement, was only that the public Business should not suffer, and by it I comply with your orders without opposing any one. I do not wish to interfere in the matter, nor is it my desire to make any private advantages. I only strive to do my Duty without any disagreeable altercation, but if you see any impropriety in this piece of Conduct, I beg you will signify it and I will act agreeable to your orders only; I flatter myself however you will not disapprove of the measure, or, if you do you will kindly allow my Intentions to have been good & point out my Error.—I have the honour to be [&c.]

J Williams J

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 124. Addressed at foot of letter: "The Hon^{ble} Comm^{rs} of the United States." Docketed: "Jon^a Williams/Nantes 6 Dec^r 1777." Notation: "pointmartin."

1. Ellipsis in the original. For the order referred to see Gabriel de Sartine to Charles Pierre Gonet, Commissary of Marine at L'Orient, 2 Dec., above.

2. Gruel and Penet.

3. Thomas Morris, stating that private business fully occupied his time, consented to having Williams take care of the business of the Secret Committee, splitting sales commissions between them. Williams agreed to the arrangement. Morris to Williams and Williams to Morris, both 5 Dec. 1777, PPAmP, Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 131, and vol. 37, 123.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM CADIZ, DEC. 6, FROM THE MASTER OF THE
TWO SISTERS, A NEWFOUNDLER."

"On the 12th ult. a few leagues to the westward of Cape Ferrol, we fell in with an American privateer, called the *Boston Hero*, of 18 guns and 120 men, who ordered all the crew into a pilot-boat we spoke with, that landed us at the Groyne. His sending us all on shore, made me suspect he meant to dispose of the cargo at some of the Spanish ports: I therefore wrote to Cadiz, as the wind was fair for that port when they took us, giving a description of the vessel to Mr. Williams, who by return of post informed me of her arrival there. I immediately set out for this place, and on my arrival entered a protest against her being sold, or her cargo, and doubt not of her being restored to me. I find the above is the usual way the American privateers now do; they get rid of the English crew, then put in hands of their own, forge papers, and pretend they come from America."

London Packet, 22–24 Dec. 1777.

December 8

EARL OF SANDWICH TO LORD NORTH

A Paper sent to Lord North on 8th December 1777 relative to the American war and urging more efforts to be made at home.

The mode of carrying on the war in America has been such for the last two years that the fleet has not been employed in the purposes in which it can be most useful

towards distressing the enemy, and making them feel their inability of holding out against the mother country.

Lord Howe has had this year under his command about 90 ships of all sorts, six of them of the line and ten two-deck ships, that is to say ships of fifty and forty-four guns; and it was natural to suppose that with such a force properly stationed he could have made it very difficult for the Americans to receive their supplies, carry on their trade, and fit out privateers to annoy the trade of Great Britain. The contrary however has been the case [*has happened*], because the greatest part of Lord Howe's fleet has been employed in convoying, embarking and disembarking the troops, and attending the operations of the army, which his Lordship in his first letters after his arrival in America mentions as his principal object, to which all others must give place. I do not mean to say that this was wrong, but the consequence of it was that our trade suffered, and that the enemy got the supplies from Europe by which they have been enabled to resist us.

It must not however be imagined that any force will be sufficient entirely to execute the purpose of blocking up all the rebels' ports and putting a total stop to their privateering; for along so extensive a coast, full of harbours and inlets, many ships will in spite of all our efforts get in and out by taking advantage of their knowledge of the coast, of dark and long nights, and events of wind and weather favourable to their purposes. However, we may certainly distress them infinitely more than has hitherto been done, and throw such burdens upon their trade and privateering as to make it difficult to carry on either without considerable loss, which, it is to be hoped, together with their want of necessities from Europe, would soon make them tired of the war.

But in order to be able to employ the naval force in America effectually to this purpose, it is absolutely necessary that the army should secure the possession of several places along the coast which are tenable (independent of a fleet to defend them) against any force the Americans can bring against them. These places must be such as the King's ships can resort to at all times and seasons, and which will give them shelter and refreshments for their men; and it is necessary that one of them at least (exclusive of Halifax) should afford complete and secure conveniences for careening and refitting the ships, without which both the ships and men will soon become unfit for cruising, which it is to be feared is already the case of many of Lord Howe's squadron.

Such ports are absolutely necessary, and without them no such naval war as is now recommended can be maintained so as to answer the purposes expected; for it must be remembered that cruisers can keep the sea only for a limited time, and that they must have friendly ports to repair to, to wood and water, and to supply their want of stores, and repair their defects, as also for the preservation of the health of their people. This was the idea of the Admiralty from the beginning of the war, and Lord Howe was accordingly by his instructions directed to consider and propose to us what ports were in his opinion properest for these purposes; but he has as yet made no return thereupon.¹

To supply what has been omitted in this particular, I would propose that a commissioner of the navy with proper assistants should go over in the first ships, with power to make such naval establishment and in such place as upon consulting with Lord Howe shall be thought most advisable. New York, Rhode Island, or Philadelphia, would in all probability effectually answer these purposes; but it is impossible to decide the point at this distance, and therefore I would leave it to be settled on

the spot and with Lord Howe's advice, who from the experience he has had and his local knowledge will be, it is to be presumed, a perfect master of the subject.

The Navy Board should be directed to send out what materials and artificers they may think proper for the beginning such establishment; but as it will take some time before this business can be completed, particular attention should be had, and immediate orders given, to provide for the security of Halifax, which since the late fatal event is in my opinion in imminent danger of an attack from New England early in the spring. If that important place should fall into the hands of the enemy, it would be a blow not easy to be recovered, as it is the only port in the whole continent of America where ships can be cleaned and refitted at this time, and is the seat of a commissioner of the navy with an established naval yard and proper artificers and materials for carrying on the business. It is to be always remembered that the fleet alone cannot defend the place, and that there must be a reinforcement of troops and additional works, if the present are not sufficient to repel every attempt of an enemy. While the American forces were employed at a distance, and the people of New England were expecting an attack at home, a small garrison was sufficient; but that is no longer the case, and as the rebels have no better means of employing their northern army than in attacking Canada or Halifax, and probably both, it seems to be our duty to attend to the security of these very important posts.

And for the better carrying on the naval service in that very extensive continent, it seems advisable that the command should be divided into two parts at least, viz the northern and southern; the first to include all Nova Scotia and Canada, the other from the Bay of Boston inclusive to Georgia. [But this cannot effectually take place till the naval establishment in the centre is formed; and therefore Lord Howe should be directed to send a sufficient naval force to Halifax early in the spring to cooperate with the land forces in case the place should be attacked.]

It is much to be wished that a separate command was also fixed in the southern colonies; and perhaps Port Royal in South Carolina would be a very proper place for the headquarters of that squadron. But I fear that at present this arrangement cannot be executed, for unless we are masters of the shore by means of our army, or by the goodwill of the inhabitants, none of the purposes wanted for the fitting and refreshing our ships can be obtained; and I can see nothing more to be done with regard to that district as yet than to leave it as it now is, giving directions to Lord Howe to employ as many cruisers to the southward as he can possibly spare, and to relieve them from time to time from his central post.

[It would also be highly proper to have a separate command for the Floridas and the Bahama Islands, for the security of those colonies and the Jamaica trade passing the Gulf: this command should consist of frigates and such vessels as the harbours in those parts will admit and afford them a proper place to careen and refit.]

Lord Howe should be told that his principal object now should be to block up the American ports, [and also to cooperate with the army in any attempts that may be thought advisable and practicable for making ourselves masters of those ports, destroying their shipping, and alarming and attacking their coast upon every proper occasion].² For these purposes he should keep as many cruisers at sea in small squadrons as his force will enable him to do; and it should be pointed out to him to be particularly attentive to the sending frequent intelligence to England of any armed vessels fitting out in America, for want of which 18 rebel privateers of whose exis-

tence we had no intelligence from his Lordship sailed at once from Boston and Salem [and came upon us unprepared in different parts, having appeared first on the Banks of Newfoundland where they took the *Fox* and did considerable damage to the fishery, while others attacked the homeward-bound West India convoy, and some had the audaciousness to insult our own coast and the trade in the British Channel].

It seems to me to be within the scope of the present subject to say a word or two on the state of our naval force at home [*as all our exterior efforts are derived from that centre*], and to consider whether it is adequate to the services that may be expected from it. We have 42 ships of the line in commission at home, which may fairly be considered as ready for service. I fear that France and Spain united have at least an equal number in Europe in commission, and I believe they have many more ready to receive men. I observe that France has only sent one ship of the line out of Europe, therefore her whole naval force may be said to be at home. Spain has no less than 42 ships of the line in commission, many of which are in foreign parts; and they certainly already have or can collect a formidable fleet at the Havana without detaching from Europe.

[The French have lately sent a large number of troops to their West India islands, with artillery and artillery officers, dismounted dragoons, and every other apparatus of war.]

We are vulnerable by a fleet at Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, and in North America, even without the aid of land forces; and with their aid, in the East Indies, and (if the Governor of Gibraltar's late account is true that he cannot defend the place without double his present garrison) in the Mediterranean also.

As soon as France determines to make war a squadron will be sent to attack us in one of these parts. We shall not know where the storm will fall, therefore the only measure of safety will be to have a respectable force in every part, [or at least to have a sufficient force in readiness at home to make large and immediate detachments to all our distant possessions]. Will our 42 ships supply the necessary detachments to answer this purpose, and to leave us superior at home to anything the House of Bourbon can bring against us in Europe after their detachment is made? Certainly not. Therefore, unless we are sure that France has no hostile intentions, is it prudent for us to remain a moment longer in our present state?

It will take a twelvemonth to get 25 more ships of the line ready for sea; 7 of these 25 (including the *Victory*) are now ready to receive men, and if they were commissioned would be ready for sea early in the spring; and 7 others would be immediately taken in hand, and ready to be commissioned in about two months. If we are in imminent danger of a foreign war (which in my opinion is the case), a day ought not to be lost. What shall we have to answer for if we are taken unprepared, and reduced to the necessity of either leaving our distant possessions undefended or seeing France and Spain in the Channel with a superior fleet?

In short, if we are certain that France and Spain will not take advantage of our distresses, our force at home is more than sufficient, and the public ought not to be burdened with that enormous expense; but on the other side, if from their falsehood and repeated breaches of their most solemn promises relative to succours sent to America, [and from the great armaments they have made notwithstanding the distress of their finances, at least those of France,] we may conclude that they are at the bottom our inveterate enemies, and are only waiting for the favourable moment to

strike the blow, I do think we risk the whole with regard to the safety of our country if we are any way remiss in using every precaution and exertion for our defence that our present circumstances require.³

I would therefore humbly advise that the 7 ships now ready to receive men, or at least 6 of them, should be commissioned, and that orders should be given for getting an equal number ready to receive men. Before it comes to their turn to be commissioned, events will show whether it is necessary to proceed farther.

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38) 1: 327–35. The editors note: “There is another copy, marked ‘sent to Ld North Dec: 7th 1777’ and endorsed thus: ‘Opinion about the Naval War Dec: 8th 1777 sent to Ld North shewing the impropriety of trusting to the promises of France & Spain, and proposing further Armaments.’ Both copies are in the Earl of Sandwich’s writing. Passages in square brackets in the paper printed here are insertions in the other copy: passages in italics within square brackets are in the other copy, but not in the one printed.”

1. Lords of the Admiralty to Richard, Lord Howe, 4 May 1776, UKLPR, Adm. 2/1332.

2. This passage marked in the original “added by the desire of Ld. Geo. Germain”; it is only an insertion on the other copy.

3. In the other copy the last few lines of this paragraph read thus: “. . . safety of our country and our personal security (which God knows is a very small article in the present consideration), if we are any way remiss in using every precaution and exertion for our defence that God and Nature have put us in possession of.”

SILAS DEANE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, JR.

Dear Sir

Passy 8th Dec^r 1777—

The Commissioners expect in about Eight or Ten Days to dispatch another Packet for America & Consequently will not detain Cap^t Young¹—I send you the Gazette Extraordinary of the Court of London which peruse & forward to M^r Hancock with the other News Papers sent you—We are still uncertain how soon Cap^t Nicholson will be ready for Sea, or if you have Shipp’d all the Goods on Montieus Two Vessels or other ways. please to be explicit on this subject in your next—

I hope Cap^t Nicholson may set out for Nantes or elsewhere to meet his Ship the last of this Week, when we shall finally determine on his destination There is no mention of you in the Dispatches from America nor any thing said on the old Subject—I hear that a Continental Ship of War is arrivd at Nantes with Duplicates of the last Dispatches tell us in your next what Ship this is & what her Errand²—I am &c
SD—

PS as to Cap^t Elliot & the other Officers at Nantes I must leave it with you to supply their present wants in the most Oeconomical manner consistent with their Stations. I hope they will not expect more than Pocket money, & to purchase necessary Cloathing for the Voyage—As to paying wages due from Congress to them we cannot do it—

You will take Rec^d of them for the Sums paid and give a Duplicate to Cap^t Nicholson to Settle in America—

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: “M^r Williams.”

1. Williams wrote the commissioners on 2 Dec. requesting instructions whether to detain Young’s dispatches, in expectation of additions to them, or to send Young off immediately. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 232.

2. Continental Navy ship *Ranger*, Capt. John Paul Jones.

December 9

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

Versailles 9. X^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, La lettre que vous m'avez écrite le 1^{er} de ce mois contenant les réponses aux questions que je vous avois chargé de faire au Cap^e. Fautrel; Et Sur le Compte que j'en ai rendu au Roy Sa M^é. a bien voulu agréer Sa justification et faire cesser Sa détention.¹ Je joins ici en conséquence l'ordre pour le faire mettre en liberté que vous signifierez au Géoluer des prisons de l'orient.² Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 9 December 1777

I have received, Sir, the letter which you wrote me on the first of this month containing the answers to the questions that I had charged you to ask Capt. Fautrel. And on my reporting this to the king, His Majesty has been pleased to accept his justification and order the end of his detention.¹ I am attaching, therefore, the order to set him free which you will give to the jailer of the Lorient prisons.² I am [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 207. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet." Docketed: "R. le 15." "Received the 15th."

1. On 2 Dec., Sartine had instructed Gonet to tell Fautrel that "nothing will excuse him from carrying out the precise orders which you will have given him before his departure." Ibid., fol. 177.

2. The order to release Fautrel is at ibid., fol. 208.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *RESOLUTION*, CAPTAIN SIR CHALONER OGLE

[1777]

Dec^{er}

Tuesday 9

Cape Ortugal S^o 18.46 E^t distance 34 Leagues
fresh gales & Cloudy at 6 AM/Saw 2 Sail to the S^owards, wore
Ship & gave Chace, Punish'd Alex^r Forbes, wth. 12 lashes for Mu-
tiney, ½ past 11 brought the chace too, found her the *Smyrna Gal-*
ley, taken by y^e *Sturdy Beggar* Provincial Privateer, hoisted y^e Boats
out & brought the Prisoners on board, sent the 4th Lieut^t, a Mate,
a Midshipman & Men to take charge of her

Cape Finnistaer S^o 25 19 E^t distance 20 Leagues.
fresh Breezes & Cloudy at 1 PM/ Made Sail after the *Sturdy Beg-*
gar At 3 Sprung y^e foretopmast at 4 tk^d Ship at 5 in 2 R Top-
sails hove to for y^e *Smyrna Galley* At 6 Sett the foresail at 11 Saw
a light in y^e SW Q^r

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/778.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO CONDE DE ARANDA

[Extract]

N^o. 3.Ex^{mo}. S^{or}.

Ha destinado V.E. la Carta N^o. 1178. de 26. de Noviembre ¹ á los puntos rela-
tivos á las Colonias Anglo-americanas, y voi á contextualarla despues de haber enter-

ado al Rey de las diversas especies que contiene, y tomado sus R^s. ordenes sobre cada punto.

Ha parecido mui bien á S.M. quanto V.E. ha trabado con M^r Grand, interlocutor de los Diputados Americanos, sobrè la restitution de la embarcacion Francesa la *Fortunée* cargada para el Comercio de Cadiz, y apresada por un Cosario insurgente,² por la sola razon de venir de Puerto Ingles con generos Yngleses.

Mediante las ofertas hechas á V.E. por esos Diputados de escribir inmediatamente al Congreso para la restitution de la presa y resarcim^{to} de todos perjuicios, las medidas que iban á tomar para evitar se incurriese en adelante en otros atentados de igual naturaleza, el sentimiento con que se hallaban, su sumisa disposicion á quanto pudiese satisfacer á S.M. y la confirmacion de estas expresiones en la Memoria³ que entregaron á V.E. y me remite, queda S.M. enteram^{te}. satisfecho, y aprueba admitiese V.E. la Memoria, puesto de acuerdo anticipadamente para ello con el S^r Conde de Vergennes.

Ahora manifestará V.E. á los Diputados para su consuelo, que su deferencia y disposiciones han merecido el agrado de S.M. asi como el insulto del Cosario le causó gran desagrado; que precisa recomienden al Congreso mucha firmeza en hacer executar las órdenes que tienen sus Armadores de respetar el Pavellon Español y no inquietar en ninguna manera su Comercio, pues no podrá tolerar S.M. lo contrario, y que en el caso presente, prescindiendo de la pronta restitution y resarcimiento completo de daños, de que no desistirá S.M., experimentarán como hasta ahora la continuacion de los efectos de la R^l. liberalidad y compasion con que los mira su magnanimo corazon, y de que verán pruebas efectivas y no escasas.

Este mismo en todas sus partes expresará V.E. para su noticia al S^r Conde de Vergennes.

Para gobierno solo de V.E. le diré que la intencion del Rey en qualesquiera socorros que haga á los Americanos, és no legarse con promesas ni contratos por muchas consideraciones que interesan tanto su honor quanto su politica, combinando todas las circunstancias actuales de Europa con nuestros intereses y la situacion de nuestros negocios.

Queda enterado S.M. de haber recibido M^r Lee Cartas credenciales del Congreso que le autorizan directamente para España, y aprueba la respuesta que dió V.E. á su insinuacion de si vendria personalmente á noticiarlo; pues si hubiese venido, no solo no hubiera permitido S.M. se le escuchase ni admitiese á tratar negocio alguno sino que le hubiera hecho salir, no siendo en ninguna manera necesaria la residencia aqui de ningun Diputado Americano. . .

Dios gu¹ á V.E. m^s. a^s. Madrid á 9. de Diciembre de 1777

El Conde de Floridablanca

[Translation]

No. 3.

Most Excellent Sir

Your Excellency has devoted letter no. 1178 of November 26¹ to topics relating to the Anglo-American colonies, and I am going to answer it after having informed the King on the various items it contained and receiving his royal orders on each point.

His Majesty was pleased when Your Excellency was dealing with Mr. Grand, speaker for the American Deputies on the return of the French ship la *Fortunée*, laden

for the commerce of Cadiz and which was captured by an insurgent privateer² for the sole reason that it came from an English port with English goods.

The offers made to Your Excellency by those Deputies to write immediately to Congress for return of the captured ship and compensation for all damages, the measures which they were going to take to avoid the occurrence of other attacks of this nature, their regret, their willingness to submit to whatever may satisfy His Majesty, and confirmation of these statements in the Memorial³ that they delivered to Your Excellency and is sent to me, His Majesty rests entirely satisfied, and approves Your Excellency's accepting the Memorial, on account of the agreement obtained beforehand for him with the Comte de Vergennes.

Now Your Excellency will show the Deputies, for their consolation, that their deference and disposition have earned the approval of His Majesty as much as the attack of the privateer has caused him displeasure. He goes on to say they should recommend that Congress firmly enforce the orders given their privateers to respect the Spanish flag, and not hinder Spanish commerce in any way, and that His Majesty would not in any way tolerate the contrary. He says that in the present case, as long as the ship is returned and compensation made for damages—failure to do so will not be countenanced by His Majesty—they will continue to enjoy the effects of royal indulgence and compassion with which his magnanimous heart regards them, and of which they will see actual proofs and not parsimonious ones.

Your Excellency will please express these statements in their totality to the Comte de Vergennes.

For your Excellency's sole guidance I will tell you that the intention of the king in providing aid to the Americans is not to commit himself to promises or contracts for many considerations which involve either his honor or politics, but rather to take into account all the current circumstances of Europe as well as our interests and the situation of our commerce.

His Majesty was informed that Mr. Lee received credentials in the form of letters from Congress which directly authorize him for Spain, and approves the response which Your Excellency gave to his suggestion that he come personally to inform him. If Mr. Lee would have come here, not only would His Majesty not have permitted him to be heard or allowed any dealing to take place, but also would have made him leave, as he believes that it is in no way necessary for an American Deputy to reside here. . . .

May God keep you many years. Madrid 9 December 1777.

El Conde de Floridablanca

L, SpMAH, Estado, legajo 4072, pt. 2, no. 3. Docketed: "Madrid 9 de Dic^{bre}. de 1777/Con el Correo Uribarri N^o 3./El S^o: C^o: Floridablanca A [S^o?] C^o: de Aranda. Q^o: S.M. queda satisfho de las medidas de los Diputados Americanos, p^a. restituir al navio la *Fortunée*, y de q^o no pasere Lee à España con sus credenciales. Q^o: la intencion del Rey es, no ligara p^a tratada con ellos. Q^o: se estimar las instrucciones al emisario Francés." "Madrid, 9 December 1777, with the Uribarri mail. The Conde Floridablanca to the Conde de Aranda. That his majesty is satisfied with the measures taken by the American Deputies for the restitution for the ship la *Fortunée*, and that Lee not come to Spain with his credentials. That the King's intention is not to treat with them. That he approves the instructions given to the French emissary."

1. Conde de Aranda to Conde de Floridablanca, 26 Nov. 1777, above.

2. Massachusetts privateer brigantine *Civil Usage*, Andrew Giddings, commanding.

3. American Commissioners in France to the French and Spanish Courts, 23 Nov. 1777, above.

December 10

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o. 175Paris December 10th. 1777

My Lord

Before I went to Versailles I carefully perused the different Papers transmitted to me in your Lordships Dispatch N^o 70, and made an Extract of such Parts of Governor Morris's Letters as I thought it would be proper to communicate to M de Vergennes; and in order to avoid the possibility of any Personal Discussions between Governor Morris, and M de Bouille, and at the Same Time to guard Against the Danger of a Discovery of the Channels thro' which M^r Morris receives His Intelligence, I entitled this Extract Authentic Advices from Martinico, and in my Conversations with the french Ministers gave no Intimation of the Channel thro' which the Intelligence comes but spoke of it as certain

The Spanish Ambassador who happened to go in before me had a Conference with M de Vergennes of an hour and a Quarter: to shew Him that I had remarked it, I began mine with saying, that He was destined to long Conferences that Day, and that I was very sorry to have a great deal to say to Him and always upon the same very unpleasant Subjects. He answered, as He often does, that He was there to Hear. and I went on with observing to Him, that the fraudulent Practice of Purchasing Prizes made by the Rebels still continued, and was a great detriment to many of His Majesty's Loyal Subjects, who had given in a Petition upon this occasion, which Petition was signed by no less than a hundred considerable Merchants, all sufferers by a Practice which was contrary to all friendship, all Justice, and which would not be tolerated in open War. Were we Sir in a state of Actual War with France, you would not suffer the Prizes made upon us by your own Subjects to be disposed of till they were legally condemned, and now, Frenchmen go out to sea to meet the American Pirates, purchase from them the English Ships they have taken, carry these Ships into some french Port, new paint them and make them pass for french Vessels. There are several Such Ships Sir at this Moment in the River of Nantes as I know from a Person lately come from thence, of two of them, which I claim as is my Duty, I know the Names, one is called la *Mignonne*, which I have already spoke to you about, the other Le *Duc de Chartres*. M de Vergenne's answer was the Same as usual; that these were abuses which the government did not tolerate, but could not totally prevent, tho' every means was taken to prevent them: that the immense gain got by such Purchases was such a Temptation, as made Men ingenious to find out means of eluding the Orders that had been given; and that I must be sensible how difficult it was to prevent purchases that were made out at Sea. I replied that there were many Marks of Evident collusion; that the American Pirates made Signs when they came near the Coast of France, and People went out in Boats to meet them; that these Ships were carried into french Ports, where they could not but be known; That Workmen were openly employed to paint and disfigure them; and that in a Word it was utterly impossible the Commanders in their different Ports should not see what was seen by every body else, unless they wilfully shut their Eyes. He promised that the Matter should be inquired into, and at his desire I gave Him a Note of the two Ships, and likewise of the Privateer the *Independance*, Captain Young, that is still at Nantes and of the *Dolphin* Captain Nichol-

son that is at Painbouf, and serves there as a sort of Guardship. She has 70 Men on board, and several officers destined for a new French ship of 24 Guns, built for the use of the Rebels—several of these 70 Men are English Sailors who tried to get away, and having got to Nantes, were, as my Informer assured me, put into the Town Prison at Nicholsons Request. (It is however possible My Lord that they had been guilty of some Irregularity, and that that was made the Pretence for their Confinement.)

After having dwelt upon all these particulars, and represented them in their true Light. I told M de Vergennes that serious as these Grievances were, they were far short of what passed at Martinico, I then took my Paper out of my Pocket—and when I gave it to M de Vergennes said that it would shew Him M de Bouilles' Conduct, as it really was, and begged Him to peruse it with Attention, and then tell me whether all this resembles Peace; or War. I said this decently, but strongly. He seemed Struck, took the Paper read it with great Attention, and when He saw the Number of Privateers fitted out by Prejean, He exclaimed why this is a Fleet! and after reading the whole, He said, Je vous avoue Milord que les Bras me tombent, and that it is impossible for me to reconcile these Advices, which you assure me are Authentic, with M de Bouilles' own accounts: He expressly says, that He has been careful to correct the abuses tolerated, or at least winked at by His Predecessor, and adds, that He is upon very good Terms with your Governors, and Admiral, and sends us copies of his correspondence with them. I told M de Vergennes that I had Intelligence, which accounted for all this, but accounted for it in a very disagreeable Manner: our Intelligence, which I pretend not to warrant, says, that M de Bouille has declared, that He has lately received Orders from His Court, to give every countenance and Protection to the Americans and that all He does, or suffers to be done is in consequence of these fresh Instructions. M de Vergennes assured me upon his Honour, that if M de Bouille had said this, He said the Thing that was not, and that He had received no such Instructions. My Answer was, that I did not give this Part of my Intelligence as certain, and therefore had not inserted it in the Paper, not chusing to mix suppositions with undoubted positive Facts. It is Facts Sir we look to, it is by them alone that Nations are to Judge; Your Governor suffers these Privateers to be fitted out against us; He authorizes this Prejean to make War against the Subjects of Great Britain, and that for the Absurdest of all Reasons, because He was born in Arcadia.—M de Vergennes readily admitted the Absurdity of this Reasoning—After what you have told me Sir, I cannot possibly believe that M de Bouille is Authorized to act as He does, but I repeat, it is to His Actions alone that we can look. They are such as are totally inconsistent with every Idea of friendship and Peace. In my apprehension of things Martinico is making war against Great Britain, The fitting out Cruizers is an Act of direct Hostility, it is an Act permitted by the Governor, that is, by the Delegate of your sovereign. If After these Representations the abuse continues, the inference must be, that if the Governor has not secret Instructions to bear Him out, He has at least the secret approbation of his Court. M de Vergennes did not contravert my Arguments, but said with a forced smile, that unless M de Bouille had made Himself King of Martinico, his conduct would change, as nothing could be more contrary to the King His Masters Intentions, and Orders, than to suffer or countenance such unwarrantable proceedings. He ended with saying, you no doubt will go to M de Maurepas pray take the Paper with you (You will be so good as to return it me) and shew it to Him, He reads English as well as I do, and will be as much struck as I am. I took His advice, went to M de Maurepas as I intended, found

Him alone, and After some short Conversation upon the same Topics I had dwelt upon with M de Vergennes, I gave Him the Paper. He read it with Attention, and I saw understood it perfectly, repeated what M de Vergennes had said of M de Bouilles correspondence, and assured me positively that He had no fresh Instructions

I observed to His Excellency, that I should not enter into the Motives or Reasons of M de Bouilles' conduct, that it was probable He thought he was acting agreeably to the secret wishes of his Court, but whether he is mistaken or not, a little Time will shew; if you do not approve his Conduct, you will force a change, if that change does not come, we must infer, your secret approbation. You hate long Reasoning Sir, and I will be very short: I will say but this, If these Acts of Hostility, carried on against us at Martinico, are suffered to continue, Your Excellency and I are giving ourselves a great deal of unnecessary Trouble in endeavouring to keep Matters quiet here, vous savez aussi bien que moi M le Comte, que si le Feu s'allume aux Extremities il gagera bientôt le Centre. He did not dispute this, but assured me that the Matter should be inquired into, and ended with saying, that that fellow Prejean must be removed. . . . I am [&c.]

Stormont

P.S. . . .

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1766. Addressed at foot of first page: "Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Paris 10 Dec^r 1777/Lord Stormont/(N^o 175)/R. 14th by Express from/Dover."

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE

Gentlemen

Ranger Nantes 10th. Dec^r. 1777.

Inclosed you have copies of three letters which I had the honor of writing to you while fitting out at Portsmouth. Which place I left the 1st. Ult^o.—After passing the Western Islands I fell in with and brought too a number of ships but met with no English property 'till within Eighty leagues of Ushant I then fell in with a Fleet of Ten Sail under a Strong Convoy bound up Channel—but notwithstanding my endeavours I was unable to detach any of them from the Convoy.¹—I took two Brigantines from Malaga with Fruit &^{ca}. for London.² One of the Prizes is arrived here the other I am now told is in Quiberon Bay.—I arrived here the 2^d. Curr^t. without having met with any Misfortune on the Passage tho I met with some very severe Weather.—besides the Fleet already mentioned I fell in with several ships in the Night so that I have had agreeable Proofs of the Active Spirit of both my Officers & Men—and tho' they have not formerly been conversant in the Management of Ships of War, yet I am persuaded that they will behave well should I have an Opportunity of bringing them to Action—for they pay more attention to instruction than conceited Fellows who think themselves too knowing to be taught.—

On my arrival I wrote to the Commissioners and forwarded the dispatches without loss of time—the Attention necessary to complete the Equipment of the *Ranger* hath induced me to stay here and hasten that business with all possible expedition—this being fairly begun I shall be in readiness to pay prompt Obedience to Such instructions as I may receive from the Commissioners in consequence of the Orders which they recieved, thro' my hands, from the Secret Committee—and should any insuperable difficulty stand in the Way of that Order I shall then be ready and will proceed on Active Service with the *Ranger* alone.

[illegible]

The South is better on the N coast & Spain is given to you. Fathoms generally small and Rocky ground but even near the land there are often no grounds at that depth.

Longitude (East from London)

I found the *Ranger* very Crank owing to the improper quality of her Ballast and to her being rather over-Masted—to remedy which I purpose to shorten her lower Masts and Ballast with lead.—as this Ballast will stow under the lower tier of Water the less quantity will be sufficient—of Course the ship will be so much the lighter and sail So much the faster—the lead can be landed on any part of the Continent where Iron can be had in its place.—the sailing of the *Ranger* falls short of the general expectation—for the Above reasons and on account of the foulness of her Bottom—which, except a partial cleaning in July, hath not been seen since she came off the stocks.

It is my hearts first and favorite wish to be employed in active and enterprizing Services where there is a prospect of Rendering such services Useful and Acceptable to America.—the singular Honor which Congress hath done me by their generous approbation of my past Conduct hath inspired me with Sentiments of Gratitude which I shall carry with me to my Grave—And if a life of Services devoted to America can be made instrumental in securing its Independence I shall regard the Continuance of such approbation as an honor far superiour to the Empty Pagentry which Kings ever did or can bestow.

I understand tho I have yet rec^d. no letter that the Commissioners had provided for me one of the finest Frigates that ever was Built—Calculated for thirty Guns on one Deck and capable of carrying 36 pounders—but were under the necessity of giving her up—on account of some difficulties which they met with at Court³—perhaps the news of our late Successes may now Put that court in a better humour.—but my Unfeigned thanks are equally due for the Intention as for the Act. I have the honor to be [&c.]

J. P. J.

L, DNA, PCC, item 58, pp. 137–40 (M247, roll 71). Addressed at foot of letter: “The Hon^{ble}. The Marine Committee.” Docketed: “N^o. 33./ *Ranger*, Nantes 10th. Dec^r/1777/The Honorable/The Marine Committee.”

1. H.M.S. *Invincible*, Captain Hyde Parker, Sr.

2. *George* and *Mary*.

3. *Indien*, building at Amsterdam.

JAMES GARDOQUI TO ARTHUR LEE

[Extract]

Arthur Lee Esq^r

Madrid 10th. Dec^{re}. 1777.

Dear Sir

... By advises from my house at St^r. Andero I find Cap^t. Babson of one of our freind's privateers¹ who lately sail'd from Bilbao fell in with about 20 sail of New-foundlanders under convoy of a strong arm'd vessel with whom she fought two hours & took 6 vessells, but the arm'd one gott away; Babson lost two officers & two privates but got safe to said port with the prizes² which circunstance pray keep to yourself. One Hibbert³ who left (Bilbao), Bilbao about the same time has taken three more which have also putt in near said port, which being what occurs have only to add my hearty wishes that all prosperity may attend you & all freinds with you during the present & many succeeding years to command. . . .

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS Am 811.2 (95). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1. Massachusetts privateer brig *General Mercer*, James Babson.

2. Probably included *Minehead* and *Hawke*.

3. Massachusetts privateer *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert.

December 11

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO JOHN THORNTON

Instructions to M^r Thornton ¹ [*Paris, 11 Dec. 1777*]

You will receive herewith a Letter to Lord North and another to Sir Grey Cooper Secretary of the Treasury,² to which you are to endeavour to obtain Answers.

As the Purport is to obtain Permission to visit & examine into the Situation of our People in their Goals, and administer to their Relief we hope a Request so consonant to Humanity will not be refus'd. But if you can not obtain such Permission, yet, (if not absolutely forbidden) we desire you would endeavour to see the Prisoners, take an Acc^t of their Names, the Rank or Quality they serv'd in, the States they belong'd to, in what Vessel, & by whom they were taken and such other particulars as may tend to give us perfect Information of their Circumstances.

But before you leave London to visit the Prisons, wait on M^r Hartley (for whom also you have a Letter which you will deliver as soon as you arrive) and desire his Advice or Orders; & if he should be so kind as to give you any relating to the Premises you are to follow the same punctually in your future Proceedings.

You will receive herewith Fifty Guineas for Travelling Expences of which you will render an Acc^t. We wish you a good Journey, being [&c.]

Your most humble Servants.

Df, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, 392.

1. John Thornton, whose real name appears to have been J. Dumeneg, had been in contact with the American Commissioners by early October. In January 1778 Arthur Lee employed him as his secretary and sent him twice to London on intelligence missions, but discharged him for suspicion of engaging in shady stock dealings. Thornton had, by then, become a British informant. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 26–28; Francis Wharton, *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, 6 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), 1: 659–61.

2. American Commissioners in France to Lord North, 12 Dec. 1777, and Benjamin Franklin to Sir Grey Cooper, 11 Dec. 1777, both below.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO SIR GREY COOPER

Dear Sir,

Paris, Dec. 11. 1777—

Receiving frequent Accounts by American Prisoners who have escap'd from your Goals, of the miserable Situation & hard Treatment of their Countrymen at Portsmouth & Plymouth, we have prevail'd with a Gentleman, Major Thornton, (to us much a Stranger but who appears a Man of Humanity) to visit the Prisons there, and give from us some Relief to those unfortunate Men. I hope that thro' your Interest he may obtain a Permission for that purpose. I could have wish'd that some voluntary Act of Compassion on the Part of your Government towards those in your Power, had appeared in abating the Rigours of their Confinement, & relieving their pressing Necessities, as such Generosity towards Enemies has naturally an Effect in softening and abating Animosity in their Compatriots, & disposing to Reconciliation. This, if I had any Influence with your Ministers I should recommend as prudent; being what would at least secure a Continuance of that kind Usage your People when our Prisoners have always experienc'd with us. M^r Thornton is charg'd with a Letter to Lord North, which I request you would procure him an Opportunity of delivering, and endeavour to obtain

an Answer. Perhaps it may not be thought proper to give any: But I am Sure it will not be an insolent one like that from Lord Stormont to a similar Application¹ The Remembrance of ancient Friendship encourages me to this Request, if 'tis too much; you can prevent Repetition of it by making no Reply. With my affectionate Respects to Lady Cooper, & love to my former young Friends, I am [&c.]

BF

Df, DLC, Benjamin Franklin Papers, 392. Addressed at foot: "Sir Grey Cooper Bar^t." Docketed: "Letter to Sir Grey Cooper/Dec 11. 77./Instructions to M^r Thornton." Cooper (c. 1726–1801), secretary of the treasury and member of Parliament, was a friend of Franklin's.

1. NDAR 8: 735n.

SHIPPING ARTICLES FOR THE OFFICERS OF THE SHIP *BRUNE*

Traitement et Conditions accordées par M M Bérard Frères et Co. Armatures du Vaisseau la *Brune* a l'Etat Major du d[it] Navire pour le Voyage de Nantes et dela aux Isles de L'Amerique Francoise Ports et Colonies de l'Amerique Angloise et Insurgente dans un ou plusieurs Ports ou Rivières, y faire un Chargement et Retour a l'Orient ou dans tout autre Port de France ou Le Navire fera Sa Decharge & Desarmement.

Il sera payé trois Mois d'Avance avant le Depart de l'Orient sur les Appointemens mentionnés ci dessous.

Les Armateurs declarent qu'ils ne veulent s'en tenir n'aucun usage de la Compagnie des Indes, qu'ils ne suivrent au Contraire que ceux du Commerce particulier pour l'Amerique et n'auront egard a aucun autre quelconque pour tout ce qui pourroit concerner le Passage du dit Navire.

Les Armateurs accordent a l'Etat Major un Port permis en Nature et Une Gratification qui leur sera payée deux Mois apres le Retour du dit Vaisseau de la Maniere et apres, et comme les d. Avantages ne sont accordés que pour les Services qu'ils seront dans le Cas de rendre a l'Armement. Si l'un deux quittoit le Vaisseau on débarqueroit pour Telle Raison que ce fut avant son Retour, il ne pourra presendu aucune Gratification, mais en Cas de Mort seulement pendant la Campagne les Armateurs tiendront compte a la Succession de la Gratification en Son entier.

	Port Permis	Gratification	Appointemens p ^r mois
A M Berubé Dufresne Capitaine	Un Tonneau en. en allant Deux en Retour	£5000 ^{lt}	£130 ^{lt}
A M Fautrell fils 2 ^d . Capitaine	un T ^{au} en Retour	3000	100
A M Livoyes Prem. Lieutenant	Point	2000	80
A M. [blank] P ^r Lieutenant au 2 ^d Poste	Point	1800	80
A M Coulas Rozan Chirurgien	Point	500	50
		12300	440

Il leur sera en outre permis de mettre dan leurs Chambres ce qu'ils jugeront a Propos, et de placer dans La Sainte Barbe une Malle chacun, contenant leurs effets d'usage seulement, sans aucune Marchandise, laquelle sera du Poids ordinaire.

Dans le Cas ou a l'Arrivée du V^{au} la *Brune* en Amerique, les Proprietaires voulussent y retenir le Navire pour le faire naviger sous leur Pavillon, ou y donner une autre Destination, l'etat Major sera libre de l'accepter ou le refuse Si les Conditions ne leur convenoient pas; et dans ce Cas leur Voyage leur sera dû en son entier, et leur Retour en France sera aux fraix des Proprietaires.

Dans le Cas ou au Retour du dit Navire, la France se trouvat en Guerre avec quelque autre Puissance et que l'on fit quelque Prise, le Capitaine et l'etat Major preleveront Suivant les usages de la Course de S^t Malo.

M. Dufresne s'engage expressement de Suivre les Ordres et Instructions que les Armateurs lui remetront pour le Susdit Voyage, tant a l'Orient quoi Nantes ou il doit finir son Armement, ainsi que de se conformer a Leurs Intentions pour l'Armement, Vivres, Rechanges et Equipage, ainsi que pour le Chargement, et de se tenir près pour partir de l'un et l'autre Port, desqu'il en Sera requis au premier Vent favorable.

Moyennant le dit Traitement, il est expressement defendu à l'etat Major du dit Navire d'embarquer ou faire embarquer sous tels Noms ou Manieres que ce puisse être soit en allant ou au Retour, aucunes Boissons ou Marchandises de quelque Sorte ou Qualité que ce puisse etre au dela du Port permis a Peine de payer triple frêt pour tout ce qui seroit trouvé en Contravention et de perdre la Gratification promise susdite & sans qu'aucun puisse reclamer en Justice contre les Armateurs pour Perte de la Gratification susdite, etant La Condition expresse sous laquelle le present Traitement leur est accordé.

M. Dufresne devra suivre la Route que lui indiquera le Capitaine Americain passer a son Bord,¹ pour entrer dans le premier Port, Havre ou Riviere qu'il lui indiquera dans l'Amerique, et Se guidera d'apres ses Avis des qu'il aura departé les trente Sept Degrés de Latitude Nord et dix sept Degrés de Longitude de Paris a peine de reprendre des Evenemens.

Fait Double a l'Orient le 10 X^{bre} 1777

Berard Freres et C^o.

Nous Soussignés Capitaine et Officiers composant l'Etat Major du V^{au} la *Brune*, acceptons, chacun dans nos Qualités respectives le Traitement ci-dessus, tant pour nos Appointemens que pour le Port permis et Gratification qui nous sont accordés, au Moyen de quoi nous promettons Parole d'honneur de remplir nos Engagemens, faire le Voyage et nous conformer strictement aux dites Conditions, consentant a etre privés de tout ce qui peut nous revenir du susdit Voyage Si nous y manquons, meme de repondre des evenemens en Cas de Contravention ou de non-Execution du present et ete qui aura autant de force que s'il fut fait devant Notaire, fait Double a l'Orient Le 11 X^{bre} 1777

J Bèrubé Dufraine
Le cullo'ch
N Fautrel
De Livoy's fils
Coulas Rozan

Amount of the Muster Roll paid on the Ships outfitted at L'Orient & attested Account Decem^r 1777 three Months advance £5748—0—0./.

True Copy Attest

Jon^a Loring Austin
W. T. Franklin

(Copy)

[Translation]

Pay and Conditions granted by Messrs. Bérard Frères and Co. outfitters of the vessel la *Brune* to the officers of the said vessel for the voyage from Nantes to the islands of French America, ports and colonies of English and Insurgent America into one or more of the ports or rivers, to take on a cargo and return to L'Orient or to any other port in France where the vessel will unload and lay up.

Three months advance will be paid before the departure from l'Orient on the emoluments mentioned below.

The outfitters declare that they do not wish to abide by any practice of the India Company, that, on the contrary, they will follow only the practices of the private trade with America and will not pay any heed to any other practice in anything that concerns the voyage of the said vessel.

The outfitters grant to the officers the right to carry goods on their own account and a bonus which will be paid to them two months after the return of the said vessel as specified below, and since the said emoluments are granted only because of the services which they will be in a position to render to the outfitters, if one of the officers were to leave the vessel for any reason whatsoever before its return, he will not be entitled to any bonus, but in case of death only during the voyage the outfitters will make payment of the whole bonus to the heirs.

	Right to carry goods	Bonus	Monthly salary
To M. Berubé Dufresne, Captain	One cask going, two returning	£5000 ^h	£130 ^h
To M. Fautrel, Jr., Master	One cask returning	3000	100
To M. Livoyes, 1st Mate	None	2000	80
To M. [blank] 2nd Mate	None	1800	80
To M. Coulas Rozan, Surgeon	None	500	50
		12300	440

They will also be permitted to put into their cabins whatever they choose, and to place in the gunner's store room one trunk apiece, containing effects for their personal use, without any merchandise for trade; this trunk will be of an ordinary weight.

If, on the arrival of the vessel la *Brune* in America, the owners should desire to keep her trading in the area under their flag or to send her elsewhere, the officers shall be free to accept or to refuse, if the conditions were not to suit them. In that case, compensation for the entire voyage will be due them and their return to France will be at the expense of the owners.

If, on the return of the said vessel, France should be at war with some other power, and if the vessel should take some prize, the captain and the officers will be compensated according to the customs of the privateers of St. Malo.

M. Dufresne expressly agrees to follow the orders and instructions which the outfitters will give him for the said voyage, whether at L'Orient or at Nantes where he is to finish his fitting out; he agrees to conform to their wishes respecting the fitting out, provisions, spare stores, and crew, as well as for the loading, and he

agrees to be ready to leave either port as soon as he is instructed to, at the first favorable wind.

In consideration of the said emolument, the officers are expressly forbidden to load on the ship or to cause to be loaded, under any name or in any other way whatsoever, either on the outward or on the return voyage, any liquors or merchandise of any sort or quality beyond the quantity which the officers have the right to carry on their own accounts under penalty of paying triple freight charges for everything found in violation, and under penalty of losing the bonus promised above, and there is waived any claim to recourse to the courts for redress from the outfitters for the loss of the said bonus, this being the express condition under which these emoluments are granted to them.

M. Dufresne will be required to follow the course which will be indicated to him by the American captain, his passenger,¹ to enter the first port, harbor or river which he will indicate to him in America, and M. Dufresne will take his instructions once he has passed a point at thirty-seven degrees of north latitude and seventeen degrees of longitude of Paris, under penalty of being held responsible for what may happen. Done in Duplicate at L'Orient on the 10th of December 1777

Bérard Frères and Co.

We the undersigned captain and chief officers of the vessel la *Brune* accept, each in his respective capacity, the above emolument, as concerns our salary, the right to carry merchandise to our account and the bonus, as granted, in consideration of which we promise on our word of honor to fulfill our agreement, to make the voyage and to conform strictly to the stated conditions, consenting to the loss of all profit to us from the said voyage if we fail to live up to our promise, and we even promise to be responsible for anything that might happen as a result of violation or non-performance of the present agreement, which will have as much force as if it had been made before a notary.

Done in Duplicate at l'Orient on the 11th of December 1777

J Bèrubé Dufraine
Le cullo'ch
N Fautrel
De Livoy's, Jr.
Coulas Rozan

Amount of the Muster Roll paid on the Ships outfitted at L'Orient & attested Account Decem^r: 1777 three Months advance £5748—0—0./.

True Copy Attest

Jon^a. Loring Austin

(Copy)

W. T. Franklin

Copy, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 57, 10. Docketed: "Agreement for the Ship *Brune*."

1. John Green.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO ROBERT MORRIS

Honored and dear Sir;

Ranger, Nantes 11th Dec^r 1777.

As the situation of affairs in Pensylvania, when I sailed from Portsmouth, rendered the conveyance of Letters from the Eastern States not altogether certain, I take

the Liberty of inclosing Copies of those which I had the honor of writeing to you while fitting out.

It is not in my Nature to persist intentionally in an Error, therefore I always wish to take the earliest Opportunity of Acknowledging a mistake; and as it now appears from the Situation of affairs, and more especially from the important Step that was taken in my favor by the Commissioners, in Obedience to the generous and liberal Sentiments and Orders of the Secret Committee, that Congress have had my Honor and Benefit at Heart: I must conclude also that it is not intended to Place me under the Command of Men, who durst not, or did not step forth as soon as myself, in this flattering belief I bid defiance to danger, and enjoy once more the cheerful Ardour and Spirit, which alone can animate and support an Officer in the Performance of his duty: to be continued in the Line wherein I stepped forth, and found acceptance at the beginning was, and is the height of my Ambitions; but for me to fight under Men, who held back, and did not appear in the first doubtful Juncture and who cannot now teach me my duty is impossible, nor will it be expected by Men of Candour and Ingenuity.

When I have the Honor of hearing from the Commissioners, I will return my thanks to the Secret Committee, but what form of thanks shall I render to you? Words are wanting here! I am utterly at a loss, nor know I where, or how to begin. the Obligations I owe to you, are so many, so important, and were so unexpected, that I must be ungrateful indeed did I not feel more than I can express. but I detest Flattery, therefore Must decline the Subject, least I should enrobe fair Truth in that fallacious dress. yes Sir, I feel, by a Prophetic impulse in my Breast, that I shall either manifest a grateful Sense of your Friendship by my conduct in Life, or by meeting my Death in support of the great Cause wherein you have born, so noble and so respected a part.

It gives me Pain to inform you that I found M^r F.¹ to be a Person different from what I thought him in America; he is subject to drink even to intoxication, which is at least a weakness utterly incompatible with the Characteristick of a good Officer; however Charity obliges me to think it rather a Habit acquired from disappointment than a constitutional Vice.

The care which France is now taking of her Seaman, ought to have some Weight with America; they have Ships of War stationed in all their Ports to make strict search, and to prevent the departure of French Seamen in foreign Ships. As America must become the first Marine Power in the World, the care and increase of our Seamen is a consideration of the first Magnitude, and claims the full attention of Congress. that our Seamen have decreased is a sad reality. that they will continue to decrease is as certain, unless effectual measures are taken to prevent it. I have seen with Indignation, the sordid Adventurers in Privateers sporting away the Sinews of our Marine: for notwithstanding the many Captures that have been made how trifling a proportion of Prisoners have been brought into our Ports, and given up for Exchange. Publick Virtue is not the Characteristick of the concerned in Privateers. no wonder then that they let their Prisoners go, in such a manner, that they immediately augment the Strength of the Enemies Fleet. their selfishness furnishes them with Reasons for this conduct; were they to keep their Prisoners, their Provision would be the sooner consumed; which might perhaps oblige them to return home before they had sufficiently glutted their Avarice? besides there might be some danger from

insurrections. these and the like are with them all-prevailing motives and bear down every Public consideration.

Were this base Conduct practised by those licensed Robbers alone "I should have found within my Soul one drop of Patience"² but to find Individuals in our Navy affected with the same foul Contagion racks me with distressing Passions, and covers me with Shame! One Instance, among many, may be sufficient. the redoubtable Manly went near the Entrance of St Johns and, disdaining Advantages, made the Enemy a Present of Eighty Seamen at once. Such Conduct on our part, at a time when our cruel Enemies are enforcing an Act of their Parliament, by the indiscriminant confinement of our Subjects in English dungeon's, not as Prisoners of War, but under the complicated Appellations of "Traitors," & Pirates & "Felons"! whose Necks they wish to destain to the Cord! and whose Hearts they wish to destain to the Flames! is a wonder "passing Strange"! and will be deemed Romance by future Ages. were an exemplary Punishment to be inflicted, on all who are thus regardless of the Intrests of America, it is to be hoped that such infernal Practices would cease.—every Prisoner of whatsoever denomination, and however distant when taken, ought to be brought into³

Df, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6667–68.

1. Maj. John Gizzard Frazer, Continental Army, to whom Jones had given passage to France.
2. *Othello*, act 4, scene 2: "I should have found in some part of my soul/A drop of patience."
3. The incomplete draft ends here.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO WILLIAM WHIPPLE

Honored Sir,

Ranger, Nantes 11th Dec^r 1777.

I think it my duty to give you some Acc^t of my Passage from Portsmouth to this place, as this may perhaps find you at home in the Bosom of domestic happiness. I had passed the Western Islands before a Sail appeared within our Horizon from the Mast head; but this Halcyon Season was then interrupted, and changed into continued alarms Night and day till the *Ranger* cast Anchor here the 2^d. Current this afforded me excellent Opportunities of exercising the Officers and Men especially in the Night, and it is with much Pleasure that I assure you their behaviour was to my entire Satisfaction. I fell in with an Enemies Fleet of Ten Sail off Ushant, bound up Channel, but notwithstanding my best endeavours, I was unable to detach any of them from the strong Convoy under which they sailed.¹ I fell in with and brought too a number of other Ships and Vessells none whereof proved to be British Property except two Brigantines with Fruit from Malaga for London which became Prizes,² the one is arrived here, the other I am told in Quiberon Bay. The *Rangers* sailing does not answer the general expectation, oweing in a great measure to her being too deep, very foul and over masted, her Ballast laid too high, on account of its improper quality, for a Ship of this construction, this with the extraordinary weight of her lower Masts occasioned her being very Crank, I am paying my whole Attention to remedy these inconveniences as much as Possible, I am shortening the lower Masts, shifting the Main Mast further aft, and Mean to ballast with Lead; as that Article will stowe under the lower tier of Water the less quantity will be sufficient, of course the Ship will be so much the lighter, and Sail so much the faster, and we shall

then, I hope, be able to stow the Cables under the Platform. Tho' I have yet received no Letter from the Commissioners, I understand that they had some time ago provided for me one of the finest Frigates³ that can be imagined, calculated for Thirty two, Twenty four Pounders, on One deck, and longer than any Ship in the Enemies Fleet, but it seems they were unfortunately under the necessity of giving her up on Account of some difficulties which they met with at Court, however I esteem the intention as much as tho' it had succeeded. as I shall always cherish the grateful remembrance of the Honor which Congress hath conferred on me by this and every other instance of their generous Approbation, I shall be the happiest of Men if a Life of services devoted to the Intrests of America can be rendered instrumental in securing it's Independance.

My particular thanks are due to you Sir, as one of the four Members of that Honorable Committee to whose generous intention, and Approbation I more immediately owe this great and unsolicited Obligation, but I hope for Opportunities of proving by my Conduct the deep sense I entertain of that favor.—

The inclosed Letter, and it's consequences hath given me real concern. Malice is a stranger to my Nature. I hate domestic broils, or misunderstandings, and would do, or suffer much, as a private Person to prevent them. But as an Officer, honored with the Approbation of Congress, and conscious of having at no time exceeded even in Thought the delicate line of my duty, or express letter of my Orders; I am in the highest degree tenacious of the respect due to my Signature: and I bid the most contemptuous defiance to the insinuation of any Man out of Congress.⁴

I have been informed in Portsmouth that the four Oar'd Boat which attended the *Ranger* was built for the *Portsmouth* Privateer, and after being rejected as misconstructed and unuseful for that Ship, was Assigned over to the *Ranger*, be this as it may, I will boldly affirm that she was the worst constructed & most unserviceable Boat that I ever saw, belonging to a Ship of War, for tho' a Man stepping on her Gunnel, would bring it down to the Waters edge, yet was her Weight equal, or nearly so to that of the Cutter, which I planned and had built, capable of carrying 40 Armed Men. had I been able, which I was not, to stow the two Boats, which I found provided for the *Ranger*, I must have been reduced to the Alternatives of throwing them overboard, or strikeing the TopMasts several times, on the Passage to prevent oversetting the Ship. I mention this matter to you in confidence as a Friend, declaring on the Honor of a Gentleman that I wish on my part to give it to Oblivion.

I have the Pleasure to hear that Captains Thompson and Hinman are well at Lorient of which please to inform M^{rs}. Thompson. I shall endeavour to procure the Articles mentioned in M^{rs}. Whipples Memorandum,⁵ I hope to live in the remembrance of the few acquaintances I have in Portsmouth, and I have the honor to be [&c.]

Jn^o P Jones

L, PHi, Ferdinand Dreer Autograph Collection, American Navy. Addressed at foot of letter: "The Honble./Gen^l Whipple."

1. H.M.S. *Invincible*, Capt. Hyde Parker, Sr.

2. *George and Mary*.

3. *Indien*, building at Amsterdam.

4. This refers to Jones's dispute with John Langdon, Continental Navy agent in Portsmouth, N.H., over the expense of a yawl. See William Gardner to Jones, 10 Oct., and Jones to Langdon, 11 Oct., above.

5. On the verso of John Wendell to Jones, 29 Oct. 1777, DLC, is a memorandum in Jones's hand to procure in France for Gen. Whipple's wife various items of cloth, lace, ribbon, gloves, and tea.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *PELICAN*, CAPTAIN HENRY LLOYD1777 Dec^{br}Castro bore S [*illeg.*]

Thursday 11

First & Middle parts Moderate & Squally, Latter part fresh Breezes & Clear. at 7 AM Tackd Ship saw two Sail in the SE Quarter out all Reefs and maid sail & Chaced at 9 spoke two Spanish Vessels, at 10 saw two Briggs in Shore gave Chace

Cape S^t Andero SSE 4 Leagues

Fresh Breezes & Cloudy, still in chace set Studing Sails. fired a Gun to bring too a french Brig Fired a Gun & made the Signal for the *Sprightly* Cutter to Chace to the SW. fired two Guns to bring too 2 Briggs in Shore ¹ Hoisted the Boat out & sent her on board with an Officer who found none of their People on board saw their Boats full of Men go on Shore. took possession of them & brought them to Our Ship they having American Collurs on board. fired a Gun & made the Signal for the *Sprightly* Cutter to Chase to the Northward. at [*illeg.*] PM fired a Gun to bring too a french Brigg from S^t Andero to Cadiz

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/710.

1. Prizes to Massachusetts privateer brig *General Mercer*, James Babson. See James Babson to Benjamin Franklin, 14 Dec., below.

JOURNAL OF H.M.S. *BEDFORD*, CAPTAIN WESTERN VARLO

1777

Cape Finestere EBS Dis^t 3 Lea^s

December

Fresh Gales and Cloudy Wea^r

Thursday 11

Cape Finestere NEB[E.] Dis^t. 5 or 6 Leagues

D^o Weather at 4 PM Cape Finestere bore SE ½ E^t Dis^t. 5 or 6 Lea^s at 8 Saw and gave Chace to a Sail in the SW^t Q^r at 9 fir'd [*a shot*] and spoke with the Chace found her a Brig from Virginia bound to S^t Cebastians,¹ sent a Petty Officer and 9 men on board her

D, UKLPR, Adm. 51/94.

1. *Nancy and Hannah. Pennsylvania Packet*, 1 Apr. 1778.

December 12

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON), FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1777

The *Mary*, Ashweek, of Dartmouth, from N. foundland to a Market, was taken by the *Hawke*¹ Privateer; the Crew were landed at Torbay the 1st Inst. by the *Vrow Elizabeth*, Heeling.

1. Massachusetts privateer schooner, Jeremiah Hibbert.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO LORD NORTH

To the Right Hon. Lord North, First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Principal Minister of the King of Great Britain.

My Lord,

"From motives of duty, and an earnest desire of mitigating the calamities of war, we proposed, near a year since, to the king of Great Britain's ambassador here, an exchange of prisoners in Europe. The answer we received must have been made known to your lordship, and the world will judge of its decency.¹ It would have been honourable for that noble lord, and happy for thousands, who have since suffered unnecessarily, if he had considered that moderation is a mark of wisdom, and humanity an ornament to the highest station. These are the sentiments at least which have governed the congress and people of the United States. They have wished that this war, into which they entered with reluctance, might be distinguished by the humanity with which it was conducted; and that compassion might heal the wounds that were inflicted. The records of congress, my lord, are filled with proofs of tender care and attention, not only to the wants, but to the comfort and accommodation of their prisoners.

"We have wished in vain to find such instances in the acts of the British governments, for unhappily all we have seen on this subject is, the public declaration of the governors and general who was chosen to commence this war, that the American officers and soldiers should be treated with equal indignity, and all devoted, without distinction, to the most ignominious fate, in terms too low for us to repeat. We have never heard of this proceeding, having been censured by the government from which he derived his authority. Neither has the invitation to the Indian savages, at a public treaty, to drink the blood and feast upon the body of those whom you called your subjects, been ever disavowed.²

"It is an universal complaint, that the practices of those in authority under you, have been conformable to the principles of these public acts.

"Col. Parker, a gentleman of rank, was thrown into a common gaol in Boston, covered over with wounds, where he perished unpitied, for want of the common comforts which his situation and humanity required.³

"Colonel Ethan Allen was dragged, in chains, from Canada to England, from England to Ireland, from Ireland to Carolina, and from thence to New York; at a time when the officers taken from you, in the same expedition, were treated not only with lenity, but every possible indulgence.⁴

"The barbarous treatment of Mr. Lovel, in Boston, has no parallel.⁵ Of the prisoners made in Fort Washington, two thirds of them perished by the unexampled cruelty and rigours of their captivity. Even in England, the severities which the American prisoners suffer, are, according to the testimony of every one we have seen, of the most grievous kind. Stripes have been inflicted on some, to make them commit the deepest of all crimes—the fighting against the liberties of their country. Numbers are now groaning in bondage in Africa and India, to which they were compelled by menaces of an immediate ignominious death; as contrary to every rule of war among civilized nations, as to every dictate of humanity.

"It is with the greatest regret we mention these cruelties. For the honor of humanity we hope they will not be committed again. Your lordship must know, that it

is in the power of those we have the honor to represent, to make ample retaliation upon the numerous prisoners of all ranks in their possession; and we warn and beseech you not to render it their indispensable duty. Upwards of five hundred British seamen have been generously treated, set at liberty by our cruisers in these seas, and sent at the public expence to their country. We trust, you will think yourselves bound to dismiss an equal number of seamen taken in the service of the United States.

"We also desire, that a person appointed by us, may have permission to furnish the subjects of the United States, who are in your prisons, with the necessaries they may want from time to time; and that a general cartel may be immediately settled, by which the unfortunate on both sides may be relieved as soon as possible from the miseries of imprisonment.

"We must beg a speedy answer, that we may transmit, without delay, the determination of your court to our constituents. We have the honor to be [&c.]

Benjamin Franklin.

Silas Dean

Arthur Lee.

"Commissioners Plenipotentiary from the Independent and United States of America."

Passi, near Paris, December 12, 1777.⁶

London Packet: or, New Lloyd's Evening Post, 26–28 Jan. 1778.

1. NDAR 8: 734–35.

2. Probably references to Gov. and Lt. Gen. Thomas Gage's proclamation of martial law of 12 June 1775, in NDAR 1: 662, and Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne's proclamation and speech to his Indians, of late June 1777, in Hoffman Nickerson, *The Turning Point of the Revolution: Or, Burgoyne in America*, 2 vols. (1928; reprint ed. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1967), 1: 120–25.

3. Lt. Col. Moses Parker, wounded and captured at Bunker Hill, died in prison after his leg was amputated. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 275.

4. See Ethan Allen, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity, From the Time of his being taken by the British, near Montreal, on the 25th Day of September, in the Year 1775, to the Time of his Exchange, on the 6th Day of May, 1778* (Philadelphia: Bell, 1779).

5. James Lovell, charged with spying after the Battle of Bunker Hill, was transferred from Boston to Halifax, and from there to New York, before being exchanged.

6. The newspaper entry continues as follows. "The answer received from government the 3d of January, 1778, on the subject of the American prisoners, is to the following effect: 'His majesty's servants do not approve of the proposal of inspectors. They understand the establishment of the prisoners to be what is usual and proper in such cases; if there has been any neglect, they have given strict orders to have it rectified, and they will always be ready to redress any complaints that shall be made. The prisoners shall be permitted to receive, under proper regulations, any charitable donations in their favor. Besides this, government are disposed, and have it in their intentions, as opportunity shall offer, to exchange them in America against British prisoners there. If any complaints are made through the hands of Mr. H——y, or through any other proper channel, they will be taken into consideration, according to the case, and redressed.'"

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

à Versailles le 12. X^{bre}. 1777.

Jay reçu, Monsieur, vos trois lettres du 3, de ce mois, l'une en réponse à ce que je vous avois mandé le 29. du mois d^{ec} au sujet du Corsaire américain le *Portsmouth* qu'on disoit passé du Bordeaux à L'orient, et dont vous me marquez n'avoir pas encore eu connoissance, une autre par laquelle vous me rendez compte de ce qui s'est passé de la part d'un matelot de St^e Malo qui vouloit se débarquer du navire la *Brune*,

et la 3^{me}. au sujet de la lettre que vous avez écrite à M. De Boüilhac, et de la réponse que vous avez reçu de ce fermier Gnal au sujet des 46. Bariques de Taffia—réclamés par les Cap^{nes}. des frégattes le *Raleigh* et l'*alfred*, et qui ont été saisies par les Employés des fermes, faute d'avoir, par ces Cap^{nes}. rempli les formalités prescrites, j'approuve le parti que vous avez pris par rapport au matelot de St^e Malo qui vouloit se débarquer, et à l'égard des 46. Bariques de Taffias confisquées, j'écris à M. De Boüilhac pour l'engager à en ordonner la remise, attendu le cas particulier, et pour ôter aux deux Capitaines anglo-américains tout prétexte d'éluder l'exécution des ordres qui leur ont été donnés de sortir promptement du Port. Je Suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 12 December 1777

I have received, Sir, your three letters of the 3d of this month, one in reply to what I informed you on the 29th of last month concerning the American privateer *Portsmouth* which was reported to have left from Bordeaux for Lorient, and of which you informed me of not yet having had knowledge, another by which you reported what occurred concerning a sailor of St. Malo who wished to disembark from the vessel *La Brune*, and the third concerning the letter you wrote to M. de Boüilhac, and of the reply that you received from this farmer-general concerning the 46 casks of rum claimed by the captains of the Frigates *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, and which were seized by the employees of the farms, for want of having, on the part of the captains, fulfilled the requisite formalities. I approve of what you did with respect to the sailor of St. Malo who wished to disembark, and with respect to the 46 casks of confiscated rum, I am writing to M. de Boüilhac in order to have him promise to order their handing over, seeing that it is a special case, and to remove from the two American captains any pretext for their eluding the carrying out of the orders which have been given to them to quit the port promptly. I am, Sir, [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E¹ 80, fol. 210. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet à l'Orient." Notations: "Classes"; "R. le 17 X^{bre}"; "Mariners' Registration"; "Received 17 Dec."

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU

CHEVALIER DE GOUZILLON-BELIZAL TO FRÉDÉRIC-JOSEPH GUILLOT

Copie de La lettre Ecrite par monsieur Le ch^{er}. de Gouzillon Belisal Lieutenant de v^{aux}. du roy a Monsieur Guillot Comissaire de la marinne a St malo

Je suis surpris Monsieur de La fanfaronade du Cap^{ne} du Brick de 14 ou 16 C. Corsaire de Grenezey,¹ il faut quil ayt la memoire Bien Courte pour ne pas se ressouvenir que dans plusieurs chasses que je luy ay appuyée en 8^{bre}. il a toujours fuy toutes voilles de hors et que meme Le lundy 27 dudit mois d 8^{bre}. a 4^h. du soir Lorsque je le rencontray au vent a moy sous la p^{ie} a Canon de Belleisle, d'un grand frais de NE. venant a ma rencontre Basbord amure a petites voilles, etant fort prés, je luy Criay sans porte voix et fis signe avec La main de me venir parler, il me repondit en son françois, oui monsieur, mais je fus fort surpris de le voir tenir le vent et mettre son grand foc, voille d Zétay et Larguer des ris, pour Lors, je n'hezitay point a tirer dessus, Luy envoyay sept Coups de Canon chargés a Boulets et mitraille et cinq a Boulet rond

desquels douze Coup. j'estime qu'il n'en a reçu que trois La Grosse mér nay Empechant de Bien pointer, je le chassay jusqu'a la nuit mais sa marche toujours superieure a la mienne, m'empêcha de le joindre il avoit tous ses mats haut son Beauprés navoit pas Lair avarié, et je le crois trop Bon marin pour du temp qu'il faisoit chargés ses mats de toile s'ils avoient été endomagés, tout cecy sest passé a la vuë de 4. Bat^{nts}. nantois et des habitants de Belleisle

Faitte L'usage que vous vouderéz de Cette Lettre je vous en laisse le maitre Flatéz que cet evenement me procure Le plaisir de vous assurer de Lattachement que je vous ay voué et avec Lequel jay Lhonneur detre [&c.]

Brest a Bord de la *Curieuse*
le 12 X^{brc} 1777

ch^{er} Gouzillon de Bélizal Lt de v^{au}.
Com^{dnt} La Corvette du roy La
Curieuse de 12 C. de 4^l et de 6
pierriers de ½^l

[Translation]

Copy of the letter written by Monsieur the Chevalier de Gouzillon Belisal, Lieutenant de Vaisseau of the king, to Monsieur Guillot Commissaire of the navy at St. Malo

I am surprised, Sir, by the boast of the captain of the brig of 14 or 16 guns, privateer of Jersey.¹ He must have a rather short memory not to recall that in the several chases that I gave him in October he always made all sail to escape and that even on Monday, the 27th of the said month of October, at 4 o'clock in the evening when I met him to the windward of me under Canon Point of Belle Isle, in a strong breeze from the northeast, coming to meet me on the port tack, under short sail. Being very near, I called to him without hailing distance and signalled with my hand to come speak to me; he answered in French, "Yes, Monsieur," but I was very surprised to see him keep the wind and set his standing-jib, staysail, and let out reefs, upon which I did not hesitate at all to fire on him, firing seven cannon loaded with ball and grape, and five with cannon balls, of which twelve shots, I estimate that only three hit him, the high seas preventing my aiming well. I chased him until nightfall, but his speed being always superior to mine prevented my catching him. His upper masts and his bowsprit did not have the appearance of having been damaged, and I believe him to be too good a sailor in that weather to have stressed his masts with sail if they had been damaged. All this happened in view of four vessels of Nantes and of the inhabitants of Belle Isle.

Make what use you wish to of this letter, I leave it up to you. I am pleased that this event gives me the pleasure of assuring you of the attachment I have sworn to you and with which I have the honor to be [&c.]

Brest, on board la *Curieuse*
12 December 1777

Chevalier Gouzillon de Bélizal,
Lieutenant de Vaisseau commanding
the royal corvette La *Curieuse* of 12
Cannon of 4 pounds and of 6 swivels
of ½ pound¹

Copy, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 129, fol. 233. Notation at top left corner: "M. le ch^{ce} de Gouzillon Belizat le 12. X^{brc}. 1777."

1. Jersey privateer *Revenge*, Noel Gautier. See Gabriel de Sartine to Frédéric-Joseph Guillot, 23 Dec., below.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU CHEVALIER DE GOUZILLON-BELIZAL TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

Monseigneur

Monsieur L'intendant vient de me faire part d'une Lettre du Commissaire de la marine de Saint malo ¹ par la quelle il luy marque un trait de fanfaronade relatif a moy qu'a fait a gerzey Le Cap^{ne}. du Corsaire ² sur Le quel je tiray Le 27 8^{bre}. et dont jeus L'honneur Monseigneur, de vous rendre Compte Le 29^{bre}. ³ a ma rentrée a Brest quoique je sois Bien persuadé Monseigneur que vous ne Doubter pas de La verité du Compte que je vous rendis lors, je me Crois obligé n'étant pas Connû a S^t malo, d'y faire passer un preçis de ce qui m'est arrivée dans ma derniere Croisiere. En Consequence je l'adresse au Commissaire il'en fera ce qu'il voudera Le fera meme passer sil veut a gerzey Cela m'est egal

Jay aussi L'honneur Monseigneur de vous en s'envoyér une Copie et soyér persuadé que si dans quelqu'un des de mes Croisiers je le trouve, malgré Monseigneur qu'il ait 14. ou 16 C. de 6. et que je n'en ay que douze du Calibre de 4. je Continueray, s'il vient trop pres de nos Cottes, a agir comme je l'ay deja fait La derniere Croisiere.

De me recommande toujours a sa Bonté pour Le Commandement d'une frigate et serois flatté que vous m'accordassier le privilege une de celles de St malo. vuë çé qui marrie dans çé moment avec M^r. Guillot relativement a çé Corsaire.

attendant donc tout de L'honneur de votre protection Je suis [&c.] ⁴

Ch^{er}. de Gouzillon Belizal.

Brest le 12 X^{bre}. 1777

[Translation]

My Lord

Monsieur the intendant has just told me about a letter from the Commissioner for the Navy at Saint Malo ¹ in which he notes a boastful reference regarding me that the captain of the privateer ² made in Jersey. I had fired on his ship on the 27th of October and I had the honor, my Lord, of making a report to you on 2 November ³ when I returned to Brest.

Although I am sure, my Lord, that you do not doubt the truth of the report that I made to you, I felt compelled, being unknown in Saint Malo, to forward there a summary of what had happened to me during my last cruise. Accordingly, I forwarded it to the Commissioner; he will do with it as he sees fit, he may even send it to Jersey. It makes no difference to me.

I also have the honor, my Lord, of sending you a copy of it and be assured that if, during my cruises, I come across him, and my Lord, whether he carries 14 or 16 six-pounders and I have only 12 four-pounders, I shall continue, if he comes near our coast, to act as I did during my last cruise.

I refer always to your bounty for the command of a frigate. I would be flattered were you to grant me the privilege of commanding one of those at Saint Malo, in light of what is happening to me at this moment with M. Guillot with regard to this privateer.

Relying on the honor of your protection, I am [&c.] ⁴

Chevalier de Gouzillon Belizal

Brest, 12 December 1777

L, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 129, fol. 232. Notations at top of first page: “Armement à Brest”; “M. le Ch^e de Gouzillon de Belizal le 12. X^{bre}. 1777”; “Renvoy du 20. X^{bre}. [au matin?]”; “approuve qu’il [illeg.] à M. Guillot”; “Rep le 26. X^{bre}. 1777.”

1. Frédéric-Joseph Guillot.

2. Jersey privateer *Revenge*, Noel Gautier. See Sartine to Guillot, 23 Dec., below.

3. Marginal notation: “marquer”; “noted”.

4. The two final paragraphs are marked with a bracket, with the marginal notation “M Blouin f.”

Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Blouin was commissary and first commissioner of the French navy.

December 13

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

13th. [Dec^r] Saturday Pleas^t weath^r All the Prisoners Examined to see What Clothes they Stand in Need of.

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

CAPTAIN GUSTAVUS CONYNHAM TO MIGUEL LAGOANERE AND COMPANY

M^r Lagoanere

[*Ferrol*] 13 Decm^r 1777

Si^r Notwtstading [*Notwithstanding*] the Certainty of every thing being Concluded, this Governour, will not or Cannot See it he Says that General O. Neal has not mention^d one Circumstance relative to the prise,¹ I see plainly that between the two the[y] are at points, and this man heare I see plainly will not resolve on any thing without it is as plain as A. B. C. I must beg you will gett the General to be a little plainer and willing to this Gov^t and Send the Copy of the Verdict inclose^d. to m^r Lambey [*Lembeye*]

I leave the prize master and A boy heare to the prize is Done with and then to proceed Down to you to Stay my return, in Respect of the Brig with you. I am Confident all will be Done for the Best and the Money of those two Brigs² Lay with you for Some time as at the fardest. I Shall not Stay Out more than 3 weeks. if An Accident Should happen in this Case it Should lay at the Disposal of M^r L. Cap^t fonlet is heare and I belive will Go Down to you to make A proposal/—

LB, UklPR, H.C.A. 32/441/7, pt. 1.

1. Most likely the *Syren*, James Renolls.

2. *Syren*, James Renolls, and *Dispatch*, Emanuel Le Geyte.

December 14 (Sunday)

JAMES BABSON TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

M^r Beniamen Francklin

S^t antones Decem^r th 14—1777

Sir this may Enform you that I Sailed from Bilboa Novm^r 20 with my pore Naked Crew by a fafuor of M^{es}. Gardoquis & Sons that Trusted me with one hund^d Pound Sterling to Buy a Little provishing I fell In with Six fish Versells from NFoundland affter a Little Dispute Tuck them all & Carred them Into S^t andero I oared

them to Bilboa but on their pasague thay fell In with a friget & a Cutter¹ three of them they Retuck & Carred of my peple Escaped on shore the outhers air Saft In port—Sir I have hear Nothing of my afair with my prise² I Left In Nant Should Esteem it as a favour if you would favour me with a Line Consaning the prise you may Depend that I Shand Trouble the french flag &, Sir I am [&c.]

James Babson

L, PPAmp, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 147. Addressed: "A Monsieur/Mons^r Benjamin Franklin/Paris". Docketed: "James Babson/Dec^r 14. 77."

1. H.M.S. *Pelican* and H.M. cutter *Sprightly*. See Captain's Journal of H.M.S. *Pelican*, Captain Henry Lloyd, 11 Dec., above.

2. *Clarendon*.

CONDE DE FLORIDABLANCA TO LORD GRANTHAM

Copia

Exmo S^{or}.

Mui Señor mio; Con fecha de 12 del corriente repite V.E. sus quejas sobre la Proteccion que supone lo gran en los Puertos de España los Corsarios Americanos, y como las ofertas que he hecho en nobre del Rey han sido sinceras y dictadas por su deseo de acreditar su Amistad y escrupuloso procedimiento à S.M. Bretanica, debo participar à V.E. que al Comandante de Galicia se le encarga de nuevo el cumplimiento de las ordenes que le estan dadas, se le previene providencie que el Corsario Cunningham entregue a su disposicion el marinero Ingles de que V.E. me habla,¹ y zele que en lo sucesivo no se violente a volver abordo a los Marineros Ingleses, ó de otra Nacion que se refugieren à tierra desde los Vaxeles Americanos, ni se consienta que sean tomados p^r fuerza, y se le advierte informe, (con remision de los Procesos) sobre todas las preses que V.E. me cita en su papel de 12. y hayan entrado en aquellos Puertos, como acerca de todo lo ocurrido en la venta de sus Cargazones, depositando el importe de ellas hasta nueva Disposicion.

Las mismas advertencias se hacen al Gobernador de Santander y Castro, mandandole detenga en este ultimo Puerto el Navio *Elizabeth*,² que dice V.E. fue tomado à medio tiro de Cañon, y remita los Autos para que aqui podemos enterarnos del hecho.

Crea V.E. que todos los inconvenientes que V.E. representa ahora se habrian evitado si V.E. hubiese tenido à bien executar (lo q^e le propuse en mi ultimo papel)³ pues de esta omission proviene sin duda la repeticion de las quejas de V.E.

Pero asi como el Rey se presta por pura amistad y buena correspondencia con su Corte de V.E. à los actos de condescendencia y equidad que dexo enunciados, se promete S.M. no tardara aquella en remediar los desordenes q^e los Corsarios y Marina Inglesa cometen en los Mares de America contra los Navios Españoles con infraccion del tenor de los Tratados, pues sobre los Excesos anteriores ocurren en el dia dos casos que se expresan en la adjunta Nota, respecto à los quales solo pide S.M. justicia, prometiendose que la Satisfaccion sea completa, y las ordenes tan effectivas que de resultas de ellas no se abuse mas de la prudente tolerancia del Rey y de sus Oficiales y Comandantes.

Deseó se haya VE. restablecido de su Indisposicion, y ratificandole mi obsequio ruego á D^s. guarde à V.E. m^s. a^s.

Aranjuez à 14 de Dic^e. de 1777. &c^a. &c^a.

El Conde de Floridablanca.

Translation.

Most Excellent Sir:

Sir; Your Excy repeats in your's of the 12th. Ins^t your Complaints upon the Protection which you imagine that the American Privateers receive in the Ports of Spain; and, as the Offers which I have made to your Excellency in the King's Name have been sincere & dictated by His Desire of confirming his Friendship & his scrupulous Proceeding towards His Britannick Majesty, I am to communicate to your Excy, that the Commandant General of Galicia receives fresh Instructions to comply with the Orders which had been given, he is directed to take care that Cunningham delivers up to his Disposition the English Sailor whom your Excy mentions to me,¹ & to be observant for the future that no Violence be offered to oblige any English Sailors or of other Nations, who shall take refuge on Spanish Ground, to return to his Ship, nor is he to consent to his, (Cunningham) taking any by Force, & the said Commandant is further instructed to give me Information (Together with the Documents relating to them) of all the Prizes which your Excy speaks of in your Office of the 12th. and which have come into these Ports as well as of all that has happened relative to the Sales of their Cargoes, depositing in the mean while the Produce of them 'till further Orders. The same Instructions are sent to the Commandants of S^t Andero & Castro directing that the Ship *Elizabeth*,² which your Excy says was taken at half Gun Shot from the latter, be detained there, & the Proceedings thereupon be sent here that we may judge of them.

Your Excy may be assured, that the Inconveniences which your Ex^{cy} now complains of might have been avoided if your Ex^{cy} had thought proper to execute what I proposed in my last Office,³ & doubtless from that not having been done has arisen The repetition of your Complaints.—But as on the one hand The King out of pure Friendship & good Correspondence towards your Court acts with Equity & Condescension which I have set forth, His Majesty on the other hopes, that your Court will not delay giving a Remedy to the Disorders which the English Privateers & Navy commit in the American Seas against Spanish Ships, infringing upon the Tenor of our Treaties, for besides the former Excesses, two Cases have just arisen which are described in the annexed Note, with regard to which His Majesty only asks for Justice promising himself that He shall receive compleat Satisfaction, & that such efficacious Orders shall be given, as shall not give more exercise for the prudent forbearance of His Majesty, His Offices & Commanders.

I am very desirous that your Excy should recover from your Indisposition, & confirming my Obedience to you I pray for a long Continuation of your Life &c^a.

Count Floridablanca

Aranjuez 14th. Dec^r 1777.

[Enclosure]

Copia

La Fragata Correo del Rey Catolico nombrado el *Colon*, su Capitan Don Mateo de Urcallo, salio de la Coruña el día 2^o. de Agosto con los pliegos del Real Servicio para la Isla de Cuba. En las inmediaciones de las Islas de S^{te}. Tomas y La Tortola fue acometido por dos Balandras Inglesas, que despues de haber la disparado varios tiros con bala enviaron gente armada à su bordo, que reconocio toda la carga, y aun se atrevio à abrir uno de los caxones de la Correspondencia habiendo puesto grillos à parte de la tripulacion Española, y tratadola como à enemiga, por mas que se la representó el respeto

q^e debia à una embarcacion Correo del Rey y la Paz q^e reynaba entre España y la Gran Bretaña, y aunque despues se permitió à la Fragata el *Colon* seguir su Viage, se la molestó y detuvo largo tiempo habiendo hecho aquellas vexaciones sin respeto alguno al Pavellon. Aunque se ignora el nombre de las dos Balandras Inglesas q^e cometeron este insulto se sabe que el Capitan de la una se llamaba Tillet, y el segundo Piloto Fills.

Hallandose el Bergantin Coreo de S.M. el *Principe de Asturias* en el Rio Misisipi a 17 Leguas de la nueva Orleans fue acometido por una Balandra Inglesa Corsario q^e la disparo varios canonazos y le abordó sable en mano ultrajando de obra y de palabra a la tripulacion y prorumpiendo en vituperios contra la Nacion Española.⁴

Note annexed to the Office.

Translation.

The Frigate *Colon*, a Packet Boat of His Catholick Majesty's, commanded by Dⁿ Manuel de Urcallo, sailed from Coruña the 2^d of August, with Letters upon the Royal Service for the Island of Cuba: Being near the Island of St^e Thomas and Turtle Island she was attacked by two English Sloops, who after firing at her several Times with Ball sent some armed people on board, who looked over the whole Cargo, & even dared to open one of the Chests of Papers, chained part of the Crew, treating them as Enemies, notwithstanding Representations made of the Respect due to a King's Packet Boat, & the Peace existing between the two Crowns: And altho' the Frigate *Colon* was afterwards allowed to proceed on her Voyage, she was interrupted & detained a long Time; all this Trouble being given without any Respect to the Flag which She bore. Altho' the Names of the English Sloops which committed this Outrage are not known, yet we know that the Captain of one of them is called Tillet, & the second Pilot Fills.

The Packet Boat belonging to His Catholick Majesty, called the *Prince of Asturias*, being in the Misissipi, 17 Leagues from New Orleans, was attacked by an English Privateer, who fired several Times at her, & whose Crew at last boarded her Sword in Hand, committing Outrages by Word & Deed, & breaking out in violent Abuse of the Spanish Nation.⁴

L and Translation, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 425; enclosure, D and Translation, at 420–21. Addressed at the foot of the letter: "Ex^{mo}. S^{ra} Baron Grantham"; and on the translation: "His Excy/Lord Grantham." Docketed: "In Lord Grantham's N^o 67." Enclosed in Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 22 Dec. 1777, below.

1. John Jordan. See Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 19 and 26 Nov. 1777, above.

2. Taken by *True American*, John Buffington.

3. See Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

4. For the attack on the *Principe de Asturias*, on 1 Sept., see NDAR 9: 929–30.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GIBRALTAR. DEC. 14."

"The *Enterprize* frigate, commanded by Sir Thomas Rich, Bart. on this station, hardly goes out on a cruise but she returns with a prize, and most of them of great value. Not long since she brought in a French ship¹ on suspicion of being bound to America. Sir Thomas had the art to sift the secret out of the crew, and she has been condemned as a legal prize in our Court of Admiralty here. We have three other frigates also cruizing about here."

New-York Gazette, 6 Apr. 1778.

1. *Pompée*, Louis Le Grand, master.

December 15

LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO CAPTAINS THOMAS GRAVES,
HERBERT SAWYER, AND GEORGE BOWYER, R.N.

By &c

You are hereby required & directed to put to Sea in the Ship you command without a moments loss of time & proceed & Cruize between Ushant & Cape Clear for the protection of the Trade of His Majestys Subjects & diligently to look out for &C to use your best endeavours to take or destroy any Privatiers or other Ships or Vessels belonging to the Rebellious Colonies of N^o. America.

You are to continue upon the above Station for one Month after passing Ushant & then return to Plymouth Sound & remain there until you receive further order; sending Us an account of your arrival & proceedings. Given &c 15th. Dec^r. 1777

Sandwich
Palmerston
H Palliser

Cap ^t . Graves— <i>Conqueror</i>	}	Plym ^o .
" Sawyer— <i>Boyne</i>		
" Bowyer— <i>Burford</i>		

By &c PS

By Express at 9 P.M.

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/103, 305–6.

HERMAN KATENCAMP TO LORD WEYMOUTH

N^o. 73.

Corunna 15th. Dec^r. 1777.

My Lord.

The S^r. *Pascal* of 74 Guns, and the *Soledad* Frigate are sailed from Ferrol but whither is not known.

Cunningham is returned to Ferrol from his third Cruize having besides the two vessels which in my last ¹ I had the Honor to acquaint Your Lordship he had sent in here taken several others and sent them to different Ports of France and Spain. The *Hawke* Privateer Jeremiah Hilbert has also made great Havock among our Newfoundland Ships bound to Bilboa, and Santander, more than half of which have been taken by the Rebels since the Convoy under Admiral Montague left them. None of His Majesty's Ships appear on this Coast to protect a Trade so extremely beneficial to the Nation, nor have any been seen by the American vessels that have lately arrived here from Virginia and other Parts of North America. I therefore most humbly beseech your Lordship will be pleased to take in Consideration what I had the Honor to write on this Subject in my Letter N^o. 66,² I humbly conceive a Cutter of equal Force with Cunninghams would render effectual Service if that method was observed.

This Pirate is still in Ferrol and continues to receive every Encouragement that can be given him. his two last Prizes which were taken within Cannon Shot of the Coast have been declared legal, and he is now waiting for Leave to sell them:³ the most false Representations have been sent to Court for that end, and there is no Doubt they will be attended to.

Great Rejoicings have been made by the Americans in this Port at the News propagated by a vessel just arrived from Northampton in Virginia, of General Howe's being totally defeated and driven from Philadelphia on the first of October, and of the total Loss of General Burgoyne's whole Army, a Report which I flatter myself deserves no Credit. I have the Honor to be [&c.]

H Katencamp.

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 414–15. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The R^t Hon^{ble} Lord Viscount Weymouth." Docketed: "Coruña 15 Dec^r 1777/Consul Katencamp/(N^o 73)/R. 5 Jan^y 1778."

1. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 3 Dec. 1777, above.
2. Herman Katencamp to Lord Weymouth, 8 Oct. 1777, above.
3. For the American perspective, see Gustavus Conyngham to the American Commissioners in France, 4 Dec. 1777, above. See also Gustavus Conyngham to Lagoanere and Company, 13 Dec. 1777, above.

December 16

F. STEWARD TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

My Lord

Waymouth Dec^r 16. 1777.

As the following description of the two rebell Frigates who engaged the *Druid*, & went into Port L'Orient, was given me by a Gent^l of the strictest veracity, who left that Place the fourth Ins^t when they were fitting out, & expected to be ready for sea in a fortnight, intending as they gave out for the S^{wd}. to intercept the Indiamen, but as he supposed from the information of the Stores he saw go on board, they meant a winter Cruise to the N^w^d. or to go directly for Boston I have taken the Liberty to lay the same before your L^dShip for the Information of the Cruizers under your Command—At the same time the *Amphytrite* from America lay in the outer road with a valuable Cargo for S^t. Maloes as he beleives tho' they said for Nantz—I am [&c.]

F Steward

[Enclosure]

The *Rawleigh* the Comm^r (Thompson a Scotchman) is a fine looking ship in size & built like the Kings frigates of 28 Guns, but carries 13 twelve Pounders on her Gun-deck & they say (for they were not mounted) 12-six p^{rs}. on her quarter deck & fore-castle beside swivells & 280 men, but he believes they exaggerate in this Particular, the Crews mostly English & Irish, who appear tired of their Masters—. The officers have most of them been employed in small trading vessells, & now swagger in blue uniforms turned up with red and Anchor Buttons.—She is low abaft, with a square Stern & quarter Gallery, a figure head—is painted white & black with a red & white streak along her Quar^r her sides well scraped, her Bend blacked rather higher up than usual, & her bottom very white, her Nettings fore & aft filled with Hay or Cotton Bags at present clean & white, she is both square & taunt rigged with very long flagstaff or rather royall Masts painted black has a whole mizen yard, & a Pole Mizen topmast the head of which is very long, her stern Lanthorn larger than general & painted white, they say sails extreamly well, especially upon a wind, & has the look of it—. The *Alfred* was formerly a Merchantman is about 275. or 300 tons at most, pierced for 20 Guns 9 Pd^{rs}. & carries 6-four-Pound^s on the Q^r Deck & forward. the Cap^t. An American, she they say has 160 men, & is better officered than the other, but sails dully.—her Appearance when her Guns are housed & ports lowered down has very little of the ship of war, she

is square sterned, without quarter Gallery or Badges, has a figure head painted yellow with a remarkable large Plume of feathers on his helmet painted white—. The ship is painted plain black & yellow with a white bottom is very taunt but not square rigged, her royall Masts & pole mizen topmast head more out of Proportion than the *Rawleigh's* has a Gaft Mizen, Top Armour & Quarter Cloths Blue with 13 white Stars y^e same as in the upper Corner of their Colors. neither have their Names in the Stern they have with them a small Bermudian Sloop with four Guns—

L, UKLPR, Adm. 1/1838/13, 64.

JOHN ROSS TO SILAS DEANE

The Hon^{ble} Silas Deane Esq^{re}.

Nantes 16 Decem^r 1777

Dear Sir

By a letter I took the liberty to write the Hon^{ble} Commissioner's last Wednesday, advising of the *Henriettas* Safe arrival from Hamb^g—You'd see thereby I was then at L'Orient. The conduct & inconsistency of my Correspondent M^r Berrard, carried me thither at a few hour's notice from Green, and I am Satisfyed had I not made my appearance (very unexpectedly to him indeed) he woud Retard the dispatch of my Vessels, without the least cause, except the Suspitions of his own heart, that I had become disgusted with his Management—My Presence changed the Scene, and I now look for the Ship with the first fair wind, having falen down to Isle Groye before I left L'Orient. Nevertheless, as no accounts are Rendered as Yet, can't say any thing of this Gentleman's management former delays & neglects on his Part has accumulated the expence, nor have I any remedy for what I may suffer in that respect, but to gaurd against him in future.—

On my return here, I received your Sundry favours of the 1st. 2^d. & 8th Inst: ¹ all which being now before me shall Reply to each in their order.—Respecting the first, M^r Moylan will set out in a day or two for L'Orient to have a converseation with M^r Gourlade, & hope his personal presence may accomplish his wishes to the Satisfaction of all parties.—We want a friend at the place of his intended Residence, to pay some Attention to our Interest, the impositions of our present Factors being too Glaring to escape Notice ²

Particulare attention shall be paid to your instructions in Regard to what you Recommend concerning Your Interest in the Ship *L'Brune*, in case she gets Safe to America, and will expect (as You Propose) Your Sentiments further on the Same Subject Previous to her Sailing—As fast as possible her Cargo will be put on board, when compleated will be able to ascertain the Freight, and then advise for Your government, and do for you in every Respect as for my Self.—³

I come now to reply to that of the 2^d. addressed to M^r Hodge and me, in consequence of What you proposed on the Score of the two Cutters.⁴—Am Satisfyed to accept of the property in both between him and me, belonging to the public,—to be assigned over to us at the first port (or ports) the Order from you may reach the Captain, or agent You employ, takeing an Inventory of the hull & materials, with a Specification (Signed by the Captain & Officers) of the condition in which they may appear when Dilevered—Leaveing it finally thereafter, to Setle the Vallue of the public Share's with Congress (or Committee of Congress) in America. And to whom M^r Hodge and I, shall

pay, on Account for Same, when ascertained wth. the Hon^{ble}. Members of Congress, by either of us, or by those whom we may impower to bring it to a speedy Settlement.—You know my motives in this engagement, are principally to oblige M^r Hodge who has lost much of his time in prosecuting this line of business to Serve the Public & himself without any material private Advantage, Besides, his determination to Risque himself, in case I assumed part of the direction as an Owner, was no Small inducement to listen to Your proposal tho I never had any concern of the kind heretofore.

I shall not incommode M^r Williams, untill the Men engaged & now onboard the Small Cutter⁵ are ordered in Some other vessel, I Shall Receive her so soon as it Suites him to dispense with her, & Push her off to a Station clear of those Seas, which am to fix with M^r Hodge previous to his departure—She is only fit to carry about Sixteen hands with a couple of months Stores, any distant voyage, consequently of no use as a Packet or Merchant Vessel from hence to America. She may nevertheless Answer as a consort for the other in certain cruizes

The day before I set out for L'Orient, I received a letter from the Hon^{ble}. A: Lee, From which, have copyed a paragraph, in said Epistle to me, Respecting the Bargain of the Cutter between You and me, And my Answer thereto, being likewise copyed on same piece of Paper, I send it herewith for Your perusal, that You may Judge of it, & act as to you may Seem best.⁶ At same time, from this correspondence with me, Woud you not think it adviceable to get the two other Gentlemen Commissioner's, to Join You in the Assignment of those Cutters to M^r Hodge & me? Circumstances & my own observations, lead me to see it necessary for you, to Act as much as possible with consent & approbation of your Coleagues, least your own Seperate distinct Service's, for the public in Your present Station (however well intended) may be misrepresented, or misconstrued—If any of the Hon^{ble}. Gentlemen, shoud have any objection to the terms of our agreement, I freely disclaim any Pretension's to the Bargain.—M^r Hodge Sets out tomorrow for Spain, therefore, in case of any Alteration from a prospect of greater advantages to the Public by keeping the Vessels, Write in Course to M^r Hodge, that he may Return, or forefit what may occur for the benefite of the present Owner's—

On the other hand, if mutually approved of, and that the Assignment are Sent me, Shall transmute the Obligation you want in Course, corresponding with our Agreement, that every thing May appear fair to bear examination, happen what will

Your Last (had not the Property arrived Safe,) woud Puzzle me much having no instruction's, or any descretionary Power from the Committee of Congress to Effect Insurance,⁷ I wished to Receive the Commissioners answer to that Letter, in justification of my self, & as a prooffe of my Attention in consulting them. It may still be proper I have it as the most Regular mode of doing business, and beg You may Procure it for me, to Serve in future for my government—What occurred to you Respecting the Ranger,⁸ Occurred to me at the very instant I was writeing M^r Lee, and mentioned it to him in particulare, hope You may be able to Possess me of Private instructions for Jones, that I may manage to join all the force I can, unobserved, to take their departure together.—None can be more Conscious then I am, to get the Goods Sent off, it is of consequence and a Valluable Property collected here safe from Russia & Germany on the best term's.—Believe I wish nothing so much as to have all at Sea, & off my hands. Pray God they may all get Safe.—I am [&c.]

Jn^o Ross

NB. Am uneasey & anxious for the unhappie Situation of Philad^a. Much do I Long to hear from the Southern Parts of our Country—The Northern very fortunatly Secured their Peace, on which I heartely congratulate You & all our Country Men. I Suppose Bankcroft coud Scarsely speak a Sentance for a week after the News Reached You Complim^{ts} to the Doctor—

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

1. Deane's letter of 1 Dec. is above; that of 2 Dec. in *Deane Papers*, 2: 263–64; and that of 8 Dec. in *ibid.*, pp. 268–69.

2. Ross and Jonathan Williams, Jr., had agreed on recommending James Moylan, an American merchant in Le Havre, as American commercial agent at L'Orient. Moylan was going to discuss a possible connection with L'Orient merchant Jacques-Alexandre Gourelade, whom Williams had originally favored for the agency. Ross to Silas Deane, 25 Dec. 1777, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers.

3. See Silas Deane to John Ross, 1 Dec. 1777, above.

4. Continental Navy cutters *Revenge* and *Dolphin*. Deane gave Hodge and Ross the option of purchasing the United States's half interest in the *Revenge*, one quarter then belonging to Hodge and one quarter to Ephraim Cunningham & Co., or acting as agents for the Congress in management of the vessel. *Deane Papers*, 2: 263–64.

5. *Dolphin*.

6. Arthur Lee to John Ross, 26 Nov., and Ross to Lee, 3 Dec., above.

7. Deane left the matter of insurance entirely to Ross's judgment. *Deane Papers*, 2: 268–69.

8. Deane suggested that the *Ranger* convoy *Brune*. *Ibid.*, 269.

JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE

Dear Sir

Nantes 16 Decem^r 1777

I received both your esteemed favours of the 1st. & 12th. Inst: (the Latter ~~only~~ this moment.) I am pleased to Learn you expect to accomplish a concurrence of the Arrangment proposed for the *Ranger*.—I shall make every possible preparation, nor do I doubt but Ill be able to manage as soon as she can be in readiness for Sea—

At present there is a fleet of English Cruizers off here & in Sight of Bele isle to watch American Vessels. almost in Soundings to the disgrace of the Libertys & Power of France—Since my last, and in my Absence, M^r Hodge arrived here, possessed of order's from M^r Deane in consequence of what is concluded on Respecting the Cutters—Today I wrote M^r Deane, advising, I had communicated my Sentiments to you on the subject, And being disposed only to finish with the Mutual Approbation of the Hon^{ble} Commissioners. I beg you may Join in the assignation proposed, if approved of, or give me Your Opinion that I may Act to gaurd against every dispute & reflection—Permit me to request my Complim^{ts} be presented to your Brother. Am indebted to Sundry of his, to which shall reply by next Post. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jn^o: Ross

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (96a). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentⁿ.—

(N^o. 102)

Nantes Decem^r 16. 1777.—

My last to M^r Dean in answer to his of the 8th informed you that I intended to go to Painbeuf to give you a fuller acco^t of the *Lion*, but various affairs have prevented.—I have now ordered every article that relates to that Ship to be collected

and sent on board with the utmost dispatch and by the end of this Week I intend she shall be compleat in everything except Poultry Vegetables & such Provision as spoil by keeping, the same Lighter will also carry down the last Bale or Cask that is to go on board her.—You know her Situation, her sailing therefore will depend on what passes with you, for all I can say on this Subject I refer you to my last.¹—Let appearances be as rigorous as they please, if they give but a private indemnification We will rub through all the Forms; or what will be better, please to obtain a private permission to dispense with the late orders.—

As to M^r Montieus Vessells I have sent a lighter load on board of each, the *Chalotais* is almost full when she & the *Lion* are compleat the *Mercury* shall take all the remainder,—but here we are again in Difficulties and if you don't succeed in some way or other we shall be obliged to unload both these Ships to take the Arms out.—I have already mentioned the *Ranger* and the manner in which M^r Morris has arranged matters with me. This Ship will want many Supplies particularly Ballast, for which I propose Lead instead of Iron tho' more costly. my Reason is because Iron is to be had in many parts of our Country, & lead is not, therefore at any future Period the *Ranger* may afford a timely supply &, taking Iron in return, not injure herself. I beg you will please to say in answer to this whether or not I am to give these Supplies and apply to you for what surplus Funds may be wanting. I doubt not your answer will be in the affirmative, tho' I think the course of Business requires me to ask the Question. This Ship is now striped and will in a few days be carreened.

I send you inclosed the weight of several Bales of M^r Monteus Cloathing, I could not weigh an equal quantity of M^r Sabatiers to make the Comparison they being almost all on board & of the few Casks that remains none have the different Sizes distinguished: The weight of the Bales was taken in presence of M^r Peltier.—I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Hon^{ble}/The Commissioners of the/United States." Docketed: "Decem^r 16th 1777/J Williams Letter/(N^o. 102)"; "Montieu, *Lion* &c/The Commissioners to supply him money for the commercial agency."

1. Jonathan Williams, Jr., to the American Commissioners in France, 6 Dec., above.

CAPTAIN JOHN YOUNG TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Honb^l Gentlemen

Nantes 16th Dece^r 1777

I recived Yours of the 2^d ins^t ¹ from M^r Maylon along with the Dispatches for Congress—which I will Secure ready for Sinking in Case of danger according to Your Orders—when the dispatches came to hand I was all clear for Sea and now onley wates for a favorable oppertunity—Ther is certen information of Seven Saile of English Cruizers off Bil:isle—for evrey vessel Latley come into port being spoake with by one or more of them—the Judge of the Admiralty here was Pleased to Communicate this intelligence to Me—and Belive they are Ordered on purpouse to Cruise off so near to watch the Frigates at L.Orient and other American vessels ther at Lorient, and now in this harbour—You May depend I shall lose no time consisting with the safty of the vessel under my commmand—and purpousing to remain in port [*port*] till I receive further information of those cruizers which My force cannot Engage if

you should think proper to send down aney more Dispatches & they should come to hand before I should have an oppertunity to saile I will take care to put them in the same leadend box with the rest, I have The honnour to be [&c]

Jno Young

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 149. Addressed: "The Honb^l/B: Franklin S. Deane &/A: Lee Esq^r. Continentail/ Commisseonrs/at Passy." Docketed: "Capt. Young".

1. Above.

December 17

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Sir

Passy, near Paris Dec. 17 1777.

We received your several letters from Nantes & Portsmouth. We shall be glad to see you here, as soon as is consistent with your Affairs, in order to consult with you on the Matters mention'd in your Instructions from the Congress, &c. We are [&c.]

B Franklin

Silas Deane

Arthur Lee

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 667–72. Addressed: "To/John Paul Jones Esq^r/Nantes." Docketed: "Paris Dec^r 17th. 1777/From the hon^{ble}. the/Commissioners./No.1."

COMTE DE BROGLIE TO LOUIS XVI

[Extract]

Plan de Guerre

Contre L'Angleterre, Rédigé par les ordres du feu Roy dans les Années 1763, 64, 65, et 1766. Par M. Le Comte de Broglie, et Refondu et adapté aux Circonstances actuelles Pour être mis sous les yeux de Sa Majesté à qui il a été envoyé le 17. décembre 1777. . . .

Second Mémoire

Mémoire militaire Relativement à notre

Situation actuelle avec L'Angleterre ¹

Il en est de la Guerre comme de toutes les Entreprises, point de Succés Sans plan, c'est ce qui nous a manqué essentiellement dans la derniere Guerre, et ce qu'il est bien à désirer qui ne nous manque pas dans celle dont nous Sommes menacés, on Seroit d'autant moins excusable, que jamais Guerre ne s'est approchée d'une maniere moins Soudaine. Depuis 2. ans, les deux Nations Sont dans un état de Guerre Caitte et dans un appareil d'armement ouvert. Aujourdhui la crise paroît plus prochaine que jamais: le plus léger événement, un pas, un mot, un mal entendu peuvent nous mettre aux prises; jamais donc il n'a été plus nécessaire de former un plan, il est vraisemblable que le Gouvernement eu a un, et si l'on de mettre celui ci sous les yeux de S. M. ce n'est qu'un hommage de Zele qui peut cependant la mettre en état de comparer la conclusion du mémoire précédant, Sur la situation politique de la france envers L'Angleterre, à été que, vû l'aveuglement qui a jusqu'ici égaré les Anglais, et la possibilité quoique peu vraisemblable qu'ils y persistent, il falloit ne point commencer la Guerre, mais seulement s'y pré-

parer, de maniere à pouvoir entrer en action au premier moment où elle Seroit nécessaire, d'après ce résultat, il s'agit de tracer un plan Général qui déffensif pour le moment actuel, soit susceptible de devenir offensif aussitôt que la Guerre éclatera.

Cette discussion est trop importante pour n'être pas traitée avec toute la méthode et la profondeur qu'elle exige, ainsi on commencera par résoudre plusieurs questions préliminaires qui y ont rapport leur Solution deviendra ensuite la base du plan qu'on doit former.

Situation de Notre Marine Comparée à celle des Anglaise, et de la Maniere de l'employer

On n'entrera dans aucun détail sur le matériel de notre Marine comparé à celui de la Marine Anglaises. Le Gouvernement doit savoir à quoi s'en tenir Sur ce parallèle, il a le Secret de notre Situation Réelle, celui de nos Chantiers, de nos arsenaux, de nos magasins, et il doit de même s'être procuré celui des Anglais, un Sebornera donc ici à quelques résultats appuyés sur les faits passés et sur des vérités reconnues, pour tâcher ensuite d'en insérer le plan d'opération qu'il paroît le plus avantageux d'adoptu pour notre Marine.

Cette branche de nos forces a fait depuis deux ans d'immences progrès, et chaque jour ils s'acroissent, l'Esprit d'emulation et d'activité y a Succédé à celui de Langueur et un de le dire de découragement; mais c'est à la mer, cest aux grands résultats de pratique que les Anglais nous attendent: ce qui nous manque, si les points sur les quels ils nous sont encore peut être Supérieurs, c'est l'habitude de la Navigation, c'est l'endurassement aux Campagnes de longs course et aux Stations difficiles, c'est L'art de passer et de tenir partout, enfin au milieu de beaucoup d'officiers, de grande espérance, c'est d'en avoir qui ayant commandé des Escadres et des flottes.

Dans cette Situation toute espèce de Situation ne convient sans doute pas à notre marine, il paroît qu'on doit éviter toutes celles qui morceleront nos forces, qui les diviseront, qui les compromettont, ou dans des Combats particuliers, ou dans des Stations périlleuses, où dans des Expéditions de longue haleine, l'expérience de deux derniers Guerres n'a que trop confirmé ce principe, on a voulu faire force partout, couvrir tout, et partout faible, partout inférieur en force ainsi qu'en manoeuvres et peut être en Capacité; on a été partout battus, ou forcé de regagner ses Ports, ce qui revient au même, puisque par l'a Les opérations ont été nulles. Apres trois Compagnes on a voulu a retenir au Système, réunir Ses forces, et il n'était plus tems. L'Escadre de Toulon, ainsi qu'il arrivera toujours, toutes les fois qu'on ne prévándra pas les Anglais, n'a pas pu joindre la flotte de l'océan, celle ci à peine égale à la flotte Anglais tandis qu'elle auroit pu être Supérieure, Si la jonction s'etoit faite, à [*illeg.*] sortir, on Sait le Sort de ce combat,² et depuis notre Pavillon n'a pas osé Se montrer. Ainsi n'en usa point Louis XIV. pendant Les deux années de triomphe, ou il eut l'Empire de la mer; il eut de Grosses flottes, et il les tint ensemble; S'il essayat un grand échec à la Hogue,³ c'est mal a propos qu'on dit que cette bataille fut le Tombeau de la marine, car l'année d'après il mit en mer une flotte de 80. Vaisseaux. Ce qui fit tomber sa marine, c'est qu'elle n'etoit point alimentée par une navigation considérable, c'est qu'elle n'etoit par conséquent que factice et un effort ephémere de la puissance; cest qu'enfin les circonstances l'ayant forcé de porter toutes Ses depenses et son attention aux Guerres de terre, elle fut peu à peu, et ensuite tout a fait négligée.

Point de petites Escadres; point d'Expeditions Soustaines, de Grosses flottes, tous nos forces dans une Seule mer,—une Bataille Navale dans ce début; mais don-

née à propos et dans un grand objet, une Guerre vive et courte, voila le Systeme qu'on proposera pour notre Marine. Dans l'état actuel il seroit dangereux pour nous de croire pouvoir déffendre nos Colonies, et protéger notre Commerce pendant la Guerre avec des Escadres. 6. Vaisseaux francais envoyés dans les mers d'Asia, en même tems que 6. Vaisseaux Anglais, au bout d'un an Se trouveroient dans un état Sensiblement inferieur à ces derniers, par le désavantage qu'à notre marine sur la leur dans les Croisiers longues, difficiles et éloignées.

En rassemblant la plus grande partie de nos forces à Brest, nous protégeons bien plus efficacement notre Commerce et nos Colonies, car nous obligeons les Anglais à garder dans l'océan et dans la Manche des forces non Seulement égales; mais même Supérieures, ils ne doivent pas en effet commettre au hazard d'une Bataille donnée avec égalité le Sort de l'Angleterre, dont l'invasion deviendrait facile, Sils venoient à la perdre; enfin s'il est un opération que nous puissions et devons tenter, c'est cette Bataille, car d'une part elle peut terminer la Guerre d'un seul Coup, de l'autre en la perdant nous n'avons pas les mêmes risques à courir, et ce Jeu est par conséquent tres inégal pour les Anglais.

Une grande raison milite encore pour nous faire préférer des opérations décisives à toutes celles qui pourroient faire traîne la Guerre en longueur, c'est que notre Marine n'étant point encore assez consolidée, n'ayant point à son appui, comme celle des Anglais, des magasins, des arsenaux pleins de moyens de rechange, ne pouvant pas avoir Sans cesse comme eux des vaisseaux frais à Substituer à ceux que nous perdons, où que la mer aura fatiguée, étant moins à portée qu'eux de tirer du Nord tous les matériaux de remplacement, nous nous asserblissons nécessairement par la durée de la Guerre, ils ont de plus pour eux la chance que, des événements étrangers viendront détourner notre attention et nos moyens, et comme à force de Subsider, de négociations et d'intrigues, ils sont habites à les faire naître, cette ressource ne leur à malheureusement jamais manqué

Il reste enfin pour appuyer le parti de faire débiter notre Marine par de grands coups et de ne point se laisser consumer par les détails et par le tems; Les Raisons tirées du caractere de la Nation, tout ce qui est affaire de constance la rebute, la fatigue, la décourage même à longue, pour tout ce qui porte le caractere de la hardiesse et de la Vigueur, L'élève et lui en communique. . . .

[Translation]

War Plan Against England

drawn up at the order of the late king in the years 1763, 64, 65, and 1766 by the Comte de Broglie, and reworked and adapted to the present circumstances for perusal by His Majesty, to whom it was transmitted on 17 December 1777. . . .

Second Memoir

Military Memoir on our Present Situation with Respect to England¹

It is the same with war as with all other enterprises: There is no success without planning. This is essentially what we lacked in the last war, and it is most desirable that we should not suffer the same lack in the one which now threatens us. To do so would be even less excusable this time, for never has a war come about less suddenly. For two years the two nations have been in a state of near war and have openly been arming. Today the breaking point seems nearer than ever. The slightest incident—

an act, a word, a misunderstanding—may bring us into open conflict. Never has it been more essential, therefore, to devise a plan. It is probable that the Government already has one; and we presume to offer this one for His Majesty's consideration only as a mark of our eagerness to serve, and to provide His Majesty with a basis for comparison. In our preceding memoir on the political situation of France with respect to England, we concluded that in view of the blindness which has thus far led the English astray, and of the possibility, however slight, that they may persist in their folly, we should not start the war but only prepare for it, so that we shall be ready to go into action the moment it becomes necessary. Accordingly, a strategy should be devised which is defensive for the time being, but is capable of turning to the offensive as soon as war breaks out.

This discussion is so important that it deserves to be treated with the utmost thoroughness and care; so we shall begin by answering some preliminary questions relating to it. These answers will then form the basis of the strategic plan to be devised.

Situation of our Navy as Compared to that of the English,
and How it Should be Improved

There will be no detailed discussion here of the materiel available to our navy as compared to that of the English navy. The Government must know how these matters stand. It has all the inside information on the present status of our shipyards, dockyards, magazines; and it must also have secured similar information about the English. Therefore we shall confine ourselves here to some conclusions based on past events and established facts, then try to deduce from them the operational plan which it seems most advantageous for our navy to adopt.

This branch of our armed forces has made tremendous progress in the past two years, and this is still continuing. A new spirit of competition and activity has replaced that of listlessness and even defeatism formerly widespread in our navy. But it is at sea that we must meet the English in decisive conflict. Our shortcomings, the points where they are perhaps still superior to us, are experience in navigation; experience with and inurement to long cruises and difficult patrols; the art of getting through and holding fast everywhere; and finally, a large and very promising corps of officers, among them some who have commanded squadrons and fleets.

Under these conditions, of course, not every kind of situation is advantageous for our navy. It is clear that we should avoid all those situations which will break up and divide our forces and will commit them to individual combat, cruising on dangerous stations, or long distant expeditions. The experience of the last two wars has confirmed this principle all too well. We tried to exert our strength everywhere, to cover everything; and being weak everywhere, inferior everywhere in strength as well as in maneuverability and perhaps in skill, we were beaten everywhere or forced to return to port, which amounted to the same thing since it nullified our operations. After three campaigns we tried to go back to our original system and to reunite our forces, but it was too late. As will always happen so long as we fail to beat the English to the punch, the Toulon squadron was prevented from joining the ocean fleet. The latter, barely equal in strength to the English fleet instead of superior as it could have been if the junction had been made, came out to give battle. The outcome of this encounter is well known,² and since then we have not dared to show our flag. This is not at all the way Louis XIV operated during his two years of triumph, when he had control of the seas. He had large fleets and kept them together. Although he did

suffer a serious setback at La Hogue,³ it is not correct to say that this battle sounded the death knell of his navy; for the very next year he sent to sea a fleet of 80 ships. What did cause his Navy to decline was the fact that it was not nourished and supported by substantial maritime activity, and that consequently it was only factitious and an ephemeral manifestation of his power. When circumstances forced him to concentrate all his resources and attention on land warfare, his navy fell into neglect, gradually at first and then completely.

No small squadrons, no long-distance expeditions, large fleets, all our forces in the same waters; a naval battle at an early but well-chosen moment and for an important objective; a short, hard war: This is the doctrine we propose for our navy. In the present circumstances it would be dangerous for us to think that we can defend our colonies and protect our commerce in wartime with squadrons. Six French ships sent into Asian waters at the same time as six English ships would find themselves, in a year's time, definitely inferior to the latter because of their navy's advantage over ours in experience with arduous cruises extending over long periods of time and great distances.

By keeping most of our forces assembled at Brest, we are protecting our trade and our colonies much more effectively; for we are obliging the English to keep forces just as large or even larger in the Atlantic and in the Channel. They dare not risk the safety of England on the outcome of a battle in which the odds are even, for invasion would become easy if they were to lose such a battle. Therefore, this kind of battle is the one operation which we can and must attempt to bring about; for on the one hand it may end the war at one blow, and on the other we are not running any comparable risk if we lose. This makes the prospect very uninviting for the English.

There is still another factor which makes decisive action preferable to any which might tend to prolong the war. Our navy is by no means sufficiently consolidated as yet and is not backed up, as is that of the English, by magazines and dockyards well stocked with replacement materiel. Unlike them, we cannot always have new ships to replace those which are lost or battered by the sea. Not being so well situated geographically as they are for procuring strategic materials from the north, we are inevitably at a disadvantage in a long war. Also in their favor is the chance that events abroad may divert our attention and our resources; and since they are very clever at creating such events by subsidies, diplomacy, and intrigue, this advantage is one which they seldom fail to exploit.

In support of the recommendation that our navy begin hostilities with large-scale action and not let itself be nibbled away by time and minor skirmishes, there are other arguments based on the character of our people. An enterprise which demands tenacity and perseverance becomes tiresome and boring to them, even discourages them in the long run; while one which bears the stamp of boldness and vigor lifts their spirits and calls forth those same qualities in them in response. . . .

D, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 132, fols. 13, 28–30; the entire text runs to fol. 59. For a war plan submitted by the Marquis de Bouillé, concentrating on the West Indies, see *ibid.*, fols. 163–68.

1. For de Broglie's "Premier Mémoire Politique sur la Situation de la France et de L'Angleterre," see Henri Doniol, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'Établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique*, 5 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1886–92), 2: 673–82.

2. The naval battle of Quiberon Bay, 20 Nov. 1759, in which the British defeated the French. See E. H. Jenkins, *A History of the French Navy: From its Beginnings to the Present Day* (London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1973), pp. 132–36. On the failure of the Toulon fleet to reach the Atlantic, see *ibid.*, pp. 130–32.

3. Naval battles off Point Barfleur and la Hogue roadstead, in Normandy in northwest France, 19–23 May 1692, in which the French were defeated by combined Dutch and English fleets.

LORD STORMONT TO
LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

Private

Paris Decr. 17. 1777.

My Lord.

... I am informed that Carmichael Franklins former secretary and Captⁿ Nicholson will leave Paris this Week. They go to Nantz and will embark there for North America on board one of those frigates the french have built for the use of the Rebels¹ I do not yet know what Port in america they will attempt to make but imagine it will be some Port in New England I dare say the other two frigates² will follow—Notwithstanding all my Representations and all the fair answers I have received. It is I think of infinite Importance that we should take Every Measure to intercept them and that we should in general be as active as possible in preventing the Rebels from receiving any sort of succours during this Winter. I know that this is what their best friends here chiefly dread. I know that some of them have said that if this is done, if our cruizers are properly stationed and are as vigilant as they ought to be, the Rebels notwithstanding all their boasted and most unexpected good Fortune will find themselves in great Distress. It is not to be doubted My Lord, that the French will continue to send them every possible clandestine succour, no Remonstancance that can be made will prevent or check to any Degree this fraudulent Practice I am sure My Lord, I have been as explicit as possible and said as much to the french Minister on the subject as could be said without carrying things to Extremities, and driving them to the wall, which my Instructions do not authorize me to do, and which in the present crisis might perhaps not be expedient I am [&c.]

Stormont.

L., *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1782. Docketed: "Paris 17th Dec^r 1777/Lord Stormont/(Private)/R. 22."

1. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

2. The *Alfred* and the *Raleigh*.

"EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM
LORIENT, DATED DECEMBER 17"

"A frigate is stationed at the entrance of every commercial port in the bay of Biscay, to prevent all intercourse with American privateers: The *Rawley* and *Alfred* remain still in that harbour under frivolous pretexts, but the true cause is the influence of fear, though they have been frequently summoned in a faint friendly manner (by order from Court) to depart.—The French Agents B—d and G—de¹ have most egregiously abused the confidence of their new constituents; they have gained 60,000 livres on one prize only; made advance charges on all goods furnished for the use and for the cargoes of these privateers, who are heavily laden; besides the impudent advantages they have taken in becoming purchasers of prize-goods at an under-value."

London Chronicle, 25–27 Dec. 1777.

1. Bérard frères & Co., and Jacques-Alexandre Gourlade.

December 18

PHILIP STEPHENS TO CAPTAIN THOMAS GRAVES, R.N., AND ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS PYE

Navy Board
Sir

18 Dec^r 1777

I am commanded by my Lords Commiss^{rs}. of the Admty to send you herewith the descriptions of the *Raleigh* and *Alfred* two Rebel Privatiers now at Port L'Orient,¹ and to signify their direction to you to furnish the Captⁿ. of the *Romney Albion* with a Copy thereof, as also any other of His Maj^{ty}. Ships going to the Westward. I am &c^a. PS

Captⁿ. Graves Sen^r. Officer at Plymouth

The like Letter to Sir Tho^s. Pye, at Portsmouth} *Romney* with this Postscript added.
P.S. Their Lordships have ordered a Copy of the above Intelligence to be Sent to Captⁿ. Hood of the *Courageux* & to the three other Ships that are to be under his Command—He will find it in the sealed Packet when he opens it—

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/556, 255–56. Notation in the margin: "Send Intelligence of two Rebel Privatiers."

1. See F. Steward to the Earl of Sandwich, 16 Dec., above.

QUESTIONS PUT TO LORD MULGRAVE AND SIR HUGH PALLISER

December 18th 1777.

- Q. Would not the business be better carried on for distressing the enemy if there was a separate station to the southward, if a proper place can be possessed for such station?
- A. Certainly it would.
- Q. Can a fleet be stationed to the southward to any good effect without a safe harbour, and easy of access to refit in, and where provisions and refreshments can be found?
- A. Certainly not.
- Q. Can such harbour be of use unless possessed and protected by troops and fortifications or by the friendly disposition of the inhabitants?
- A. It cannot.
- Q. Would it not be advisable that a command of frigates and small vessels should be fixed near the Bahama Islands for the security of West Florida and the trade passing the Gulf?
- A. If a proper place can be found, such command would be very useful for the purposes mentioned.
- Q. Should not there be a central station with a naval establishment for the careening and refitting ships of any burthen?
- A. To be sure there should.
- Q. Should there not also be a northern station for Nova Scotia and the River St Lawrence?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can Halifax, and the naval establishment there, be effectually secured without a large body of troops and additional works for its defence?

A. Halifax cannot be secured without a large body of troops; and it is even doubtful whether it can be secured with troops if attacked by an army.

Q. Will the 42 ships of the line now in commission at home admit of our making proper detachments for the security of our distant possessions?

A. According to the accounts we have of the force of France and Spain in Europe, it would be unsafe to make detachments from the 42 ships.

Q. How many ships of the line may be ready for service by April or May if they were immediately commissioned?

A. Seven, including the *Victory*.

Q. How many ships of the line may be got ready for service from the first of Jan. 1778 to the first Jan. 1779?

A. About 25.

These questions were put to Lord Mulgrave and Sir H. P. at a meeting of the Cabinet Council, December 18th 1777, and were answered as above. There were present at this meeting:

Lord Chancellor

Lord Gower

Lord Dartmouth

Lord Sandwich

Lord George Germain

Lord North.

Lord M. and Sir H. P. were also asked what port to the southward would in their opinion be the most useful to a fleet and fittest for a naval establishment. They desired not to be considered as giving a decisive answer to this question, as it would require much consideration and enquiry from persons well acquainted with the coast; but at present they thought that Norfolk in Virginia or Port Royal in South Carolina might answer the purpose.

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771-1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932-38), 1: 337-39. Written in the Earl of Sandwich's hand.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

[Extract]

Gentlemen,

Paris, Dec. 18. 1777

... Our Vessels laden with Supplies have by various Means been delay'd, particularly by Fear of falling into the Hands of the English Cruizing Ships, who swarm in the Bay and Channel. At length it is Resolv'd they shall sail together, as they are all provided for Defence, and we have obtain'd a King's Ship to convoy them out of the Channel, and we hope quite to America. They will carry we think to the Amount of 70,000 £ Sterling and sail in a few Days. ...

B Franklin

Silas Deane

Arthur Lee

L, DNA, PCC (M332, roll 3, fols. 164-70). For the entire dispatch, which gave news of the agreement in principle between the commissioners and the French government to enter into a treaty, see *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 305-9.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO JOHN ROSS

M^r RossParis Decem^r: 18th: 1777.

Sir

We Rec^d: yours giving an Acc^t of the Arrival of the Goods on which we had not made any Insurance. from the Situation of your Affairs when you wrote Us last, we presume that Your Ship, Cap^t Green ¹ is ready for sailing. Cap^t Nicholson ² will also be ready in a few Days, We have therefore to propose to you that They go in Company as Cap^t Nicholson will be joined by one or Two more Ships of Force which will prove a Convoy sufficient against any common encounter. You will arrange this matter, as to The place of their Rendezvous, with Cap^t Nicholson, who will wait Our final Orders which shall be sent him by the Time he will be ready for sailing—We depend that You will remember the Sum advanced You, by Us, out of the first remittances which may come to hand, as We are really in want, and that You will in Your Letters to the Com. of Congress, mention it as a Reason for their hastening their remittances if not already on the Way. We have to Assure You that We are [&c.]

B Franklin

Silas Deane

Arthur Lee

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, film 54, reel 66. Addressed: "John Ross Esq^r/Nantes." Docketed: "Paris 18 Decem^r:/1777 The Hon^{ble}/Commissioners—Recv^d./Decem^r 20th/Answered—24th."

1. The *Brune*, John Green.

2. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU DE KERGARIOU TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

j'ay eu l'honneur de vous rendre Compte que L'eloignement ou jetais de painbeuf m'avait déterminé avant L'arrivée de M^r de Rozily, de prier M^r dunerat commandant Le *Courtier* de Reclamer un matelot déserteres du navire marchand Le *pacifique* et Engager pour Servis abord de Bricq insurgent L'*indépendance*; ¹ dans La visite qu'a fait M^r dunerat abord de ce Briq il n'a pas trouvé ce matelot, mais un autre matelot françois et un italien ont Reclamés sa protection, il Les En a Retiré, et me Les a Envois. Le matelot françois que j'ay interrogé, ma donne pour Raison, que il Etant Engagé pour travailles au Rearmement de ce briq il n'avait jamais Eu L'intention d'y faire campagne mais que Le travail fini on L'y Retenoit de force: L'italien provenait d'une prise que ce Briq avait fait dans Sa traversé, et qu'on y Retenait de force comme Etranger pour faire partie de L'équipage. j'ay Renviré Le matelot françois a M^r de Rozily pour verifier Sa déposition tres douteuse Le connoissant pour un Sujet tres Leger. et En outre pour quil Le fit paier des La Solde qu'il a du gagner pendant le tems quil a travaillé abord de cet insurgent Cel que Le prescrit Lordonnance. quand a L'italien, j'ay jugé que Sa plainte devoit Regarder Lamirauté et En consequence je Lay Renviré a mettre Sa plainte devant ce tribunal, me Renfermant dans mes instructions qui ne sont mention que des matelots français; mais, Monseigneur, il me Seroit Essentiel d'avoir vos ordres pour ce qui

concerne de tels prisonniers même Les nationnaus de La vieille angleterre que Les Batiments de guerre américains retiennent a Leur bord et que La visite que vous m'avez prescrit dy faire me met a portée de découvrir: Le commissionnaire anglois pour ces deux batiments du commerce Rendus a Sa nation² a desja voulu men parler a litre de Reclamation; il En fera Le Rapport a la fregatte angloise que vous m'annoncer devoit Entrer En Riviere, Le capitaine fera vis a vis de moi toutes Les démarches qu'il Sera Engagé a faire; j'ay Eludé La plainte du Commissionnaire En lui Repondant que je ne croirois pas aux prisonniers de guerre que dans nos ports il ne Sagissait que de Commerce et que je devois penser que ces hommes detenus aux fers faisaient partie des Equipages, [*illeg.*] qu'on punissoit [s'etans?] mal conduits, que c'était une police interieure des Batiments et que je Lessais aux Etrangers La liberté de L'exerce chez Eux-même.

j'ay a ce mouillage dans ce moment un batiment insurgent purement de commerce, qui se propose de partir, mais L'annonce des fregattes angloises Linquiete, il Est venu pour Reclamer deux hommes de son Equipage, qui sont malgaches d'origine, qui lui ont deserté, il Les croit abord des batiments anglois. je Les ay fait chercher et on ne Les a pas trouvé, ces hommes En partant ont voler plusieurs Effets a leur Capitaine Samuel Smith capitaine de ce navire de boston nomme L'*adams*³ de 300 tonnés.

j'ay scu quil y avait une auberge a painbeuf ou Les insurgents Entrenaient et nourrissaient plusieurs matelots françois, quil se proposaient de prendre a la mer devant Les faire Sortir de la Riviere sur des barges du pais, j en ay donné avis a M^r Louvel⁴ et de plus Loin du depart de ces insurgents armée En guerre, Si je ne puis appareiller nesi même pour Les veilles a Leur sortie je Les seray suivre par le Lougre et je Lui Recommenderay de ne Lesser accestes ces batiments par aucune Barge.

permettes moi, Monseigneur de vous représenter que cette recherche de nos matelots tres avantageuse dun coté, peut Rebuter Et Eloigner de nos ports tires Les navires américains, qui pour Le moment nous prouere un commerce tres utile; lexpulsion des prises est desja une perte Considerable et je pense que votre intention devoit de tollerer quelques abus autant quil seroit possible de ne pas S'en apercevais. je voudroit bien meriter votre confiance et Recevoir vos ordres particulier a ce Sujet. . . . a Bord de la *danaé* à St nazaire

ce 18 X^{bre} 1777

Kergariou

[Translation]

My Lord

I had the honor of reporting to you that the distance I was from Paimboeuf made me decide, before the arrival of M. de Rozily, to ask M. Dunerat commanding Le *Courtier* to claim a seaman who deserted from the merchant ship Le *Pacifique* and was hired to serve on board the insurgent brig *Independence*.¹ M. Dunerat did not find this seaman on board the brig when he inspected it, but another French seaman and an Italian requested his protection; he did remove them from it and sent them to me. The frenchman that I questioned explained that he had engaged to work on the outfitting of the brig without any intention to sign on for a cruise, but that when the work was completed, he was forcibly retained. The Italian came from a prize made by the brig during its crossing and was forcibly detained as a foreigner to be part of the crew. I have sent the French seaman back to M. de Rozily

in order to verify his very dubious deposition, knowing him to be a very thoughtless subject, and in addition to have him paid the balance due him, earned during the time he worked on board the insurgent ship, as prescribed by ordinance. As to the Italian, I decided that the Admiralty should hear his complaint, and in consequence I sent him to place his complaint before that tribunal, referring to my instructions that only mention French seamen. But, My Lord, it appears to me to be essential that I have your orders affecting such prisoners, even the nationals of old England which American war vessels hold on board, and whose discovery is made possible by the boarding and inspection you prescribed for me. The English commissioner for the two merchant vessels returned to his nation² has already wanted to speak with me about a reclamation. He will report about it to the English frigate that you informed me should be entering the river. The captain will make towards me all the approaches that he will be engaged to make. I have dodged the complaints of the commissioner by responding to him that I do not believe that there are any prisoners of war in our ports. He only knew of those of commerce, and I should think that those men detained in chains were part of crews being punished as malcontents; that that was a policing within the ships, and that I left to foreigners the liberty to exercise it among themselves.

At this time I have at this mooring a purely merchant insurgent vessel which is readying to depart, but news of English frigates makes them anxious. [*The master*] came to reclaim two Madagascar-born crewmen who deserted, and whom he believes are on board English vessels. I had a search for them made and they were not found. In departing, these men stole several personal belongings from their master, Captain Samuel Smith of this vessel from Boston, the *Adams*³ of 300 tons.

I learned that there is an inn at Paimboeuf where the insurgents are lodging and boarding several French seamen, whom they intend to pick up at sea by having them go down the river on local barges. I have informed M. Louvel⁴ of it and further of the departure of the armed insurgents. If I am unable to sail, or even to watch them at their sailing, I will follow them with a lugger, and I will recommend to him not to allow any barge to have access to them.

Permit me, My Lord, to remind you that this search for our seamen which is on one hand very advantageous could repulse and keep away from our ports the American vessels, which are at this time procuring us a very profitable trade; the expulsion of prize vessels is already a considerable loss and I think that your intention would be to tolerate a few abuses so long as it is possible to keep them unseen. I desire to merit your confidence and to receive your private orders on this subject. . . .

On board la *Danaé*, St. Nazaire,

18 Dec. 1777

Kergariou

L, FrPNA, Marine, B¹ 129, fols. 263–64. Notations: “La *Danae* freg.”; “Renvoi du 29. X^e 1777”; “accuser simplement la réception. ne rein changée. adresser à Brest”; “La reponse n’a pas été signée.” “The *Danae* frigate”; “Returned 29 Dec. 1777”; “simply acknowledge receipt. Nothing changed. dated at Brest”; “the answer has not been signed.” The final portion of the letter, not printed here, concerns provisioning and health on board *Danae*.

1. Continental Navy sloop *Independence*, Capt. John Young.
2. The Jamaicamen *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*.
3. Massachusetts merchant ship *Hancock and Adams*.
4. Jean-Pierre Louvel, commissaire des classes in Paimboeuf.

JACOB BENNET, TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ADMIRALTY OF NANTES

Extrait des Registres du greffe du Siege Royal de lamirauté de Nantes

L'an mil sept cent soixante dix sept le dix huit de decembre Devant nous mesire philippe vincent Roger conseiller du Roy lieutenant général civil et criminel commissaire enquesteur examinateur et garde de Sçel du Siege Royal de lamiraute de nantes Present Monsieur Landays dupé procureur du Roy a Comparu le Sieur Jacob Bennet commandant cy devant le Brigantin nommé *L'amitié* de Senepuxent du port de cent trente a cent quarante tonneaux monté de quatre canons de quatre livres de balles, quatre pierriers et de douze hommes d'equipage lui comparant compris assisté de maitre pierre Boudet interpreté Juré des langues etrangeres par lorgâne duquel il nous a déclaré qu'il partit dudit lieu de Senepuxent dans le maryland le vingt six du mois d'aouit dernier pour venir a Nantes chargé de cent dix toneaux de tabac soixante dix barils de farine et six mille pieces de merrein a l'adresse et a la consignation des Sieurs pliarne penet et comp^e. negociants de cette ville que pendant sa traversée il a été chassé par differents Batiments, mais que s'en etant heureusement echappé il arriva sous Bellisle le quatre octobre suivant vers les huit heures du matin; que lui etant venu un pilote du dit lieu a son Bord vers midy pour le conduire en la Riviere de loire; ils firent en conséquence route pour y entrér; que vers les deux heures et demi etant a environ deux lieues du croisic les vents regnants de la part du N.O. le Pilote dit a lui declarant qu'il n'étoit pas possible d'entrer en cette Riviere; et qu'il falloit relâcher dans la Baye ou ance du Croisic afin d'y passer la nuit pour en appareiller le lendemain et suivre leur Route pour ce port; que se rendant en la ditte Baye ils appercurent un Brigantin a distance deviron une lieue et demie d'eux qui sortoit de cette meme Baye, qui lui donna chasse sur les quatre heures de L'apres midy; que voyant alors lui Sieur ——— declarant que c'étoit un Batiment ennemi que ne s'attendoit pas de trouver si pres des côtes de france, il fit son possible pour faire coste sur la pointe du dit lieu du Croisic etant la plus proche de luy; mais que le dit Batiment ennemi le Joignit et se mit entre la terre et lui, et le força de se rendre etant a distance d'un mille ou tiers de lieue de la ditte pointe du croisic, ou il étoit pres de faire coste voyant Du monde sur le Rivage; qu'il apprît alors que ce Batiment se nommoit la *revenge* de Jerzey corsaire monté de quatorze canons et deviron soixante dix a quatre vingt hommes dequipage commandé par le capitaine Noël gautier qu'il croit françois, qui le conduisit dans le port de Jersey ou ils arriverent le huit dudit mois d'octobre, auquel endroit le dit sieur comparant fit son protest contre le dit Sieur Gautier devant James hemery notaire public audit endroit le dit Jour huit octobre; qu'il a appris qu'il y avoit Longtems que ce corsaire croisoit entre lisle du may et cette de hedic et le four; qu'il prèsume que son Pilote devoit en etre instruit vu quil a Sçu que d'autres pilotes avoient dit le Sçavoir; qu'ayant trouvé occasion de passer a Saint Malo, il est venu dela en cette ville, et fait la presente declaration qu'il affirme veritable parservient apres lecture et Linterpretation que luy en a faite son dit interprete pour valoir et servir ce que de raison, et a signe et le dit maitre Boudet ainsi signes Jacob Bennet Boudet Landays Dupé et Roger

collationné

Bernard
commis Jure

[Translation]

Extract from the Registers of the Records Office in the Royal Headquarters of the Admiralty in Nantes

The year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven, the eighteenth of December before us, my Lord, Philippe Vincent Roger, the King's Counsellor, Civil and Criminal Lieutenant General, Investigator and Examiner, Commissioner, and Keeper of the Seal of the Royal Headquarters of the Admiralty in Nantes, also present M. Landays Dupé, the King's attorney, appeared Sieur Jacob Bennet, commander of the former brigantine *Friendship* from the port of Sinepuxent of between one hundred thirty and one hundred forty tons burden, carrying 4 four-pounders, 4 swivel guns and a crew of twelve men who appeared with the captain. He was accompanied by Master Pierre Boudet, a sworn expert in foreign languages through whose voice Jacob Bennet stated he sailed from the aforesaid port of Sinepuxent in Maryland on the 26th of last August to come to Nantes laden with 110 casks of tobacco, 70 barrels of flour, and 6,000 barrel staves directed and consigned to the Sieurs Pliarne Penet and Company, merchants of this city; that during the crossing he was chased by various ships but fortunately having escaped from them he arrived off Belle Ile on the 4th of the following October at about 8 o'clock in the morning; a pilot from the aforesaid place came on board around noon to take the ship into the Loire River; consequently they set a course to enter the river. In the course of two and a half hours, having reached a point two leagues from the Croisic point, with prevailing winds from the northwest, the pilot told the captain that it was impossible to enter the river and it was necessary to drop anchor in the bay off the Croisic point to spend the night in order to prepare to get under way the next day and continue their course to that port; while going into the aforesaid bay they saw a brigantine at a distance of about a league and a half from them who was leaving the bay, and who gave chase to them at 4 o'clock in the afternoon; that then seeing Sieur ——— declaring to him that it was an enemy ship which he did not expect to be so close to the French coast; the pilot did his best to run ashore on the point of the aforesaid place of the Croisic, it being the land closest to him. The aforesaid enemy ship, however, joined him and stationed itself between him and the land, and forced him to surrender. He was then at a distance of a mile or a third of a league from the aforesaid Croisic point where he was preparing to run ashore, and saw a crowd of people on the shore. The captain then learned that the ship was called the *Revenge* out of Jersey and a privateer carrying 14 guns and a crew of somewhere between 70 and 80 men, under the command of Captain Noël Gautier, whom he believed to be French, who took him into the Jersey port where they arrived on the 8th of the month of October. It was in that place that the gentleman appearing before us made his protest against the aforesaid Sieur Gautier before James Emery, a notary public in the aforesaid place on the aforesaid day, the 8th of October. He learned that this privateer had for a long time been cruising between May and Hoëdic islands and le Four. He assumed that his pilot must have been aware of it, since he knew that other pilots had said that they were. Having found an occasion to go to Saint Malo, he came from there to this city and made the present statement, which he affirms on oath to be true, persevering after reading it and the translation his aforesaid interpreter had made for him, to be used as thought proper, the captain signed it. The aforesaid Master Boudet did likewise. Signed: Jacob Bennet, Boudet, Landays Dupé, and Roger.

Verified

Bernard

Clerk of the Court

Copy, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, fols. 274–75. Notation in top left corner: “avec la lettre de M. de Sartine du 28. X^{bre}. 1777.” “With de Sartine’s letter of 28 Dec. 1777.” Not printed here, a certification of the validity of Bernard’s signature, signed by Roger and dated Nantes, 20 Dec., concludes the extract.

December 19

“EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ON BOARD THE *SMYRNA GALLEY*,
ARRIVED IN STANDGATE-CREEK, DEC. 19, FROM SMYRNA.”

“On the 1st inst. about 80 leagues N.N.W. of Cape St. Vincent’s, we were taken by an American privateer called the *Sturdy Beggar*, which took two bales of silk out of us and some other trifles, and ordered us for Bourdeaux, but on our way thither, off Cape Ortegal, on the 9th, we fell in with the *Resolution* of 74 guns, which retook us. Our cargo was computed to be worth near 80,000l.”

London Chronicle, 30 Dec. 1777–1 Jan. 1778.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Sir—

Painbeuf Dec^r 19th. 1777—

M^r Williams deliv^d me your favor, inclosing the Letters from L’Orient—the Sails, Cordage &C are spoke for by M^r Odea, to be made here—M^r Williams does not appear pleased that the sails shou’d be made at Painbeuf, however M^r Odea and he it seems will settle that matter—

The Ship’s masts are shortned the mainmast twenty inches farther aft, shrouds set up and every matter about them secure—have employed eight french caulkers this day on the main deck—Shall make all dispatch possible Four of the prisoners have entered for the *Independence* two for our Ship one of which is Bulfinch¹—The dutchman, have delivered to Captⁿ Smith,² and taken his receipt—The frenchmen wou’d not quit their Lighter on any Account, therefore have the two Masters and one Mate as prisoners on board the Ship, M^r Robertson³ being unwilling to keep them any longer in the Brig—Our people from the prize⁴ have been return’d to the Ship, these two days past except M^r Green,⁵ who tarrys to see her unloaded—Every thing is quiet, and good order on board the Ship, which I shall endeavour to keep up—And Am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

As to Slops there are only 28 Jackets 8 frocks on board not one Shirt—Several of the people have only one shirt, many of them, not a pair of drawers, or breeches—I shou’d suppose that woollen trowsers and Great coats will be necessary—there are 6 pairs of shooes on board

250 Stout, Seamen’s upper Jackets

250 under Jackets—

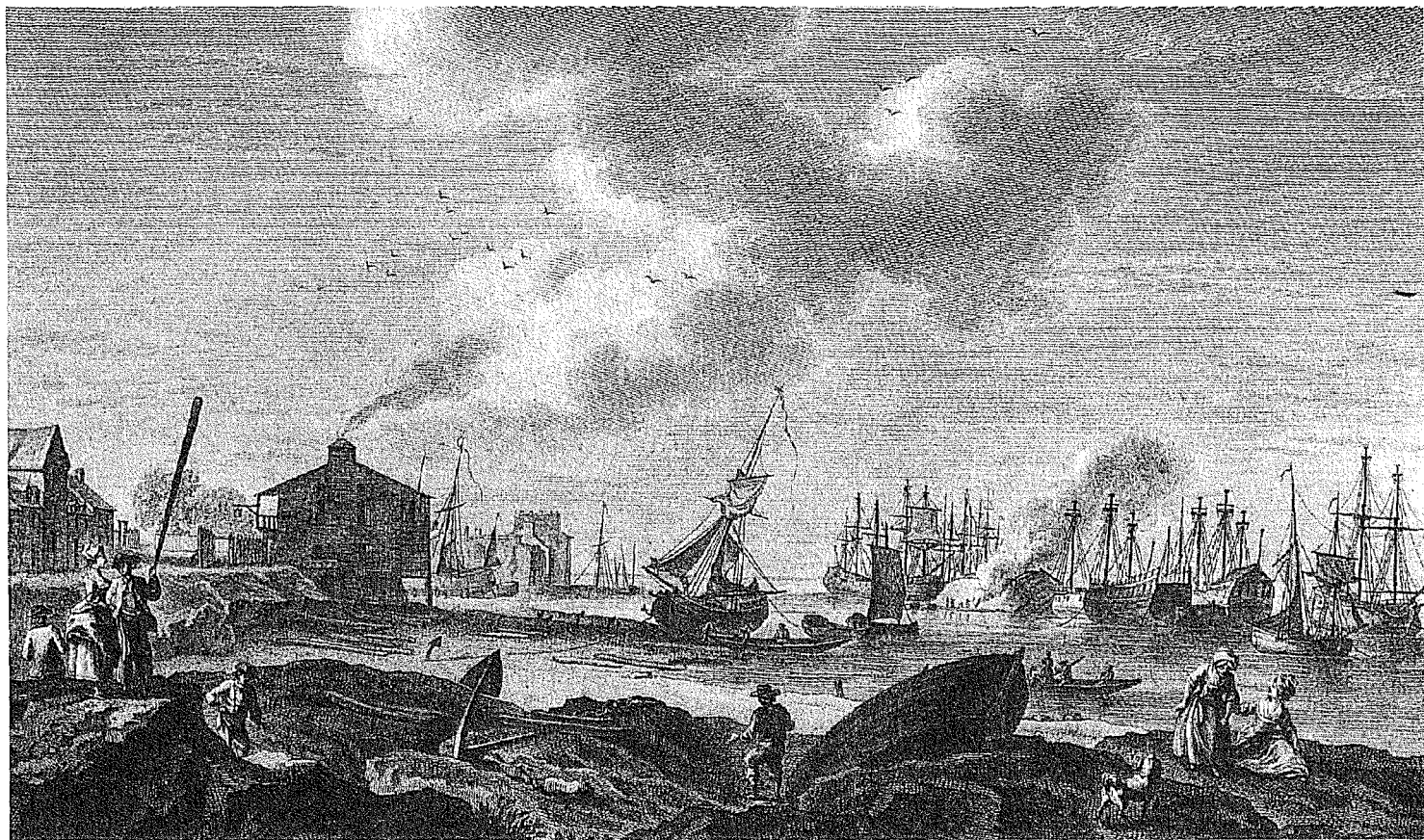
300 Shirts or more, as you may think proper—

200 flannel or other Woollen drawers & breeches,

200 pair of Trowsers some woollen, the other strong stuff.

30 doz. mill’d Caps—

40 Great Coats—



The Port of Paimboeuf

150 pair of Shooes—
 150 pair of Mill'd Gloves, or Mittens—
 Some Cotton hankerchiefs
 A parcell of Seamens kinves [*knives?*].
 Some Dutch Caps—
 2 doz. Strong Chest locks,
 Some Strong Shooes buckles—
 20 hammocks are very much wanted—
 Beg Leave to refer you to the memorandum of provisions &C Expended and on hand—

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6673–74.

1. Master of the *George*, *Ranger's* prize.
2. Probably Samuel Smith, Massachusetts merchant ship *Hancock and Adams*.
3. John Robertson, *Ranger's* boatswain.
4. Brigantine *Mary*.
5. Continental Navy midshipman Joseph Green, *Mary's* prize master.

December 20

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD

Gent^l.

20 Dec^r 1777

Lord Vis^{te}. How Command^r in Chief of His Maj^{ty}'s. Ships in N^o. America having in his Letter of the 5th. June last¹ taken notice of the long absence of the *Flora*, which he had sent to Antigua to be refitted, not by way of censuring the retardment, but in a light that may effect the service of the ship carreening in the West Indies; and his Lordship having Proposed as an expedient if necessary in future (for facilitating the timely Repair of his Cruizing Ships) to apply to Comm^r Arbuthnot for a Part of the Artificers to be sent from Halifax to be employ'd at New York during the season of the year which will not admit of sending Ships to be refitted at that Port; I am commanded by my Lords Commiss^{rs}. of the Admty to send you herewith an Extract of so much of the said Letter as relates to the subject & to acquaint you that they have signified to his Lordship their Approbation of his proposition; and I am to signify their direction to you to give the necessary orders to Comm^r Arbuthnot to send to New York from time to time such number of Artificers belonging to the Yard at Halifax as Lord Howe may inform him will be requisite for carrying on the service above-mentioned as well as to encrease the present establishment of Artificers at Halifax if it shall be found necessary to enable him to do so. I am &c^a.

PS

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/556, 262. Addressed at foot: "Navy Board." Marginal notation: "Directed to order Commiss Arbuthnot to send such a number of the Artificers in Halifax Yard to New-York as may be wanted for the repair of the Cruizers on the North American Station."

1. NDAR 9: 27–28.

PHILIP STEPHENS TO THE BRITISH NAVY BOARD

Gentⁿ.20 Dec^r 1777

Vice Adm^l Young Commander in Chief of His Majⁱ's Ships at the Leeward Islands having in his Letter of the 12th June last¹ inform'd My Lords Comm^{rs} of the Admty that the *Otter* Sloop, which was Just refitted, was the tenth of the American Fleet that had been refitted at Antigua, a greater number than can be refitted at that Yard on its present Establishment, without retarding the refitting the Leeward Island Squadron; I am commanded by their Lordships to send you herewith an Extract of so much of the said Letter as relates to the Subject, and to signify their direction to you to cause such an addition to be forthwith made to the Present establishment of Artificers at Antigua as you conceive to be necessary for carrying on the service with expedition & despatch: And I am at the same time to signify their Lordships direction to you to encrease the present Establishment of Artificers at Port Royal in Jamaica in like manner, and for the like purpose if you Judge it to be necessary; letting their Lordships know the Augmentation you make to each of the said Establishments. I am &c^a.

PS

LB, UKLPR, Adm. 2/556, 262. Addressed at foot: "Navy Board." Marginal notation: "Directed to Augment the Number of Artificers in His Maj^{ty} Yards at Jamaica & Antigua."

1. NDAR9: 100.

LOUIS XVI AND GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO
LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU CHEVALIER DE BERNARD DE MARIGNY

20^e X^{bre}. 1777

Mémoire du Roi

pour servir d'instruction particuliere au
S^{re}. Ch^{er}. Bernard de Marigny L^t. de V^{au}.

Command^t. la frég^{te}. du Roi La *Belle Poule*.

Sa M^{te}. ayant fait choix de S^{re}. Ch^{er}. Bernard de Marigny L^t. de son V^{aux}, Commandant sa fregate la *Belle Poule*, pour une Mission particuliere,¹ Elle va lui faire connaître ses intentions par la présente instruction, tout sur l'objet général de la d^{te}. mission que sur la conduite qu'il aura à tenir suivant les circonstances.

Quoiqu'il ait été ordonné au S^r. Ch^{er}. Marigny par la 1^{re}. Instruction qui lui a été adressée pour la meme date que la présente,² de se rendre aux îles de S^t Pierre & Miquelon, il ne Cherchera pour ces îles; mais il dirigera sa route et sa manoeuvre de maniere à arriver en droiture à Boston ou à tel autre Port de la nouvelle Angleterre, occupé par les insurgens, où il lui sera plus prompt et plus facile d'aborder.

Si à l'atterage, il rencontroit quelque frégate ou Corsaire anglois qui lui demandât de motif de son apparition sur la Côte de la nouvelle angleterre; il prétexteroit la contrariété des vents qui lui ayant refusé l'accès des îles de S^t. P^{re}. et Miquelon pour lesquelles il étoit destiné, l'ont jetté sur cette côte; et que se trouvant dans le besoin d'eau & d'autres raffraichissemens, il cherche un mouillage pour s'en procurer.

Sa M^{te}. connoissant la prudence et la sagesse du S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigny, croit inutile de lui recommander de mettre la plus grande honnêteté dans ses propos & dans ses procédés envers les anglois, s'il en rencontre; de n'être pas le premier à com-

mettre aucune hostilité, et de se contenter de repousser la force par la force, si l'on osoit l'employer contre lui.

Lorsque le S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigny sera arrivé dans un port de la nouvelle Angleterre, il laissera aux Passagers³ qu'il aura reçus à Bordeaux, la liberté de se débarquer: et afin de se procurer à lui même l'occasion d'y faire quelque séjour, pour y prendre des connoissances de la situation du Pays, de la disposition des esprits, de l'Etat des affaires et des augures qu'on y forme pour la suite de la guerre; il s'annoncera comme chargé de retirer ceux des matelots françoise qui se trouveront sur le Pays. Il recevra, en effet, à son bord tous ceux qu'il pourra rassembler et les ramenera en france. Il doit observer à ce sujet, qu'il n'est pas probable que le Gouvernement de la Province où il abordera, lui prête main forte pour contraindre à s'embarquer sur la frégate du Roi, les matelots français émigrés: il n'en fera pas l'instance; mais il emploira tous les moyens de persuasion pour les engager à revenir, en les assurant même de la part du Roi, qu'ils ne seront pas recherché et punis pour cause de cette évasion.

Le S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigni évitera de f^{re}. un long séjour dans le Port de la N^{lle}. Angleterre où il aura abordé: il ne s'y arrêtera que le tenir absolument nécessaire pour faire reposer son Equipage, et se procurer les connoissances & renseignements qu'il lui fera possible de recueillir.

Il aura la plus grande attention pend^t son séjour; de tenir son Equipage dans la regle la plus stricte et sous les loix de la discipline la plus exacte. à cet effet, il ne permettra point à ses gens de descendre à terre: et lorsqu'il sera dans le cas de commander une Chaloupe pour le service de sa frégate, il y fera toujours embarquer un officier à qui il prescrira de ne point quitter la Chaloupe et d'empêcher que les matelots ne s'en écartent. Il aura soin de composer l'Equipage de son Canot, des gens les plus surs qu'il aura à son bord, et sur la Sagesse et l'exactitude desquels il puisse compter; tant pour éviter toute contestation avec les habitans du Pays, que pour prévenir la désertion; et engager même par des assurances de pardon et des invitations, les matelots françois émigrés à revenir en france.

Si le S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigny venoit à apprendre que la paix est faite ou prête à se conclure entre l'Angleterre et les Etats unis de l'Amérique, il reviendrait aussitôt en france pour en apporter la nouvelle.

Le S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigny naviguera avec les plus grandes précautions en fais^t son retour en france: il évitera le plus qu'il pourra de se mettre à portee des Bâtimens d'une force supérieure aux siennes; mais il fera en sorte de joindre ceux qui lui paroîtront inférieures, afin de se procurer des nouvelles. Si dans sa traversée, il n'apprend rien qui puisse lui faire soupçonner l'interruption de la tranquillité publique en Europe, il fera son retour directement à Brest: dans le cas contraire, il prendra le 1^{er}. Port de France ou d'Espagne où il pourra aborder.

Il ne communiquera la présente Instruction à qui que ce soit, par même à aucun officier de son Etat major—elle doit être sureté et pour lui seul.

Sa M^{te}. ne pouvoit donner au S^{re}. Ch^{er}. de Marigny une marque plus distinguée de la confiance qu'Elle a dans ses talens et son intelligence, qu'en lui confiant l'exécution des ordres contenus dans la présente Instruction: Elle est persuadée qu'il sentira toute l'importance de la mission dont il est chargé; et Elle ne compte pas moins sur sa prudence, sa sagesse et sa discretion, que sur le zèle et la fermeté dont il Lui a donné des preuves.

Fait à Versailles le 20 X^{bre}. 1777. Signé Louis, et plus bas, de Sartine.

[Translation]

20th Dec. 1777

Memorandum from the King
to serve as special instruction to the
Chevalier Bernard de Marigny Lieutenant
de Vaisseau commanding the royal frigate
La Belle Poule

His Majesty, having chosen the Chevalier Bernard de Marigny, Lieutenant de Vaisseau commanding the frigate *Belle Poule*, for a special mission,¹ he will communicate his plans in these instructions on the general object of the said mission and on the conduct to be followed, depending on the circumstances.

No matter what the Chevalier de Marigny was ordered to do in the 1st instructions sent him for the same date as these instructions,² to proceed to the St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands, he shall not search for these islands, but rather direct his course and maneuvers in such a way as to reach Boston or some other part of New England occupied by the insurgents, where it will be faster and easier to arrive.

If upon his landfall, he meets some English frigate or privateer that asks him why he is there on the coast of New England, he must make the excuse that the winds had prevented him from reaching St. Pierre and Miquelon, his original destination, and threw him up on that coast, and that needing water and other provisions he was looking for a place to anchor so he could obtain these things.

His Majesty is well aware of the Chevalier de Marigny's circumspection and wisdom and knows he does not have to remind him to maintain civility in his conversation and in his dealings with the English, if he meets any, not to initiate hostility, but merely to deflect blow for blow any attack which they might dare make against him.

When the Chevalier de Marigny arrives at a port in New England, he shall allow the passengers³ he picked up in Bordeaux the freedom to disembark, and so that he himself might take the opportunity to travel a bit and scout for information on the situation of the country, the general mood, the state of affairs, and indications that one might gather concerning the results of the war, and he shall announce that he is responsible for bringing back French sailors he finds in that country. He will then in fact take on board all those he can gather together, and bring them back to France. Realize in this matter that the provincial government where he arrives is unlikely actually to try to bar the émigré French seamen from boarding his Majesty's ship: he must not insist, but rather use all means of persuasion to get them to return, even assuring them on the part of the king that they will not be tracked down and punished for their evasion.

The Chevalier de Marigni shall avoid staying long at the port in New England where he puts ashore; he must stay only as long as is necessary to rest his crew and obtain whatever information and intelligence he can gather.

During his voyage he must take great care to keep his crew in strict order and under tight control. To achieve this, he must not allow his men to set foot on the ground, and when the need arises to take a ship's boat out for the service of the frigate, he must man it with an officer under orders never to leave the boat alone and to make sure the seamen do not stray. For this ship's boat, he must assemble a crew from among the most reliable men he has on board, whose discretion and punctuality he can trust, both to avoid any conflict with the inhabitants of the country and

to prevent desertion; use promises of a pardon as well as enticements to get émigré French seamen to return to France.

If the Chevalier de Marigny learns that England and the United States of America have made their peace or are about to make it, he must return as soon as possible to France to report the news.

The Chevalier de Marigny must navigate carefully returning to France, avoiding to the greatest extent possible putting himself within range of ships stronger than his own, but arranging to join those ships that are weaker, in order to get news. If during his crossing he learns nothing that would lead him to suspect an interruption of public peace in Europe, he must proceed directly to Brest; if the opposite is the case, then he must land at the first place he can find, in France or Spain.

He must not communicate these instructions to anyone at all, not even his officers; the instructions must be locked up, accessible only to him.

His Majesty could not give the Chevalier de Marigny a more distinguished token of his great confidence in his skills and intelligence than to bestow on him the responsibility of carrying out the orders contained herein: His Majesty knows that the Chevalier de Marigny is aware of the critical nature of this mission he has been given, and is counting no less so on his circumspection, wisdom and discretion, as well as his vigor and reliability, of which qualities he has given the king demonstrations.

Written at Versailles on 20 December 1777, Signed Louis, and underneath, de Sartine.

LB, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 134, fols. 425–26. Notation at top left corner of first page: “2^e instruction à n’ouvrir qu’à 80 ou 100 lieues au mer”; “2nd instruction, to be opened only when 80 to 100 leagues out to sea.”

1. By Dec. 17, the French ministry and the American Commissioners had agreed in principle to enter an alliance, proceedings only awaiting the Spanish court’s reply to France’s invitation to join the alliance. Marigny was to transport to America the Commissioners’ messenger, who bore a dispatch informing Congress of the expectation of a treaty. For the text of the Commissioners’ dispatch, dated 18 Dec., see *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 305–9. The *Belle Poule* sailed on 6 Jan. 1778, but weather forced her into L’Orient ten days later. Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774–1787* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 93–94.

2. The first instructions ordered Marigny to St. Pierre and Miquelon in order to bring all the seamen there back to France. They also instructed him to open the enclosed packet—that is, the second, true instructions—when 80 or 100 leagues at sea, and to sink that packet if attacked by a superior British force. FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 134, fol. 423.

3. The passengers were Simeon Deane, bearing the American Commissioners’ dispatches, and Anthony Knapp, a privateersman from Newburyport, who was to act as a pilot on the American coast. The American Commissioners in France to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, 20 Dec. 1777, in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 320.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gent^l.

Lorient Dec^r 20th 1777

This Letter is design’d for the particular purpose of giving my Opinion respecting the Ship *Duras*¹ which M^r Berard wrote to you about when I was in Paris—

She is a large old East India Ship in want of very considerable repairs, which I think would be very expensive & after all be an old Ship not very fit for our use in her present position; If she was cut down as was propos’d I hardly think she would make a good Frigate; her Guns would not be a of sufficient heighth from the Water, at most but five feet; she has the Name of a fast sailor—in my opinion it would not be safe to meddle with her until she was overhall’d & fit for the Sea—she is really a

cheap Bargain as she now stands, could she be got to America at any reasonable expence & with dispatch, her Military Stores would be worth more in America, than the Sum they now ask for the Ship—If they would engage to fit her out with dispatch & at a known Sum, I believe she would Answer, provided you could put a Cargo of Light Goods in her & send her to Boston in the Month of March—put every Gun she would carry on both Decks—when out strike the lower Deck Guns into the Hould—let the rest of her Cargo be Hemp & Yarns ready tarr'd, fitting to lay into any kind of Cordage—After all I have said I cannot advise you to embark in any of those old Ships without much circumspection & good Information—as they are ticklish matters; more especially as they must be left to the management of French Houses

Your most Obed^t Serv^t

Tho^s Thompson

NB. The Mem^o. of Anchors given to M^r Arthur Lee of 77^w is a mistake as they are much too large for a 74 Gun Ship.

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 162. Addressed: "To/The Honorable/Doct^r Benj^m Franklin, Silas Deane/& Arthur Lee Esquires./Commissioners &^{ca}/At/Paris." Docketed: "L'Orient Dec^r 20th/1777 Letter from Cap Thompson."

1. *Duc de Duras*, which would become the Continental Navy ship *Bonhomme Richard*.

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

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen

Nantes Decem^r 20. 1777.—

In expectation of hearing from you I have only at present to inform you that I am just returned from Painbeuf & have had the pleasure of seeing as fine a Ship¹ as any of her size in any Navy.—I am in expectation of seeing Cap^t Nicholson soon and if our obstacles are removed I shall soon Finish the Expedition; the Ship is all rigged, Guns mounted & everything fitted. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 37, 126. Addressed: "The Honourable/The Commissioners of the/United States/Paris." Docketed: "M^r Williams. Dec^r 20./77."

1. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

"SUPPLIES SENT TO CONGRESS THRO THE HOUSE OF CARDOQUI
AT BILBOA, & ADDRESSED TO ELBRIGE GERRY, ESQ^r."

By the Schooner *Tabby* Cap^t Hodges¹

Russia Duck 119 peices

Tent cloth 42 D^o.

Sewing twine 252 lb

Sail Needles 400

By the *Alexander* Cap^t John Williamson²

Shirting 185 peices

8 Anchors 109 hund. wg^t

Cables 5 from 8½ to 18½ Inches

Cordage 17 Coil of all dimensions } 342 hundred weight

By the *Charlotte* Cap^t Wil^m. Sinclair³

Shirting 100 peices

Tent cloth 30 D^o.

Russia duck 24 D^o.

8 Anchors 199 hund. wgt^t.

Cables 4 from 9 to 18½ Inches

Cordage 119 Coil all dimensions

By the *Lydia* Cap^t Will^m. Andrews

Blue Cloth 27 peices

Shirting 331 D^o.

Blankets 12

8 Anchors 102 hhd wgt^t

Cables 7 from 9 to 18½ Inches

Cordage 234 Coil, all dimensions.

By the *Success* Cap^t Gerris⁴

Salt 757 farricks

Anchors 16. wght 238 hhd

Cables 3 from 16 to 18½ inches

Hawsers 3

Cordage 234 Coyl all dimensions

Shoes strong 2247. pair

Shirts made 2532

Stockings 243½ doz.

Hatts 1500

Kettles large 18

Blanketts large 2186

Shirting 28 peices

2 Small Cases & a Barrel with Jesuits Bark, Rhubarb, Ipecacuanha, Tartar Emetic,
Mercury Sublimate, Purging Salts, Opium.

By the Schooner *Marblehead* Cap^t. Sam^l. Duggard⁵

Salt, Duck & tent Cloth. quantity unknown.

Arthur Lee

True Copy⁶ from Mess^{rs}. Gardoqui's Invoice Paris Dec^r. 20th. 1777.

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 83, vol. 1, pp. 135–36 (M247, roll 110). Enclosure in Arthur Lee to the Continental Secret Committee, 10 Feb. 1778, *ibid.*, pp. 127–30.

1. John Hodges, "who saild the 24th of March 1777 from Bilbao." From a similar, undated list, also enclosed in Lee to the Secret Committee, 10 Feb. 1778, p. 133.

2. Who "saild from D^o. April 25th. 1777." *Ibid.*

3. Who "saild from D^o. 25th. of April 1777." *Ibid.*

4. Cabbot Garrish, who sailed "May 8th. 1777." *Ibid.*

5. Who "saild 14th D^o." *Ibid.*

6. With his letter of 10 Nov. 1777 to Francis Lewis, William Lee enclosed a similar list with the following minor differences: In the *Alexander*, 3 cables, not 5; in the *Lydia*, 237 coil of cordage, not 234. In addition, William Lee listed supplies received "From our friends in [*France*]"—3,000,000 Livres in Money—but 1,000,000 £ to be repaid in Tob^o—Ship'd in the *Amphitrite*, *Mercur*, *Seine & Flammand*, 200 four pound Brass Cannon with Carriages Compleat, 91315 Cannon Balls, 27, Nine Inch Mortars Compleat; 56 Brass four pound Cannon compleat, 3782 Bombs—33,000 Fuzees Compleat with Bayonets. 1230 Fuzees for light horse.—30,000 Gun Locks—3,000,000 Gun Flints.—100 Ton of Lead.—10,000 P. Worsted Hose for Officers; 3,000 Blankets for Officers; 10000 Silk Hkfs.—50,000 Linen Hkfs; 2000 Artillery tools 50000 lbs Sulphur, 26 Brass, 6 lb Cannon mounted on the *Flammand*." ViHi, William Lee Letter Book, pp. 81–82.

CAPTAIN ELLIOTT SALTER, R.N., TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

My Lord,

*Hussar in Bull Bay,*¹ December 20th 1777.

I take the liberty of writing to you to acquaint you of my arrival here in company with his Majesty's sloop *Alert*, whose mainmast is sprung in two places (and span-shackle broke) owing to the badness of the stick; and having had a survey on it find it can be sufficiently fished to carry her to England, I have therefore thought it prudent to come into port with her, as our rudder is damaged and am in want of water, as the *Alert* can have the assistance of our carpenters and armourer. I am sorry to inform your Lordship we have had an unsuccessful cruise, having been off Cape Finisterre on information of an American brig and Conyngham's cutter having been seen off there 2 days before (20 ultimo). This intelligence I gained from the master of a letter of marque just come out of Oporto. On the 4th inst I fell in with his Majesty's ship *Medway*, who had met with nothing; and on the 6th with the *Asia*, who had likewise been unsuccessful. We lay to all night in company with her, and next morning saw two sail, one of which the *Asia* and we chased, and the *Alert* the other; we came up with our chase about 2 P.M. and sent our boat on board, she proved a brig from Mounts Bay to Venice. About 11 that forenoon the *Alert* fired a gun, and some time after another, which was perceived from our tops, on which I sent the 2nd lieutenant up with his glass to see if he could distinguish any signal the sloop had out; but could observe none nor her chase in sight, which was the cause of my not hauling my wind to join her, as I supposed something was the matter with her mast or rigging and that she could easily join me after I had brought to our chase. About 4 P.M. she joined us, and informed me the vessel she chased proved to be a Philadelphia-built ship of about 24 guns (which Captain Bazely supposed to be an American cruiser) with a spar deck, whole mizen yard, clean white bottom, quarter badges, and a figurehead which stood far back. On the *Alert's* hoisting an American ensign she hoisted a plain blue flag at her ensign staff, which signal not being understood by the *Alert* she hauled it down and hoisted Spanish colours. About 5 P.M. made sail to the south-east in hopes of falling in with her; and about 9 the *Asia* tacked and stood to the northward. The next morning made Cape Finisterre and stood to the southward, calling off Oporto for intelligence, but could gain none from the consul. I run down that evening off the Burlings, and next day fell in with his Majesty's sloop *Martin*, who came out from Lisbon on a ten day's cruise, by order of Captain Moore of the *Exeter*, in quest of a Bermudian-built American brig privateer of sixteen guns without a head and black sides. The day after I fell in with the *Egmont*, who I find has been equally as unsuccessful as ourselves. In the afternoon gave chase to a brig from Bilbao to Setubal. The owner informed me that he had been six weeks at Bilbao, waiting for the departure of the American privateer then in there; and he very justly observes it is out of the power of our cruisers to catch them, as they never come out from the land and on the appearance of a vessel of force they run into port. These privateers have people employed to look out from the hills who make signals to them when anything appears in the offing, so that they slip out and take them; but on the contrary if any of our cruisers appear off, they have signals to acquaint them therewith, so that they continue quiet till our ships are off the coast. On the 14th I chased a snow and brought her to; and whilst we were hoisting our boat out, she wore and ran foul of our stern, carrying away the ensign staff, stern lantern, and damaged the rudder, which our car-

penter informed me he should be able to repair provided the ship was anchored in smooth water. I have therefore carried her up to Bull Bay, as likewise the *Alert*, which I hope will meet your Lordship's approbation. I have the pleasure to inform you that the *Alert* and *Hussar* go nearly alike and do equal credit to their bottoms, though the *Alert* being rigged as a cutter has the advantage of being more weatherly. The Bay by no means agrees with her at this season of the year, as she, dabchick like, is frequently under water; and after a gale, many of which we have met with, she is not able to set her mainsail till the sea is down for fear of springing her boom; and I am happy to think no accident has happened to her in all the bad weather we have had, as the defects in her mainmast did not appear till this day (the 16th). Her people, though constantly wet, are healthy, which is not the case with ours, as we have had from 16 to 25 sick ever since we have been out with colds and fevers and now we have 30; and the only cause that I can attribute for the *Alert's* people continuing so healthy is that she has her galley between decks, which though disagreeable in some respects is of great benefit to the ship's company, as I have always observed in the West Indies, when ships have been unhealthy and have had their galleys below, that the cooks and people who lay near it seldom or ever caught the infection. I am sorry to say our rigging is so badly fitted that it wants overhauling entirely, being rigged by contract; and from my not being allowed the men who were volunteers for the ship I may venture to say I have not 30 good seamen on board—however, I hope I shall be able to complete my deficiency before I return to England. Our upper works are so leaky that her sides and deck will require fresh caulking all over: I have therefore to request your Lordship will be pleased to order the ship into Hamoaze on our return, that I may have an opportunity of getting my rigging lifted and put to rights, which I am sorry to say has not been in my power to do since she left the River. I propose putting to sea again as soon as I have repaired my rudder and completed our water, which I hope will be in a few days. I have the honour to be [&c.]

Ell^t Salter

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38), 1: 256–59.

1. The *Hussar* and *Alert* anchored in the Tagus River on December 19. UKLPR, Adm. 51/51.

December 21 (Sunday)

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU LE BRETON DE RANSANNE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

Les Capitaines des deux bâtiments¹ américains qui sont ici, viennent de m'instruire que vous aviez ordonné que le rhum qu'ils avoient acheté & qu'on Leur avoit saisi, Leur fût rendu. Il n'y a plus que La Crainte de trouver Leur Ennemi En force à La Côte, qui puisse retarder Leur départ. Le nommé Jacques Mandret, maitre de La barque *La margueritte de Bonne alliance*, De L'Isle-Dieu, vient de me rendre Compte qu'Étant parti de Bordeaux Le quatorze de ce mois pour venir à L'orient; Il avoit rencontré Le 19 à huit heures du matin, à La vuë de La pointe Sud-Est de Belle-Isle

Deux frégattes de vingt-six à vingt-huit Canons. Comme Je ne crois pas que nous En ayons deux Ensemble dans ces parages, Il y a Lieu de Croire que Ce sont des bâtimens anglois qui sont venus Croiser pour attendre Le Départ Des americains qui sont à L'Orient. Si vous voulez, Je sortirai avec Eux & les Conduirai au Large. J'attendrai vos ordres pour Cela. . . J'ai L'honneur d'Etre [&c.]

le breton De Ransanne

A bord De La *Sylphide* En rade Du port-Louïs

Le 21 Decembre 1777.

[Translation]

My Lord

The captains of the two American ships ¹ which are here have just informed me that, as you ordered, the rum they had bought and which had been taken from them, has been given back to them. There remains only the fear of finding their enemy in force on the coast which may delay their departure. The man called Jacques Mandret, master of the boat *La margueritte de Bonne alliance*, from L'Isle-Dieu, just reported that after leaving Bordeaux the fourteenth of this month for Lorient, at eight o'clock on the morning of the 19th he encountered in sight of the southeast point of Belle-Isle two frigates with twenty-six to twenty-eight guns. As I do not believe we have two of these together in these waters, I have reason to believe they are English ships come to cruise in expectation of the departure of the Americans who are at Lorient. If you like, I will leave with them and lead them out into the open sea. I await your orders on this. . . I am [&c.]

le breton De Ransanne

On board La *Sylphide* in the harbor of port-Louis

21 Decembre 1777.

L, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 129, fol. 283. Notations at head of first page: "La *Silphide* Corvette"; "Renvoi 29 x^e 1777"; "[accuser simplement la reception. ne Rien changée]"; "adresser à Brest." "Answered 29 Dec. 1777"; "simply acknowledge receipt. nothing changed"; "dated at Brest."

1. Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Elisha Hinman, and Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Thomas Thompson.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Captⁿ. Jones

Ranger 21st Decem^r 1777.

Sir

Jack ¹ arrived this morning, am extremely happy that matters on board are to your satisfaction Shall duly observe, and comply with the contents of your Letter—Am Sorry to inform you, that the Ice came down last night very swift with the Ebb, and pretty thick, the frenchmen are much alarm'd at it, M^r Odea informs me the consequence may be bad unless the Ship is hawled in shore, which I do not think my self Authorised to do, without your order—especially when so nigh as to advise and hear from you in so short a time—Some of the people have this morning applied to me for liberty to go on Shore, which shall not grant them without your approbation—

The Ship is still in good order, on Friday employed eight french caulkers from the shore who altogether did not do as much as we of our own did yesterday, therefore did not send for them again—The Officers Join in their respects I am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

Shou'd be glad to hear whether there has been any word of the *George* Shall esteem it a favour if you'll please to forward the Letter to M^r Shores

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6675.

1. Johnny Downes, apprentice in *Ranger*, formerly servant to John G. Frazer. Frazer to John Paul Jones, 15 Dec., *ibid*.

December 22

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE CONTINENTAL MARINE COMMITTEE

Gentlemen,

Nantes 22^d. Dec^r. 1777.

The *Independence* being still in this port—it is my Duty to acquaint You that I yesterday received a letter from the Commissioners requiring my Appearance at Paris.—I hope the present situation of Affairs will enable them to furnish me with some Additional Force—but should that event be protracted for any considerable Space of time I will make my stay at Paris very short and on my return will proceed to Sea with the *Ranger* in the intrem.—You may rest Assured that I will endeavour to transmit to you the most regular accounts of my proceedings, being in the Grateful sincerity of my Heart Gentlemen [&c.]

L, DNA, PCC, item 58, pp. 141–42 (M247 roll 71). Addressed at foot: “The Hon^{ble}./The Marine Committee.” Docketed: “N^o 34./ Nantes 22^d Dec^r. 1777./The Hon^{ble}./The Marine Committee.”

PIERRE-ANTOINE MASSIE AND OTHERS TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

22. x^{bre}. 1777

Nous capitaine pierre Antoine Massie de Marseille commandant Le navire Le *Bon pasteur* party du Fort Royal Isle Martinique Le 4 octobre 1777 pour marseille notre destination, officiers major, passagers et Equipages d'iceluy, certifions et attestons que Le 21 Decembre meme année Sur les 4 heures du soir nous trouvans par le travers du cap de Gatte distants 4 Lieux avec un vent D'ouest fraix, un navire portant pavillon anglais et marchant Superieurement a nous, vint jusques par notre travers a demy lieu loin et nous tira un coup de Canon a boulet qui nous passa fort pres, nous mimes tout de Suite notre pavillon, menames tout de suite nos bonnettes hautes et basses et cargammes nos deux basses voiles, ayant mis a travers tout de Suite Sous nos deux hunniers, il nous fut sous peu a la portée de La voix. il nous cria d'oû nous Venions et oû nous allions, luy ayant repondu de la Martinique a Marseille, il commanda que Le capitaine y fut tout de suite a bord avec Son Canot; luy ayant représenté par L'entremise d'un de nos matelots qui parlait Anglois que nous n'avions qu'une Lourde chaloupe très enbarrassée qui demandait au moins trois quarts D'heures pour etre mise a la mer et que La nuit S'avavançait il repondit qu'il allait mettre le sien, en Effet il L'envoya a notre bord avec Six hommes armés de deux paires de pistolet et un Sabre chaques, ils disaient etre officiers de La fregatte, il fallut ceder ses Six hommes armés montèrent a bord, firent embarquer de force le capitaine en luy ordonnant de La part du leur de porter avec luy tous ses papiers ayant mis le pistolet Sur la gorge du timonier ils S'enparerent du gouvernail et du commandement du Navire Le dit

cap^{ne}. S'étant embarqué dans Le canot et ayant abordé a bord de La dite fregatte, ils le firent dessandre dans La grand chambre ou le dit capitaine Etait avec un passager qui parlait francais et Son Chirurgien il luy fit demander tous Ses papiers, il luy remis une balle de fer blanc renfermant L'expedition de L'amirauté, Le congé dé Monseigneur L'amiral, Le role d'Equipage et L'expedition du domaine qui constatait Le chargement, il ne Daigna pas meme ouvrir la boëtte ou ils Etaient renfermés il fut La mettre tout de suite dans Son bureau; il me fit dire pour lire par cet homme qui parlait Francais et qui nous servait D'interprete qu'il etait tres persuadé qué je ne venais pas de La martinique et bien de La nouvelle Angleterre, que mon chargement devait etre composé du Tabac, du Ris, du bled et autres denrees provenant de ce paÿs, et qu'il etait dessidé de me menner a Mahon pour faire La visite Exacte et decharger mon Vaisseau. il fit passer tout de suite Douze de Ses matelots armés dans mon bord, nomma un capitaine de prise et mon navire fut totalement a Sa discretion ayant donné tous Ses ordres, il redessendit dans La chambre où j'avais resté tout Etonné de cette scène. je luy Representai Qu'il n'avait qu'a faire verifier tous mes papiers et qu'il verrait que je viens reelement de La martinique et que mon chargement n'était absolument composé que de denrées venant du cru de cette colonie. il me fit dire pour toute reponse qu'il allait me mener a Mahon et que La on verrait, sans vouloir jetter un coup d'œil sur mes papiers. Le voyant determine de La Sorte, je luy dis que cedant a La force, je protestait des ce moment de tous dommages retard quelconques tant pour La Sureté de mon navire que pour La cargaison, et qu'ayant eu beaucoup des mauvais temps je faisais 28 pouces d'eau par heures avec Le beau temps et belle mer, et que quand Le navire fatigoit j'avais de La peine a faire laisser les pompes, que S'Etant Enparé dé mon navire c'était a luy ay faire prévoir. Cet homme pour lors devint furieux, et je me vis Sur le point d'être mis aux fers, il voulait a toute force me faire bonne prise et que je ne dis mot.

Monsieur Le Baron D'arbaud de Jouque major general de La Martinique L'un de mes passagers fut aussy mandé a bord, on luy fit Subir L'interrogatoire, luy proposant de Luy donner La moitie du chargement S'il voulait avouer que nous Eussions des marchandises de La nouvelle angleterre, Le tout avec violence et mauvais procedé. il fit son possible pour faire entendre audit capitaine que nous venions reellement de La martinique chargés des denrées coloniales & que nous n'avions Relaché en aucun port depuis notre depart. tout cella ne satisfesait pas ce capitaine qui voulait absolument nous conduire a Mahon il poussa La violence jusqu'a vouloir le retenir dans son bord en ottage à la fin a forces des sollicitations et des prieres il Le fit Reconduire a Bord du *bon pasteur*

Deux soldats deserteurs qui etaient embarques par ordre du gouvernement furent pareillement mandés a son bord et furent interrogés hors de ma presence; Enfin apres m'avoir fait bien des reproches de ce que les francais favorisaient ouvertement les nouveaux angleterriens et autres mauvais propos, sur Les 11 heures du Soir il me fit dire qu'il allait me rendre mes papiers et me faire conduire a mon bord, m'offrant si j'avais besoin de quelques vivres de me les ceder en payant ayant deja 78 jours de navigation et les vivres commençant a me manquer, je le priai de me vendre 2 quinteaux biscuit, une barrique d'eau, 12 poulles, et un petit Cochon, luy ayant payé pour Le tout 4 guinées, m'ayant donné en sus la moitie d'un barril lardier [*illeg.*] la moitie d'un fromage et 4 à 5 livres de bœurre sans vouloir de L'argent, je luy fit envoyer en reciproque 25 livres caffè, 12 bouteilles Sirop, 6 bouteilles Vin de

Bourdeaux et 2 bouteilles Rumb. toutes ses provisions etant embarquées Dans le canot il my fit Embarquer moy meme et conduire a mon Bord en me souhaitant bon voyage. j'arrivai a mon bord, où je trouvai tout dans une Confusion extreme, le capitaine de prise et ses matelots ayant mis mon navire dessus dessous et visité autant qu'il fut possible de toute part. Le sieur Gautier mon capitaine en second luy ayant representé pareillement que nous faisons beaucoup d'eau, et qu'ils eussent Soin de faire pomper, ils ne voulurent jamais le faire ni permettre qu'on Le fit et repondirent ironiquement s'il avait peur de couler bas, enfin tous ces gens La se débarquerent et je me trouvai sur les 11 heures du soir maitre dans mon navire.

cette fregatte s'apelle The *Westmoreland* armée de 22 pieces de canons de 8 et beaucoup du monde, commandée par cap^{ne}. Michel party de Londres depuis 15 jours sans avoir Relaché en aucun port, allant a Mahon et de La a Livourne.

fait a bord Du navire Le *Bon pasteur* le 22 Decembre 1777

Pr^e Massié Cap^{ne}.

Gautier

Massie cadet

D. albiail

Le Bn. d'arbaud passager sur

le dit navire

Chomet Des Beaumes

Rayet

Martin Passager

Le maitre nocher Contre maitre et

Calfat et Canonier ne Sachant Signer

onts fait Chacun Leurs Croix Cy

Dessous

Pr^e Massie Cap^{ne}

X croix Du maitre

X croix Du contre maitre

X croix Du Calfat

X croix Du cannonier

je Soussigné pierre antoine Massié cap^{ne} Du navire Le *bon pasteur* et au nom de messieurs Ventre & Pascal mes armateurs, Proteste De tous Depens, et Domages provenant tout Du Deffaut de la pompe qui peut m'avoir avarié plusieurs Barriques de sucre a mon premier Rang que du Retard occasioné injustement, Reservant a mes armateurs tous leurs droits pour former telles plaintes qu'ils avi Seront Bon etre leurs interets Lors que Le Domage Sera Reconnu
a Bord Du *bon pasteur* Le 22 Decembre 1777

Pr^e Massie—

[Translation]

We, Captain Pierre-Antoine Massie of Marseilles, commanding the ship *Bon Pasteur*, having sailed from Fort Royal in the Island of Martinique on 4 October 1777 for Marseilles our destination, senior officers, passengers and crew, as here below, certify and attest that on 21 December of the same year, at 4 o'clock in the evening, we came abreast of the Cape de Gata at a distance of 4 leagues; with a strong breeze from the west, we came upon a ship flying an English flag, and sailing at a speed faster than ours. She closed on our beam to within a distance of half a league and then fired a gun, the shot passing very close to us; we immediately hoisted our flag, immediately took in our high and low studding sails and furled our courses; having immediately come abeam under our two topsails; she shortly came within hailing distance and shouted to us from where were we coming and where we were going; we answered we were coming from Martinique and going to Marseilles; she then ordered the captain to come immediately by boat to the ship; having explained to him

through one of our sailors who spoke English that we had only a heavy rowboat in very bad condition, which would require three quarters of an hour to put in the water and that it was getting dark, the captain answered he would put his own boat in the water; as a matter of fact he sent it to our ship with six men each armed with two pairs of pistols and a sword; they said they were officers from the frigate; we had to allow the six armed men to board us; they forced the captain to get into the boat while ordering him, on behalf of their captain, to bring all his papers; while holding a pistol against the helmsman's throat, they took control of the tiller and the command of the ship. The aforesaid captain, having embarked in the boat and having gone aboard the aforesaid frigate, was forced to go down to the great cabin where the captain was with a passenger, who spoke French, and his surgeon; the captain was asked for all his papers, which he handed over in a tin box containing the Admiralty's sailing orders, my Lord Admiral's authorization, the muster roll, and the customs clearance confirming the nature of the ship's cargo. The frigate's captain did not bother to open the box in which the documents were enclosed. He had it immediately put in his desk; he had me told, through the man speaking French and who served as an interpreter, that he was certain I was not coming from Martinique but rather from New England, that my cargo had to contain tobacco, rice, grain, and other produce coming from that country, and that he had decided to take me to Mahon for a thorough inspection and to unload my ship. He then sent immediately twelve armed men from his crew to board my ship, appointed a prize master, and now my ship was completely at his disposal; having issued all his orders, he went down again to the cabin where I had remained completely stunned by this scene; I put it to him that he had but to have all my papers checked, he would then see I really did come from Martinique and my cargo was made up entirely of produce grown in that colony. As his only answer, he had me told he would take me to Mahon and it would be decided there, still without trying to look over my papers. Seeing his determination, I told him that, having had to give in to a show of force, I was as of that moment protesting against all damages and any delay as well as the safety of my ship and its cargo. I also stated that, having met up with bad weather, I was leaking at a rate of 28 inches an hour during good weather and calm sea, and when the ship was laboring I had trouble keeping the pumps working, and since he had seized my ship, it was up to him to order precautions. This man then became furious, and I could see myself being put in irons. He wanted at all costs to make a fine prize of me and for me not to say a word.

Baron d'Arbaud de Jouques, Major General of Martinique, one of my passengers, was also summoned on board and was subjected to an interrogation, suggesting to him that he would be given half the cargo if he would admit that we had goods from New England. All of this was accompanied with violence and nasty behavior. The baron did his best to make the aforesaid captain understand that we were truly sailing from Martinique laden with colonial produce and that we had not anchored in any port since our departure. None of that satisfied the captain who was intent on taking us to Mahon; he continued with his violent behavior to the point of trying to hold him as a hostage on board the ship. Finally, after many entreaties and pleas, the captain had the baron returned to the *Bon Pasteur*.

Two soldiers, who had deserted and had been put on board the *Bon Pasteur* by order of the government, were likewise ordered on board the captain's ship and were

interrogated outside my presence. At last, after having upbraided me about the French openly favoring the New Englanders, and other nasty remarks, at eleven o'clock at night he had me told that he would return my papers and have me taken back to my ship and offered, if I needed any provisions, to let me have them for a price. Since I had already been sailing for 78 days, provisions were getting low, I asked him to sell me 2 quintals of biscuit, a cask of water, 12 chickens, and a small pig. After I had paid him 4 guineas, he gave me, in addition, half a barrel of lard, half a cheese, and 4 or 5 pounds of butter, without wanting any payment. In return I had sent to him 25 pounds of coffee, 12 bottles of syrup, 6 bottles of Bordeaux wine, and 2 bottles of rum. After having all his provisions loaded into the rowboat, the captain had me get in and had me rowed back to my ship, wishing me a good voyage. On arriving on board my vessel, I found everything in extreme confusion. The prize master and his sailors had ransacked my ship, having gone into every nook and cranny. Sieur Gautier, my second in command, likewise had pointed out to him in protest that we were leaking badly, and that they would have to see that the pumps were worked; they never attempted to do it, nor did they allow anyone else to do it; they scornfully responded whether he was afraid of sinking. At last, those men left the ship and, at 11 o'clock at night, I was master of my own ship.

The frigate is called the *Westmoreland*, carrying 22 eight-pounders and a lot of men, under the command of Captain Michel. They had sailed two weeks ago from London and, without dropping anchor in any port, were making their way to Mahon and then from there to Livorno.

Done on board the ship *Bon Pasteur* on 22 December 1777.

Pr^e Massie, Captain

Gautier

Massie, the younger

D. albiail

The master pilot, the master's mate, the boatswain, and the gunner were unable to write and made their marks

Baron d'Arbaud, passenger on the said ship

Chaumet des Baumes

below

Rayet

Pr^e Massie Capt.

Martin, Passenger

X Master pilot's cross

X Master's mate's cross

X Boatswain's cross

X Gunner's cross

I, the undersigned, Pierre Antoine Massie, captain of the ship *Bon Pasteur*, and in the name of Messers Ventre and Pascal, the owners of my ship, do solemnly protest all damages and expenses resulting from the failure of the pump, which may have spoiled several large barrels of sugar in the bottom rank in the hold, as well as the delay which it unjustly caused, reserving to the owners of my ship their right to file such claims as they believe to be in their interest when the damages have been determined. On board the *Bon Pasteur*, 22 December 1777.

Pr^e Massie—

DS, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, fols. 322–24. Notation at top left corner: "avec la lettre de M. de Sartine du 9. Jan^{re}. 1778"; "with de Sartine's letter of 9 January 1778." Sartine's cover letter to Vergennes is found at vol. 528, fol. 74.

LORD GRANTHAM TO LORD WEYMOUTH

[Extract]

N^o. 67.Madrid 22^d. Decem^{br}. 1777.

My Lord,

I have received the Honour of your Lordship's N^o. 31 and shall pay very particular Attention to the Contents of it.¹

I enclose to your Lordship Copy of an Answer, and its Translation, to my last Office to the Spanish Minister,² the Professions of which are very plausible. I have seen him since I received it, and have pointed out to him that nothing had been wanting on my part towards the prevention of the Complaints which I made, for that I had given Notice to His Majesty's Consuls to make Protests in all Cases of Prizes brought in to Spanish Ports & that besides, the Cases which I complained of had happened before the Time, on which he had promised that stricter Orders for Impartiality in attending to these Matters should be issued, and therefore that it was not fair to attribute any part of the Conduct of the Spanish Governors to their not having received Information.³

Besides the Promises which the Office holds forth, I received from him very direct Assurances, that he had given Orders to have Cunningham forbidden to enter into any of the Ports of Spain. The execution of which, tho' merely agreeable to the first Measures which were promised to be taken, cannot but have a good effect, in shewing the Governors, especially the Commandant of Galicia, that this Court is more in earnest, than it has hitherto appeared to be in this Business. . . . I have the Honour to be [&c.]

Grantham

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 417. Addressed at the foot of the first page: "The Lord Viscount Weymouth &c^a &c^a &c^a." Docketed: "Madrid 22 Dec^r 1777/Lord Grantham/(N^o67)/R. 9 Jan^r 1778."

1. Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 28 Nov. 1777, above.

2. Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 14 Dec. 1777, above.

3. Floridablanca told Grantham to instruct the British Consuls to gather the necessary evidence before filing a protest, as unsupported claims could not be effectively dealt with. See Floridablanca to Lord Grantham, 18 Nov. 1777, above.

December 23

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO FRÉDÉRIC-JOSEPH GUILLOT

A M Guillot

Commis^a. des Ports et Arsenaux de M^{ne}. à St. Mâlo—Vlles. Le 23. X^{bre}. 1777.

J'ai reçu, M, Votre Lettre du 5 du ce Mois par laquelle vous m'informez de l'intention annoncée publiquement par le Cap^{ne} du Bâtim^t. La *Revanche*,¹ d'attaquer à la 1^{re} rencontre la Corvette La *Curieuse*. J'ai mandé en conséquence, à M Le C^{te}. d'Orvilliers de faire passer cet avis à la frégate qui est à Nantes afin que le Bâtim^t Anglois soit observé. Je vous suis gre aussitot De votre exactitude à me f^{re}. part de tout ce qui peut interesser la service du Roi. Je suis [&c.]

[Translation]

To M. Guillot

Commissary of the Ports and Arsenals of the Navy at St. Malo.

Versailles, 23 Dec. 1777.

I have received, sir, your letter of the 5th of this month by which you inform me of the intention announced publicly by the captain of the ship *Revenge*¹ to attack on the first encounter the corvette *La Curieuse*. I have sent, in consequence, to Monsieur Le Comte d'Orvilliers to have this information passed on to the frigate that is at Nantes so that the English ship might be watched. I am pleased with your exactitude in informing me of all that can interest the king's service. I am [&c.].

LB, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 134, fol. 428.1. Jersey privateer *Revenge*, Noel Gautier.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Captⁿ. Jones—*Ranger*—Painbeuf 23^d Dec^r. 1777.

Sir

I wrote you yesterday of the Ice, sinc which time, we have not been troubled with any, of consequence—The Captain of the French Frigate has been on board, I believe from some application of our french people, in respect of cloaths, (which indeed they much want as well as the englishmen, and americans on board) the entry book hath been produced to him, he begs they may be well treated but at the same time, acknowledges he cannot take them, without some order peculiar for that purpose—I am desired by him to write you, to know the time, you fix for sailing, of which he says, he must have some fixed period, and that M^r Odea, from me will inform him, (all this I believe, finesse)—The Ship's masts, rigging &c—are pretty forward, and our Ship's company orderly—as soon as the tides rise shall hawl on the ways to do the bottoms; unless any order from you to the contrary—the Lead is come down which shall put on board the last Gabard—Doctor Green has given me a memorandum of medicine, which I inclose—I must beg leave to press you for the slops in mem^o. sent you, the people being absolutely in want—The Officers tell me frequently, they want money, and that their exigences require a speedy remedy—M^r Odea has supplied us with three tierces and one barrel of beef—M^r Robertson¹ has the Stores, the money you delivered me, shall retain in my hands—The Officers present their compliments—I am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

Jack² is very unwell—

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6677.

1. John Robertson, *Ranger's* boatswain.2. Johnny Downes, apprentice on the *Ranger*.

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentlemen

Nantes December 23^d. 1777.

Your esteemed favor of the 17th. I have recived.—I wish to leave the *Ranger* in such a situation as to expect to find her nearly ready for Sea on my return—

as I think it will be for the intrest of the Service that I should then proceed with her alone Unless an Additional force can be very soon Procured.—should circumstances Admit—an Additional force may be prepared, in my Absence, without any foundation for suspicion.—These sentiments I submit to you with becoming deferance to your Superiour Wisdom. I shall have the honor of paying you my personal respects soon after the appearance of this—therefore shall only add that I am [&c.]

Jn^o P Jones

L, MB. By courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL NICHOLSON TO SILAS DEANE

Honble Sir

Nantes Dec^r 23^d. 1777—

I Arrived Saturday Night last, was much Surprised to find every thing in Regard to my Ship,¹ Just as I left them, no Contrary Orders from the Minister,² so that I am afraid to take my people on board her Yet, She is all loaded Ready for Sea, only to take on b^d. a few Stores &c, it is A great fortification [*mortification*] to me not being permitted to go on b^d. my Ship, with my people; two English Frigates, one 74, Cruizing off here, I am [&c.]

Sam Nicholson

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "To/The Honble Silas Deane Esq^r/A/Paris." Docketed: "Capt Nicholson/Nantes Dec^r 23/77."

1. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.
2. Gabriel de Sartine.

JOHN ROSS TO SILAS DEANE

[Extract]

Dear Sir

Nantes 23 Decem 1777

...Hodge Set out on Sunday, very unwell Poor fellow! So heavy could not write You from hence, he intends it however so soon as he gets to Bourdeaux—At same time, he drew on you in my favour for £3000 Tournois @ 15 d/d. which is in consequence of the Credit he had from M^r Morris (or Committee of Congress) on You. The bill is forwarded today to Gerardot Haller & C^o. & doubt not it will prove good.—

The Ship *La Brune* arrived here last friday from L'orient & look for Green soon when you may depend on the Utmost to get forward for his departure—You may expect to hear from me by Capt: Jones—time only Permit me to Add at present, that I am [&c.]

Jn^o. Ross

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed at foot: "The Hon^{ble}. Silas Deane Esq^r." The portion not printed here concerns an intended meeting with Simeon Deane to discuss a proposed business deal.

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

[Extract]

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen.— (No. 105) Nantes Decem^r 23. 1777—

Cap^t Nicholson is gone to Painbeuf to see his Ship,¹ I inclose a Letter he has written to M^r Dean,² since which I find the expected orders are arrived and we are now to meet no Difficulties. . . .

I shall make a calculation of what will remain after loading the three Ships, and shall then take up the first good Vessell that offers.

I have just met with 9 americans who are arrived from Dunkirk & 10 arrived yesterday from St Malo's, these I shall take on board the Frigate & supply them with necessaries. . . . I have the honour to be [&c]

Jon^a Williams J

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "To/The Hon^{ble} The Commissioners/of The United States." Docketed: "Dec^r 23^d/1777 J Williams Letter Nantes." Notations: "Montieu's/Uniforms"; "Montieu's Cloaths bad"; "(N^o 105)." Portions not printed here concern the poor quality of clothing provided by Jean-Joseph Carié de Montieu, and Williams's writing to William Lee.

1. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.
2. Captain Samuel Nicholson to Silas Deane, 23 Dec., above.

December 24

LIEUTENANT BOUX TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Messieurs

Vous voudrés bien prendre en récommandation qu Jai quitté Le service du roy auquel Jetois attaché pour entrer à celui des Etats de l'amerique septentrionale. Je me suis rendu en Conséquence à vos ordres, et relativement au grade de lieutenant de Vaisseau dans la marine de Etats unis; En hollande pour y diriger La construction d'un Vaisseau qui vous y faisies faire, que maintenant je suis à paris par une suite de vos ordres pour me rendre ou votre service m'appelera.

Ma fortune et mon metier, ne me permet pas de faire isy un long séjour, permettez qu'en Conséquence je vous réitere mes prieres, pour déterminer ceque je dois faire, et si vous ne pouvez pas dessider dans ce moment La mission que vous voudriez me donner. Je vous prie de me permettre de partir pour lorient, ou Jai quelques affaires qui demende ma présence.

La Jattendrai vos ordres, et serai toujours disposé à suivre avec zelle le service des Etats. Je suis [&c.]

a Paris le 24 X^{bre}. 1777.

Boux Neveu

[Translation]

Gentlemen

Please consider that I left the service of the king to which I was attached in order to enter that of the States of North America. I went, in consequence, at your orders, and relative to the rank of lieutenant de vaisseau in the navy of the United States, to

Holland, where I directed the construction of a ship which you were having built; ¹ and that now I am in Paris, by your orders, to place myself where your service will call me.

My fortune and my vocation do not allow me to visit here long. Permit me, in consequence, to repeat to you my request that you determine what I ought to do, and if you are not able to decide this moment the mission that you would want to give me, I request that you allow me to depart for Lorient, where I have some business that demands my presence.

There I would await your orders and would be always disposed to follow with zeal the service of the States. I am [&c.]

Paris, 24 Dec. 1777.

Boux Neveu

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (102a). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Docketed: "24 Dec^r '77."

1. *Indien*, building at Amsterdam.

ARTHUR LEE TO JOHN ROSS

Abstract: Letter the Hon^{ble} Arthur Lee to John Ross.

D^r Sir

Chaillot Dec^r 24th. 1777.

"I received your favor of the 16th. It is a suite of that Conduct, which has confused every thing that M^r Deane assumes to himself, the right of giving orders without the Knowledge or Concurrence of the other Commissioners. The orders you mention were never communicated to me, nor any part of the proceedings at Dunkerque, by which I can judge whether it is proper to concur or not. I have spoke to M^r Deane on the Subject, who promises to shew me M^r Hodges acc^{ts}; when I have seen that & Know the specific Terms on which, & the Reasons why, the Cutters are now to be sold, I shall be able to give you a satisfactory Answer."

Copy, DNA, PCC, item 83, vol. 2, pp. 512–13 (M247, roll 110). Endorsed: "No Letters from M^r Lee on that Subject since/J.R./True Copy. Attest./Arthur Lee."

December 25

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

25th. [Dec^r] Thursday fine w^r. Over head; but Extreemly Muddy in the Yard— Served with Mutton & Turnips to keep Christmas with. White bread Likewise; a Rairity indeed—

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

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

A Versailles, le 25. X^{brc}. 1777

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, vos lettres des 12. et 19. de ce mois; par la premiere, entr'autres choses, vous m'annoncéz l'arrivée de la Corvette la *Silphide*, dans la rade du

Port Louis, et vous me faites part des observations que vous avéz faite à M. Le Breton de Ransanne, commandant cette Corvette, sur la maniere de faire fructueusement la visite à Bord des Bâtimens Étrangers pour en retirer les Matelots François qui pourroient s'y trouver; vos observations à ce sujet me paroissent fort justes.

Par votre lettre du 19., vous me faites part de ce que M. De Bouilhac, fermier Général, vous a écrit qu'il accordait la main levée des taffias réclamés par les Capitaines du *Raleigh* et de l'*Alfred*; ce fermier Général m'a informé des ordres qu'il a donnés à ce sujet, et de leur exécution; au moyen de quoi ces deux Capitaines n'ayant plus aucun prétexte de prolonger leur séjour, je compte qu'ils auront satisfait à l'ordre qui leur a été donné de partir. Je suis [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 25 December 1777

I have received, Sir, your letters of the 12th and 19th of this month; by the first, among other things, you announced to me the arrival of the corvette *La Silphide*, in the roadstead of Port Louis, and you sent word to me of the observations that you made to M. le Breton de Ransanne, captain of the corvette, about the manner of successfully visiting foreign ships in order to remove the French seamen who might be found on board; your observations on this topic appear to me to be very proper.

By your letter of the 19th, you report that M. de Bouilhac, farmer-general, wrote you that he was granting the withdrawal of the rum claimed by the captains of the *Raleigh* and *Alfred*; this farmer general had informed me of the orders that he had given in this regard, and their carrying out. As a result, these two captains having no longer any pretext to prolong their stay, I expect they will comply with the order given for their departure. I am [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrLAL, series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 258. Addressed at foot: "M. Gonet, à l'orient." Notation: "Classes". "Mariners' Registration."

ARTHUR LEE TO CONDE DE ARANDA

Mons^r

a Challot le 25^e Decemb^r 1777

Je vous prie d'avoir la bonté d'expedier a votre Cour la requête que je l'honneur de vous envoyer. Une prise faite par un Corsair americain etoit saisée, dans le Port de S^t Sebastian, l'Equipage mis en prison, tous les Papiers de le Commandant americain emportés, lui même condamné sur sa propre confession, qu'il etoit obligé de faire et de signer dans une langue dont il n'entendoit pas un mot.¹ Le personne qui etoit envoyé par le Capitain de le Corsair de montrer leur Commission du Congrès et prier leur relachement a reçu cette reponse—No viene el ex^{mo}. Sen^r Comand^{te}. Gen^l en condescender con lo que solicita en su instancia Marston Watson primer Ten^{te} de la Goleta Corsaria nombra el Hawk.

J'espere que la grace et la justice de votre Cour me donnera le moyen par un relachement le plus prompt de prevenir les mauvaises effets que fera cet évènement inopiné sur les esprits de mes Compatriotes, parmi lesquelles je souhaite que le respect et l'amitié pour la Nation espagnole dureront toujours. J'ai l'honneur d'etre [&c.]

Arthur Lee

[Translation]

Sir,

Chaillot 25 December 1777

I beg you to have the goodness to dispatch to your court the request that I have the honor of sending you. A prize made by an American privateer was seized in the port of St. Sebastian, the crew put in prison, all the papers of the American commander taken away, he himself condemned on his own confession, which he was obliged to make and to sign in a language of which he understood not a word.¹ The person who was sent by the captain of the privateer to show their commission from the Congress and to beg their release has received this response: His most excellent Señor Commandante General will not comply with that which Marston Watson, first lieutenant of the privateer schooner called the *Hawk*, requested in your case.

I hope that the favor and the justice of your court will give me the means, by a most prompt release, to prevent the bad effects that this event will have on the minds of my countrymen, among whom I desire that respect and friendship for the Spanish nation will endure for ever. I have the honor to be [&c.]

Arthur Lee

L, SpMAH, Estado, legajo 3884, expediente 2, doc. 1.

1. Brig *Britannia*, Wood, master, John Allen, prize master, captured by Massachusetts privateer schooner *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert.

LORD STORMONT TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Monsieur

25. X^{bre}. 1777

Il est de mon Devoir d'informer Votre Excellence que les Corsaires Americains Le *Raleigh*, l'*Alfred* et Le *Randolph*,¹ qui devoient partir il y a Longtems sont encore à l'Orient, et quoi qu'ils soient bien en etat de mettre a la Voile, ayant trouvé abondamment toutes sortes de Secours; on leur permet de rester sous les pretextes les plus frivoles. Ils sont chargés de Canons d'armes et de Munition de Guerre; qui leur ont été fournis dans Vos Ports, en Violation directe, des Traités que Lient les deux Nations, et des Ordres reitérés émanés de cette Cour. Je tiens tous ces details M le C^{te}. d'un Temoïn Occulaire. Je suis persuadé qu'il suffit de les mettre sous les yeux de Votre Excellence, et je ne puis pas douter un Moment que cette Cour, trop Jalouse de sa propre Gloire pour n'être point fidel aux engagements les plus solemnele n'envoye d'abord les Ordres positifs pour faire partir sur le Champ les trois Corsaires mentionés ci dessous, et pour les obliger à décharger les Canons, Armes, et Munitions de Guerre qui Leur ont été fourni d'une Maniere fraudulense, dans un pays ami de la Grande Bretagne, et engagé par des Traités a ne jamais fournir a ces Enemis de pareils Secours.²

Je viens d'apprendre de Bordeaux que Monsieur Barton³ un Negotiant Anglois et un des plus Considerables, et des plus Considerés qu'il y ait dans cette ville, à été insulté publiquement à la Bourse par un Nomme Walke Capitaine, d'un Vaisseau Americain qui a traité de la Manière la plus insolente non seulement Mons^r Barton, mais tous les Negotiants Anglois qui étoient presents. Ils auroient bien chatié son Audace s'ils n'avoient point respecté les Loix du pays. En Consequence des plaintes portées par Mons^r Barton Le susdit Walke a été mis en Prison mais au bout de Vingt Quatre heures. Il a été relâché par les instances du S^r Delap Soidisant Agent des Rebelles. Je supprime les Details de cette Affaire ayant lieu de Croire que Mons^r le Comte

de Fumel⁴ en a fait Raport. Je suis persuadé que V^{re}. Excellence trouvera une punition aussi Legere bien peu proportionnée à une pareil Outrage.⁵

Le Sieur DeLap à trouvé Moyens de vendre un Vaisseau Anglois pris par les Rebelles et Conduit a Bordeaux. Il a vendu presque publiquement ce Vaisseau avec toute sa Cargaison et Il dit hautement qu'il vendra de même tous les Vaisseaux Anglois qui seront pris par nos Rebelles et que lui seront adressés pour cette effet⁶

Je m'interdis toutes Reflexions M. le Comte en ecrierant à un Ministre aussi éclairé que V^{re}. Excellence elles seroient bien Superflue J'ai l'honneur d'être [&c.]
Paris ce 25 X^{brc}: 1777 Stormont

[Translation]

Sir

25 Dec. 1777

It is my duty to inform Your Excellency that the American privateers the *Raleigh*, the *Alfred*, and the *Randolph*,¹ which should have left long ago, are still at L'Orient and although they are quite fit to sail, having found abundant aid of all sorts, they are allowed to remain under the most frivolous pretexts. They are laden with cannon, arms, and munitions of war, which have been furnished to them in your ports, in direct violation of the treaties which united the two nations, and the reiterated orders issued by this court. I have all these details, Monsieur le Comte, from an eyewitness. I am persuaded that it will be sufficient to bring them to Your Excellency's notice, and I cannot doubt for a moment that this court, too jealous of its own glory not to be faithful to the most solemn engagements, will at once send positive orders to cause the above-mentioned three privateers to depart immediately and to oblige them to unload the cannon, arms, and munitions of war which have been supplied to them in a fraudulent manner in a country which is friendly toward Great Britain, and engaged by treaties never to furnish such aid to these enemies.²

I have just heard from Bordeaux that Mr. Barton,³ an English merchant, and one of the most important and respected in that town, has been publicly insulted at the Bourse by a certain Walke, captain of an American vessel, who treated in a most insolent manner not only Mr. Barton, but all the English merchants who were present. They would have punished well his audacity, if they had not respected the laws of the country. In consequence of the complaints made by Mr. Barton, the above-mentioned Walke was put into prison; but at the end of twenty-four hours he was set at liberty at the instance of Sieur Delap, who calls himself an agent of the rebels. I suppress the details of this affair, having reason to believe that Comte de Fumel⁴ has reported them. I am persuaded that Your Excellency will consider so light a punishment quite out of proportion to such an outrage.⁵

The Sieur Delap has found means to sell an English vessel captured by the rebels and taken to Bordeaux. He sold this vessel almost publicly with its entire cargo, and he openly says that he will sell similarly every English vessel which may be captured by our rebels and sent to him for that purpose.⁶

I deny myself all reflections, Monsieur le Comte, in writing to so enlightened a minister as Your Excellency they would be quite superfluous. I have the honour to be [&c.]
Paris, 25 Dec. 1777. Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1799. Addressed at foot of first page: "S: Ex^{ce}: M^{le} C^{te}: de Vergennes". "His Excellency the Comte de Vergennes." Notation: "Extraits envoyer de cette lettre, tant à M. Bertin qu'à M. de Sartine, le 28 X^{brc}: 1777." "Extracts of this letter sent both to M. Bertin and M. de Sartine, 28. Dec. 1777."

1. The British Admiralty received intelligence dated 13 Dec. stating that *Alfred* and *Raleigh* were going to sail from L'Orient on 19 Dec. to join the frigate *Randolph* at Nantes. UKLPR, Adm. 2/1334. The Continental Navy frigate *Randolph*, however, was then at Charleston, S.C.

2. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: "Représentations Sur le Séjour à l'orient de 3 Corsaires Americains"; "Representations as to the stay of three American privateers at L'Orient." On 28 Dec. Sartine instructed the commissary of marine at L'Orient to investigate the basis of the complaint. FrLAL, Series 1, E⁴ 80, fol. 278. That same day he wrote to Vergennes that he doubted *Alfred* and *Raleigh* were still at Lorient, since the commander of the king's frigate stationed there had ordered them not to delay their departure. He was having *Randolph*, if it were indeed in that port, ordered to sail, issuing orders about the embarkation of arms and munitions, and investigating a reported prize sale at Bordeaux. Sartine to Vergennes, 28 Dec. 1777, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. pol., Angleterre, vol. 526, 375–76, printed in *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1808.

3. John Barton, an Irish merchant at Bordeaux.

4. The Comte de Fumel was commandant of the Château Trompette, a fortress guarding the harbor of Bordeaux. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 26: 246.

5. Delap told the American Commissioners that Captain John Walke, of Virginia, "had been imprisoned at the suggestion of some of Lord Stormont's agents, who had seduced some of his sailors, and tampered with others." Richard Henry Lee, *Life of Arthur Lee, LL.D.*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1829), 1: 369. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: "plaintes contre un americain qui a insulté M. Barton à Bordeaux"; "complaints against an American who has insulted Mr. Barton at Bordeaux."

6. Marginal notation at the head of this paragraph: "vente a B^x d'un v^{au} anglois pris par un americain"; "Sale at Bordeaux of an English vessel captured by an American."

LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

Most Confidential

Paris Thursday Morning Decr 25. 1777

M. de Maurepas assured a friend of mine last Night upon his Word of Honor that France had made No Treaty with the Rebels and that no such Measure was in Contemplation. This solemn assurance joined to all that M de Maurepas & M. de Vergennes said to me seems to destroy the Credibility of the Report & inclines me to believe that France will, in the present Moment at least till the final Event of the campaign in America is known, (which Event some of the Ministers have I am told declared she ought to wait for) confine herself to that plan of insidious Policy which she has so long pursued, take no open Part in favour of the Rebels, but give them every secret support. There is too much Reason to believe that Many french ships laden with Every thing the Rebels stand in need of are preparing to sail for North America, & that the Project of sending these ships in Fleets under Convoy of the american Privateers that are in the French Ports and of those Ships of War built in france for the use of the Rebels that will have french and american captains, is by no means laid aside tho in consequence of the Intelligence we had got the place of Rendezvous is changed They no longer mean to rendezvous at Bilboa but in or near some port of France, What Port I do not yet know

There certainly never was a time when it imported us more that our Cruizers should be active and Vigilant and particularly attentive to all that passes on the Coast of France

Your Lordship may remember that M. de Vergennes in one of our Conversations on the subject said that this Project of sending ships in fleets was not only unjustifiable, but Tres mal adroit as by that Means they would more easily fall into our Hands. I hope My Lord that his Prediction will be accomplished. such captures must certainly appear justifiable to every Reasonable and impartial Man whatever Lettres de Mer the ships may carry whatever colours they may hoist occasionally the being under Convoy of american Privateers would alone make them legal Prize. If such suc-

cours should reach america it is but too plain that they would be a great & effectual support to the Rebels. I am [&c.]

Stormont

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1800. Addressed: "Lord Visct Weymouth." Docketed: "Paris 25 December 1777/Lord Stormont/(Confidential)/R. 29th by Messenger to Calais."

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gentⁿ

L'Orient Decem^r: 25th. 1777—

Besides the general Letter which I wrote you respecting our Business with Gourlard, Berard & D. Montplesire, I cannot in Justice to M^r Berard (to whose particular management all the Business which concerned the *Raleigh* was left) omit giving this particular Letter—He has transacted every matter to my entire satisfaction like a Man of Honour, a Man of Business, & an able Merch^t setting aside Dispatch which was not in his Power to Command owing to the Customs of the Port—from his proceeding with us I have no reason but to recommend future Business to his House should you have occasion to transact any at L'Orient, which Port I must recommend as a Safe Harbour & Easy of Access, & were it to be much frequented by Americans, Business would become more Easy and Expeditious—The Business of the *Alfred* was left entirely with Mess^r Goulard & D. Montplasier of whose management Cap^t Hinman can give you the best Acco^t. I am [&c.]

Tho^s: Thompson

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 177. Addressed: "To/The Hon^{ble}/Doct^r Benj^a. Franklin, Silas Deane/& Arthur Lee Esquires/Commissioners &^{ca}./At/Paris." Docketed: "L'Orient Dec^r 25th/1777 Lett^r from Cap^t T Thompson."

December 26

LLOYD'S EVENING POST AND BRITISH CHRONICLE (LONDON),
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1777

London.

His Majesty's ship *Royal Oak*, Captain Faulkner, is arrived at Portsmouth from a cruize, and has brought in with him the *James*, Capt. Hopkins, from South Carolina to Nantz, with 100 barrels of rice, 50 ditto of indigo, and 20 hogsheads of tobacco.

MARQUIS DE NOAILLES TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

[Extract]

A Londres le 26 decembre. 1777.

... M. le Chevalier Pinto m'a fait dernièrement une Confidence que je me crois obligé, Monsieur le Comte de vous transmettre. Il m'a dit que Sa Cour avoit dans ce moment-ci quelques intérêts à démêler avec les Américains; que les Députés qui étoient à Paris avoient envoyé le mois dernier un Mémoire à Lisbonne que ce Mémoire avoit été le résultat d'une Résolution prise par le Congrès dès le mois de Juil-

let; que l'objet étoit de demander au Ministère Portugais la révocation de l'Edit rendu par le feu Roi de Portugal pour fermer aux Américains les Ports de ce Royaume.¹ La réflexion par laquelle M. le Chevalier Pinto a fini, est qu'une pareille démarche mérite toute l'attention de sa Cour, parce qu'il est très important pour elle de ne point se brouiller avec les Américains, et que d'un autre côté la révocation d'un Edit aussi récent feroit ici un Eclat qu'il faudroit tâcher d'éviter. Je lui ai répondu que la prudence de Sa Cour surmonteroit encore de plus grandes difficultés; mais que s'il me permettoit de lui parler avec la même franchise qu'il m'avoit montrée, je lui dirois que s'il y avoit des inconvéniens à révoquer l'Edit, il pouvoit s'en trouver moins à ne point le faire exécuté rigoureusement. . . .

Le M^{is} de Noailles

[Translation]

London, 26 December 1777.

. . . M. the Chevalier Pinto recently entrusted me in confidence with a secret, which I feel obliged, My Lord, to pass on to you. He told me that his court had at this moment some interests to work out with the Americans, that the deputies, who were in Paris, had sent a memorandum last month to Lisbon, and that this memorandum was the outcome of a resolution passed by the Congress as early as the month of July; that the purpose was to ask the Portuguese minister for the revocation of the edict issued by the late king of Portugal to deny the Americans access to the ports of his kingdom.¹ The comment by which the Chevalier Pinto ended was that such an action deserved the full attention of his court, because it is most important for the latter not to quarrel with the Americans, and that from another point of view, the revocation of the edict, so recently issued, would cause a scandal that was to be avoided. I said to him in response that his court's discretion would overcome even greater difficulties; however, if he were to allow me to speak as candidly as he had to me, I should tell him that if there were difficulties in revoking the edict, he might find fewer of them by not strictly enforcing it.

The Marquis de Noailles

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol., Angleterre, vol. 526. Marginal notation: "Confidence de M. Pinto Sur la revocation proposée en Portugal par les députés du Congrès à Paris de revoquer l'Edit qui ferme aux Américains les Ports du Portugal." "M. Pinto's communication made regarding the revocation in Portugal brought up by the deputies of the Congress in Paris to revoke the edict that closes Portuguese ports to the Americans."

1. For the American Commissioner's memorial, see "The American Commissioners to the Marqués de Ponte de Lima" [before July 16, 1777], in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 24: 321–22. On 1 May 1777, the Continental Congress had appointed a committee to investigate whether the Portuguese edict violated the laws of neutrality. NDAR 8: 886.

JOURNAL OF DR. JONATHAN HASKINS

[*Mill Prison, Plymouth, 1777*]

26th. [Dec^r] Friday Clody weather St Stephens's Day M^r Tolcher (Grand father to the Mayor of P[lymouth]) made a Present of 100 ^d Loves to the Boys

D, MeHi, Jonathan Haskins Journal.

AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

Passy 26 December 1777

We beg your Excellency's Permission to make an appeal from the Judgment of the Admiralty, at Nantes which ordains a confiscation of two Prizes (British West-india Ships) taken legally on the High Seas by two American Privateers,¹ and that Your Excellency will be pleased to request his Majesty to suspend the Departure of those Prizes, and their Cargoes, until the justice of our appeal shall have been regularly decided by the proper Tribunal.

The great value of the prizes in question, the distressed situation of their Captors, and the discredit which has fallen upon the cause of our Country by the disposition which was made of the ships after their Confiscation, as well as by the indecent exultation of our Enemies on that subject, all unite in making it our Duty to trouble your Excellency with this request and to Pray that you will favourably represent it to the King.² We have the honor to be [&c.]

B Franklin
Silas Deane
Arthur Lee

L, *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1801. Addressed at foot: "M^r Le Comte de Vergennes." Notations at the head of the page: "annoncé le 27. à M. Deane quil pouvoit employer la voyes juridiques" ["announced on the 27th to Mr. Deane that he could avail himself of the legal course"]; and "Franklin Dean Lée."

1. *Clarendon and Hanover Planter*, captured by Massachusetts privateers *Fanny* and *General Mercer*, John Kendrick and James Babson, commanders.

2. The same day Silas Deane wrote similarly to Conrad-Alexandre Gérard, arguing further that the original owners could not object to an appeal from a judgment of Admiralty, "a Court from which Appeals may be regularly made." *Stevens's Facsimiles*, vol. 20, no. 1802. The next day Deane wrote to Jonathan Williams, Jr., urging him to do what he could to help see that the two prizes were detained for the appeal and stating that "to save if possible these two ships, after all that has passed, will be a master stroke and give me pleasure as long as I live." *Deane Papers* 2: 286.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Dear Sir

L.orient Dec^r 26th 1777

I Congratulate you on your safe arival in this Kingdom, and more particularly as you bring good and agreeable news—I took it a littl unkind I must Confess at not hearing from you on your arival as you came directly from a Place where every thing near and Dear to me resides—however a letter from a Friend is at any season welcom; I read it with pleasure until I came to the two last lines which Contains an unesesary and unseasonable Complement and gave it the appearence of a Letter design'd to discharge a supposd Deibt rather then a Letter of Friendship and information—You do me a sensible pleasure in your attention to M^{rs}. Thompsons shoes you will please to make that Commison agreeable to your distination—Capt Nichalson's acc^t. of our Court Junt, I dare say was Entertaining, told no doubt, with a few of his Embelishments—I hope you will Enjoy much Satisfaction in the Pleasures which paris afourds—particularly in appearing at every Public place where you Can mortify the English and agrandize the States—Cap^t Hinman presents his best Comp^{ts}. we should have been happy, to have meet you in Paris Your most Hble Ser^t

Tho^s. Thompson

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6683–84. Addressed: "To/John Paul Jones Esq^r/Capt, in the american Navy/Paris." Docketed: "Thomas Thompson Esq^r/L'Orient Dec^r 26th. 1777./rec^d. Nantes Feb^r 10th 1778."

LIEUTENANT THOMAS SIMPSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES

Captⁿ. Jones
Sir

Ranger 26th. December 1777.

Your favors by Captⁿ. Young and M^r. Chandler¹ received the evening they came down; no person hath asked leave to go on shore, since I wrote you—Every decent and proper line of conduct, shall be duly attended to, in my power, however shou'd any thing to the contrary happen (tho' I don't expect it) cannot think myself responsible, unless it be thro' my neglect of duty—If you'll please to order down cloathing it will be of infinite service, several of the people have had colds, and others infested with Vermin—the men are at present, in perfect peace, and I dare say if properly clothed it will continue, at which I am sensible you will be very happy—I have taken the liberty since you left the ship, to serve the people one gill of brandy each, in the morning at turning out, and the other gill mix'd in Grog at dinner, which gives universal content, and they seem very thanful for the indulgence. Intend Graveing the ship immediately after the holiday, if the weather permit—the Carpenters on shore will not work till monday next—The magazine is lowered fourteen inches, and will be finished this evening—two hands are on shore, plaining the plank for the quarters—expect to raise the Orlop tomorrow if possible—Captⁿ. Young says he is afraid to take prisoners, on account of his crew, and even wants me to take his man that is under confinement—I cou'd wish you to prevail with Captⁿ. Nicholson to take the prisoners, when he takes charge of his ship²—Have nothing to add, but my wishes for your pleasant Journey to Paris, the Compliments of the season, in which the Officers Join me, and am [&c.]

Thom Simpson

L, DLC, John Paul Jones Manuscripts, 6681–82. Addressed: "John Paul Jones Esq^r/At/Nantes." Docketed: "Letter from Thomas Simpson/26th. Dec^r 1777.—" Notations: "forwar'd by Cⁿ. Nicholson"; "If Cⁿ. Jones should be gone for Paris M^r. Williams will be so Obliging as to forward the Slops for the *Ranger* as soon as possible, the Crew being in much want of them—."

1. Samuel Chandler, of Cape Ann, Mass., was discharged from Mill Prison "as being a Passenger & a man of Liberal Education" in June. By October he was in France, receiving aid from the American Commissioners and seeking passage home. *NDAR* 8: 831, 9: 417; *Deane Papers* 2: 201, 202, 228, 241.

2. *Lyon*, subsequently Continental Navy frigate *Deane*.

"EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A PASSENGER ON BOARD THE *FLY* SLOOP,
WILLIAM BURDEN, COMMANDER, DATED TENERIFFE, DEC. 26."

"On the 25th of November,¹ about two, P.M. we were attacked within four leagues of Santa Cruz by a provincial brig, of sixteen guns and ninety-odd hands, Wm. Cole Commander, last from Bilboa, who had taken in the space of fifteen days four English vessels. After a short contest, a shot carried away part of our bowsprit, and we were obliged to strike our English ensign to the thirteen Continental stripes.² The Americans granted us our sloop's boat, with which we all, except three negro sailors, whom Capt. Cole detained, got on shore, and were most hospitably treated by Mess. Pasleys. Ten days afterwards Capt. Burden, myself, and four of our people, embarked for England on board the *Scipio* snow,

Samuel Kirkman Commander, and in lat. 35 N. long. 14 W. in the Atlantic Ocean, we fell in with an American frigate and brig,³ which had left Nantz a short time before. As we were by no means able to contend with the rebels, they soon boarded and took us. They treated us very roughly, and detained us for several days during their cruise off the Madeiras; they dispatched the *Scipio* for Boston, and put us on shore at Teneriffe, where I am now waiting with impatience for some favourable opportunity of conveyance home."

London Chronicle, 17–19 Feb. 1778.

1. The date of capture was more likely 5 Nov. See note 3, below.

2. The sloop *Fly* was libelled in Massachusetts Maritime Court, Middle District, on behalf of Capt. William Coles, Massachusetts privateer brigantine *Oliver Cromwell*, in late December. *Independent Chronicle* (Boston), 1 Jan. 1778.

3. Massachusetts privateer frigate *Mars*, Capt. Thomas Truxtun, and privateer brigantine *Fanny*, Capt. John Kendrick captured snow *Scipio* on 15 Nov. H.M.S. *Greyhound*, Capt. Archibald Dickson, recaptured *Scipio* on Georges Bank 23 Dec. Captain's Journal, H.M.S. *Greyhound*, 23 Dec., above; *American Vessels Captured by the British during the Revolution and the War of 1812: The Records of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Halifax, Nova Scotia* (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1911), pp. 74–75.

December 27

SILAS DEANE TO VIEUS AND MORRELL

Gentlemen,

Paris Decem^r 27 1777

It is some time Since I did myself the Honor of writing to you as I concluded M^r Grand informed you of what passed here I sent him the other day a Letter from Cap^t Cunningham & one from his Hostage to be forwarded to you, which I hope came duly to hand & that no further Disputes will arise about the Ransom Money. The Hostage owns that he is well treated. (I wish we could say as much for our Prisoners in England.) That he will have his Liberty on the money being paid—the Rules & Customs of Nations at War in such Cases are well known, by them we shall regulate our Conduct in this affair & it is to no purpose for the Agent to expect any other Mode of proceeding the whole Affair is exceeding simple, the Hostage is held for a certain Sum that sum paid, he shall be at Liberty to dispose of himself as he pleases, but to give other Security is out of all Rule & the Demand to say no more of it is extravagant. I can but hope the Affair will be settled without further Difficulty. I am extremely sorry for the Trouble given you on this Occasion & wish it could have been avoided. I shall ever be happy in hearing of your Welfare, my Brother has left Paris & I am not certain of his Returning before he sees America, he as well as myself have a grateful Sense of your Civilities to him during his Stay at Dunkirk—I am [&c.]

Silas Deane.

LB, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "Mess^{rs}. Vieus, Morrell & fils/Dunkirk—."

JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE

The Hon^{ble}. Arthur Lee Esq^r

Nantes 27 December 1777

Dear Sir—

I Received both your esteemed favours of 17 and 24th. Same being now before me, do note the contents—Permit me to thank you for the early information: you have been so obliging to honour me within the first, am in hopes to be in Readiness

in proper time, but from a letter of mine, lately to the Commissioner's. You would see thereby, a necessity of adopting Secressie in Your measures.¹—It gives me pleasure the bussiness of the Cutters comes under your consideration, and that am to expect your Answer on that Subject soon.—I want nothing in the line of my Purchases, but what will bear the Strictest Scrutiny, & the particulare approbation of the Hon^{ble}. Commissioners in this of M^r. Hodges & mine.—

This will be handed to you by Captain Jones of the *Ranger*; a Gentleman of Abilities & knowledge in his profession, capable of giving you a very Satisfactory account in such matters as have come under his notice, & in his department.—You will I know be pleased in his conversation, haveing nothing assuming in his deportment.—From the Instructions he is possessed of, he seems to have some dependance on geting a Vessel of some considerable force in Europe, to be provided for him by the Commissioners.—in the Service of the United States.—If any thing of this kind are concluded on, & to be Accomplished with expedition, Probably the present favourable disposition of the French Court, might lead them to make sale to the Commissioners privately, of one of those New constructed large Ships, intended to carry heavy mettall on the plan of Frigates²—Coud any such scheme be brought about, am not under apprehension, but Jones, (an interprizeing officer, disposed to Signalize himself in the Service of his Country) would give total Satisfaction which might be expected from such confidence and Mark of Favour.—Secressie in Such plan merit every attention, therefore would Recommend a vessel purchased in this way, out of the Kings Yards, to be compleated for Sea, and contracted for to be delivered at a certain distance at Sea with a certain Complement of Men, & liberty granted to Captain Jones to transfer his own Officers & Men from the *Ranger* to this New Vessel

The Commissioners Securing such Vessel, would have no occasion to make themselves Acquainted with her destination neither assume any direction—Captain Jones being already possessed of the full confidence of the American Navy Board, and at Liberty to Act & Cruize as he may see fit.—Ambition will lead a man of Spirit to do honour to his Country; distinguished in this manner, and I really conceive it practicable for the Commissioners, upon proper application, to Succeed in what might enable him to render essential Services with Reputation in a line different from money objects.—it is rather intrudeing on your patience to enlarge so much on this subject. Nevertheless, from my knowledge of your accustomed attention of promoting what tends usefull in public Services, I doubt not youl forgive my freedom—I have the honour to be [&c.]

Jn^o. Ross

N:B. Whether or not a scheme take for Captain in the line mentioned.—It will be exceedingly Prudent to dispatch his business at Paris Soon, and Permit him to Proceed on a Cruize, that his time may not be lost during his Stay on this Side the Atlantic—& by directions from the Comm^{rs}. when Ready for Sea, will join & proceed off the Coast, as part of the Convoy intended.—³

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS Am 811.2 (108). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1. Ross wrote the Commissioners on 24 Dec., advising that plans for a ship convoy to America be kept secret. In the same letter, he spoke of the arrival from Hamburg of his ship the *Henrietta* and his hope that the *Brune*, having arrived at Paimboeuf, would complete her lading by the following week. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 24: 343–44.

2. *Indien*, and another frigate building at Amsterdam.

3. On the same date, Ross wrote Silas Deane a similar letter in support of Jones's ambitions. *Deane Papers* 2: 289–91.

JOSEPH GARDOQUI & SONS TO ARTHUR LEE

Arthur Lee Esq^r
Honoured Sir

Bilbao the 27th. Decem^r 1777—

As we had the pleasing satisfaction to informe you on the 17th. Instant¹ (datte of our last salutations to you) our haveing placed to your Credit Reales 242092. & 24 mrs of Vⁿ.² we again beg leave to confirme the same with the Rest of it's Contents; & This very post haveing produced us your allways agreable & Esteemed favour of the 14th. Current have the pleasure to advice you in Contestation thereof, our haveing at present a favourable prospect of begining soon to full fill your orders. Two days agoe haveing come in aprice Schooner³ of the *Generall Mercer's* Privateer Cap^t Babson, & as he Intends to fitt her out for your quarters, have given proper dispositions for the purpose, & Rest assured good Sir that we shall send in her a very good assortment of the Articles you are pleased to prescribe in your Kind favour before us—most part of them being allready prepared in Loadge—There is also in Port the Privateer Schooner *Hawke* Jeremiah Hibbert Master with an Intent of Returning home his Cruzing time being over, therefore doubt not, shall also have Roome in her to send another assortment of your said Articles, & In short our present appearance for the purpose being now very fair, you may depend that not a moments time will be lost in executting your orders, giving you punctuall advice thereof—

We had a direct information of G. Burgoyne's defeatt, & hope that the Repports sprad about G. Howe will prove True in Expectations therefore of Receiving a Confirmation of it from your good self most Cordially Subscribe—[&c.]

J: G. & s

L, MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers, bMS AM 811.2 (109). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University

1. In MH-H, Arthur Lee Papers. The Gardoquis described their attempts to fulfill Lee's request to purchase blankets and send them to America.

2. *Real de Vellón*: a coin worth half a silver real. Mrs: maravedís, a Spanish coin, 34 of which are worth one real vellón.

3. Schooner *Sally*.

December 28 (Sunday)

GABRIEL DE SARTINE TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

à Versailles Le 28. X^{bre}. 1777.

J'ay eu l'honneur, Monsieur, de vous marquer par ma Lettre du 12. de ce mois, que je faisois prendre des éclaircissemens relativement à la note qui vous avoit été remise par M. L'ambassadeur d'angleterre concernant un Batiment anglois nommé *L'ann Susanna* amené à L'orient par un Corsaire americain,¹ et qu'on luy avoit assuré être au Pelerin où on travailloit a le défigurer, luy ayant déjà donné le nom de *La Mignone*. Suivant ce qui m'est marqué, il y a en effet aud. lieu du Pelerin près Nantes un navire nommé *La Mignone* en armement pour le Cap françois; mais ce Batiment appartient à un négociant de Nantes qui l'a acheté d'un autre négociant du meme lieu, à qui, Suivant l'acte de propriété enregistré en L'amirauté de cette ville, il avoit été vendu par un particulier de Vannes qui a pareillement justifié en être pro-

prietaire. Il n'a d'ailleurs été reconnu aucune circonstance qui puisse faire régarder ce Batiment comme étant celui qui a donné lieu a la réclamation de M. Le Vicomte de Stormont. J'ay l'honneur d'être [&c.]

de sartine

[Translation]

Versailles, 28 December 1777

I had the honor, Sir, of reporting to you in my letter of the 12th of this month that I had obtained clarifications relating to the note the English ambassador had given to you regarding an English ship called the *Ann Susanna* brought to Lorient by an American privateer.¹ The source maintained the ship was in Le Pellerin where it was being worked on to alter its appearance, having already renamed it *La Mignone*. According to what has been reported to me, there is, in fact, in the aforesaid place of Le Pellerin near Nantes, a ship named *La Mignone* being fitted out for Cap François. This ship, however, belongs to a merchant of Nantes who bought it from another merchant of the same place, to whom, according to the deed of ownership recorded at the Admiralty of this city, the ship had been sold by a private citizen of Vannes who likewise had furnished proof of ownership. In addition, there has been no known evidence that might lead one to believe this ship to be the one that gave rise to Viscount Stormont's complaint. I have the honor of being [&c.]

de sartine

L, FrPMAE, Arch. dipl., Corr. Pol. Angleterre, vol. 526, fol. 378. Addressed at foot: "M. Le C^{te} de Vergennes." Notations a head of the letter: "M de Rayneval"; "faux exposé fait à M^c Stormont au sujet du Batiment—Ann Susane amené à l'orient"; "false report made to Lord Stormont about the ship *Ann Susane* brought to L'Orient."

1. See Lord Stormont to Comte de Vergennes, [2 Dec.], above.

CAPTAIN THOMAS BELL TO SILAS DEANE

Dear Sir

Nantes y^e 28 Dec^r 1777

I rec^d your Esteemed favour of the 2^d. Instent¹ and Wold have Rought to you before this But Expecting to Sail Day After Day I put it of as Long as posibel on the 22^d. Cap^t Young and My Self Went on board² But the Wind to the Westward prevented us from Sailing and as the Wind Still Remans to the Westward and bad Weather Cap^t Young thought it Best to Return, to Nantes in Case of Aney Orders from you Might Arive you Say in your Letter the Commissioners Expect that I will Embark With Cap^t Young and in Case of Accident the Dispatches is Solely to my Care as to the dispatches I hant as yet Seen Aney of them as to What Cap^t Young Entends Dowing on that head I no Not but dare Say Cap^t Young has your Orders for that and Will Act Accordingly) you Say the Letters to M^r Morris is to my particular Care Which I have not yet Seen but make no dout Cap^t Young has Receivd them With the despatches if Cap^t Young thinks proper to Give me the despatches you may be Asshurd my best Endevors Shall not be wanting to prevent them from falling into the Enemy hands and Shall deliver them Saif on my Arivell the Inclosed is the Account of All the Disbursments of the Ship *Tartar* that I have, I have Left A Copey of the Saim With M^r Tho^s Morris as to the Account he wont Settel it With me but Says he Will Settel With you as he has Advanced M^r Pellve in Lyons the Sum of £1200 . . 0 . . 0 Livers and in Paris £72 . . 0—Which in All Makes £1272 . . — . . —Liv-

ers More then we New of Sir I am Glad to hear of things tacking A turn With you In favour of America but am Supprised to hear dayley of Brithish Ship of War being of heare and no Stop put to it I think it Wold be Dangeris for Cap^t. Young to Sail While thay are of heare Cap^t. Smith³ Sailed from hear on the 20 Instant and report Was Giving by A Vesell that Arived on the 22^d. that on the 21 A Ship Was takeing of belllle and I make no dout but it is Cap^t. Smith if that is the Case

Sir I most Sincerly Wish you health and hapiness With much Esteem [&c.]

Tho^s. Bell

L, CtHi, Silas Deane Papers. Addressed: "The Honb^{le}. Silas Deane Esq^r/Paris." Docketed: "Nantes 28th Dec^r 1777/Lett^r Cap^t Bell."

1. Silas Deane to Thomas Bell, 2 Dec. 1777, in *Deane Papers* 2: 263. See also The American Commissioners in France to Captain John Young, 2 Dec., above.

2. Continental Navy sloop *Independence*.

3. Samuel Smith, in *Hancock and Adams*.

December 29

JOHN FLETCHER TO LORD WEYMOUTH

To the Right Hon^{ble}: Lord Visco^t: Weymouth.

May it please your Lordship—

[*London*]

I humbly beg Leave to represent to you on the Behalf of my Friend M^r: John Goss of Teingmouth in the County of Devon Owner of the good Ship or Vessel called the *Brittania*, John Wood late Commander, that the said Ship was laden at Newfoundland with Cod-Fish and Oil for a Market in Spain or Portugal; that in the prosecution of the Voyage the said Ship was taken by an American privateer,¹ the Captain of which took out the *Brittania*'s Crew and substituted some of his own people appointing one John Allen Commander, who carried the said Ship into S^t: Sebastian's in the Kingdom of Spain under American Colours and reported the same as come from Newberry in North America, and the Cargo as American Property, but fortunately there happened to be in the same place a Capt: John Hooper Master of another Ship just arrived from Newfoundland, who sail'd with the *Brittania* under the same Convoy and had been in Company with her some few Days before, this Capt: Hooper knew the *Brittania* to be the property of M^r: John Goss, and being acquainted with the Circumstances under which she was brought into that port went to the Commandant and acquainted him that the said Ship was falsely reported, where upon the Commandant committed the American Captain and Crew to prison on the Declaration and Affidavit of Capt: Hooper and detained the *Brittania* and Cargo till further Enquiry should be made into the Matter—I humbly therefore entreat your Lordship to cause this Case to be stated to his Majesty's Minister at the Court of Madrid, and to enforce the Restitution of the said Ship and Cargo to my Friend M^r: John Goss or to whomsoever he shall appoint to take Charge of the same—I have the Honour to be [&c.]

29th Dec^r: 1777

Jn Fletcher

Broad Street

L, UKLPR, S.P. Foreign 94/204, 404–5. Addressed: "To the Right hon^{ble}: Lord Viscount Weymouth/Secretary of State for the Southern Department." Docketed: "Broad Street 29 Dec^r: 1777/M^r Fletcher/R. 30th."

1. Taken by Massachusetts privateer *Hawke*, Jeremiah Hibbert.

JACQUES-ALEXANDRE GOURLADE AND PIERRE-ANDRÉ MONTIGNY DE
MONPLAISIR TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Messieurs

L'Orient Le 29^{eme}. X^{re}. 1777

Nous nous empressons de vous informer que les deux frégates du congrès Le *Raleigh* & L'*Alfred*, ainsi que le Shloup le *Mars*¹ sont appareillés cet après midy, Sur les Trois heures avec un Bon vent de nord est qui promet de favoriser Beaucoup leurs projets.

Nous ne devons pas vous Laisser ignorer qu'elles Sont accompagniér de La frégatte Du Roi La *Silphyde* dont Le Capitaine a promis A Messieurs Thompson et Hinman de Les Précéder et de Leurs annoncer par Les Signaux convenus tout ce qu'il decouvrirait en avant. personne ne désire plus de Succès que nous à Ces Deux frégates; nous N'Avons Rien négligé pour Leur être utiles pendant leur Sejour ici. nous aurons L'honneur de vous Rémètte par le premier Courier Le Compte de leurs dépenses.

M^e Moyland² est arrivé ici en Bonne Santé. il nous tardait d'Avoir la Satisfaction de le Connaitre & de le voir, nous nous flattons que nous acquererons Son amitié comme Son estime. Les V^{aux}. Le *Beaumont* & L'*Anonime* Sont en Rade avec L'intention d'Appareiller demain. Nous Sommes [&c.]

Gourlade
de Monplaisir

[Translation]

Gentlemen:

L'Orient, 29 December 1777

We hasten to inform you that the two Congress frigates, the *Raleigh* and the *Alfred*, as well as the sloop the *Mars*¹ set sail this afternoon around three o'clock with a favorable wind from the northeast which gives promise of being of great assistance in their plans.

We should not leave you ignorant of the fact that they are accompanied by the king's frigate La *Silphyde*, whose captain promised Messrs. Thompson and Hinman that he would precede them and announce to them by signals agreed upon everything that he should discover ahead. No one desires success for the two frigates more earnestly than we do. We have neglected nothing for their convenience during their sojourn here. We shall have the honor to remit to you by the first courier their expense account. Mr. Moylan² arrived here in good health. We were anxious to have the satisfaction of knowing and seeing him. We flatter ourselves in believing we shall acquire both his friendship and esteem. The vessels Le *Beaumont* and L' *Anonime* are at anchor in the roads with the intention of setting sail tomorrow. We are [&c.]

Gourlade
de Monplaisir

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 7, 191. Addressed at the foot: "A Messieurs les députés/du congrès/A Paris." Docketed: "L'Orient 29^e Decem^r 1777/Letter from Goularde &c/&c."

1. James Moylan's letter to the commissioners of the same date gives the sloop *Mars*'s master's name as Captain Holmes. Ibid.

2. For the purpose of Moylan's visit to L'Orient, see John Ross to Silas Deane, 16 Dec., note 2, above.

CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Gen^{ts}

Lorient—[Dec. 29, 1777]

I thot' before this to have given you an acc^t. of our departure—nothing Hinders but wind & weather—shall forward the acc^{ts}. &c. at my Departure, and write you fully;

I recivd M^r Franklines Inclosing M^r Boudiens;¹ also a Letter from M^r Lee Informing of a Spy:s being in L.orient; the time of sailing and the way I intend to go is a matter that remains Intirly with myself therefore you must not expect to hear of our sail^s until some time after our departure; a Frigate and a 74 has been seen off Bell Isle; I have a proper Look out for them by a small vesel employd for the Purpos; when I think a fit opportunity they shant stop us (except they anchor in the Harbours mouth which I hope will be the Case) to see how Tamely the French would bear with it—Since your application to m^d Sartine the Commisary here has given us Leave to Command our own ships—all kindness and Condisendcion to the Highest degree. But personal Civilities will not atone with me for an Insult offerd to the States in my person as their officer—But as “D^r Franklin says in his Letter” all begins to go well and I belive for the future we shall have Civeler Usage—I am [&c.]

Tho^s Thompson

L, PPAmP, Benjamin Franklin Papers. Addressed at foot of last page: “To the Hon^l the Commissioners/Benjⁿ Franklin, Silas Dean, & Arth^r Lee Esq^r.” Docketed: “Cap^t Thompson L’Orient.” The date supplied is that of *Alfred’s* and *Raleigh’s* sailing.

1. Baudouin, an agent Sartine used occasionally as an intermediary with the Americans. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* 25: 348.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU DE KERGARIOU TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

j’ay eu L’honneur de vous rendre compte de la baye de quiberon de ma Sortie pour rejoindre Les fregattes angloises et de toutes Les particularités de ma navigation avec elles, jusqu’au moment ou Les vents forcés et contraires Les ont obligés de Relacher et mouiller sous belle-isle.

Dans La nuitte du 25 au 26 Les vents venus de la partie du nord elles ont appareillées et des que Le jour me La permis j’ay mis aussi sous voile et Les ai Suivi en dehors de belle isle. Les vents favorables, ces batiments se Sont bientot éloignés de la vue de nos côtes et Les ayant moi meme perdu de vue, je Suis Revenus Sur mes pas et ay passé Le jours dehors, pendant ces 24 heures Les vents n’ayants Eprouver aucun changement on peut etre assuré que ces fregattes ont Continuées Leur Route.

En me Raprochant de belle-isle, j’ay Eu connaissance d’un batiment grecié En Lougre que je prenois pour un des notres. Sa manœuvre Lorsque j’ay voulu me rallier a lui ma prouvê qu’il etoit corsaire etranger. La nuitte se faisoit et je n’ay pu continuer à le chasser, j’ay même Lieu de penser qu’il marchoit aussi bien que ma fregatte. Dans La nuitte je Suis venu mouiller aux cardinaux et au jours reverant vien En dehors de belle-isle j’ay fait Route pour La riviere de nantes ou j’ay Entré Le Soir, je me flattois y trouver vos ordres concernans Les matelots francois que j’ay Retiré du Corsaire insurgent L’*indépendance*;¹ M^r de Rozily qui a ma priere, tenoit de depuis mon depart La Station de St nazaire m’a dit n’avoir rien reçu de vous, Monseigneur, n’y a son adresse n’y a la mienne concernant notre mission.

je Reçois des ordres du M^r Le Comte d’orvilliers pour que j’aye a me joindre a La Corvette La *curieuse* sous belle-isle, m’y Etablir En croisiere pour En Eloingner plusieurs corsaires anglois dont on y a eu connoissance. Le tems me permettant de sortir aujourd’huy je profiteray de la marée pour mettre sous voile

par Le Raport de l'officier commandant a belle-isle, qu'on menoire il me paroît quil Sert pretté genereusement aux besoins des corsaires et que c'est leur donner bien des facilités pour tenir Leur croisiere Sur nos côtes, Si on Leur y Refusoit ces secours et même La Relache En mauvais tems, ce Seul ordre Les contraindroient de Sen Ecarter, je vais tacher de Les joindre et Leur notifiray de S'eloigner conformement a vos ordres.

Les frégattes angloises venues prendres Les deux batiments du commerce S'appellent L'une La *Minerve* commandée par C^e. Stot et l'autre La *thetis* cap^e gell, ces deux frégattes portent 26 canons de 12 En batterie et 6 canons de gaillard.² La fregatte La *danaé* pouvoit porter une pareille artillerie Si nous avions des canons des mêmes proportions que Les anglois, plus courts que Les canons de 8 que j'ay abord, Leur batterie par ce moien Est plus aisée a Servir, ces fregattes n'étant cependant plus Larges que Les notres.

La frégatte La *minerve* avoit une marche Superieure et le Capitaine L'attribue a son doublage de Cuivre, La *thetis* qui netest pas ainsi doublée marchait mal et j'avois autant davantage sur elle que L'autre En avait sur moi. ces officiers anglois avec Lesquels j'ayvecu, comme je vous L'ai mandé, Recherchant dans Les procedés d'honneteté, des moiens de Les suivre sans affectation, tel que me Le prescrivait mes instructions, m'ont dits avec une Espece d'affectation quils avaient 15 vaisseaux ou frégattes En croisiere du cap finistere aux sorlaingues et point dans L'interieur du golphe. dailleurs ils m'ont parus S'attendre a la perte totale de L'amerique dapres Les nouvelles quils En avoient Recus.

je vais Encore prier M^e de Rozily de tenir En Station dans La Riviere et je lui Remet Les 7 francais qui se sont Reclamés du Corsaire insurgent, ne Sachant ou ma croisier me conduira et la destination que vous En ordonnerer, ainsi M^e de Rozily sera a même de faire Executer vos ordres a leur Egard. . . . je Suis [&c.]

abord de la *danaé* ce 29 X^{bre} 1777

Kergariou

a St nazaire par guerande.

[Translation]

My Lord

I had the honor of reporting to you, from Quiberon Bay, about my departure to join up with the English frigates and about all the details regarding my sailing with them, until the time when contrary and high winds forced them to put into port and to lie at anchor in the lee of Belle Île.

During the night of the 25th to the 26th, the wind blowing from the north quarter, the English frigates weighed anchor, and as soon as daybreak allowed me to do it, I set sail and followed them away from Belle Île. Sailing under favorable winds, these ships were soon out of sight of our coast; having myself lost sight of them, I retraced my course and spent the day outside; during these 24 hours, the winds having undergone no change in direction, it is certain these frigates had continued on their course.

While again approaching Belle Île, I observed a ship, rigged like a lugger, which I took to be one of ours. Its able maneuvering when I tried to catch up with it proved to me that it was a foreign privateer. Since it was getting dark, I could not continue after the ship, and I even had reason to believe that the ship was sailing as well as my frigate. During the night I came to anchor at the Cardinaux; at daybreak, seeing nothing outside Belle Île, I set a course for the Nantes River where I arrived in the evening. I was pleased to find there your orders concerning the French sailors I had taken off the enemy privateer *Independence*.¹ M. de Rozily, who, at my request, was

since my departure manning the St. Nazaire station, told me he had received nothing from you, my Lord, either addressed to him or to me regarding our mission.

I received orders from Comte d'Orvilliers to join up with the corvette *La Curieuse* to the leeward of Belle Ile, and to establish myself cruising about in order to rid it of several English privateers that we knew were there. Since the weather makes it possible for me to leave today, I shall take advantage of the tide to set sail.

It appeared from the report of Belle Ile's commanding officer, which was brought to me, he had generously responded to the needs of the privateers and had made available to them many accommodations to keep them on our coasts. If help were to be refused them, or even refusing to allow them to enter a harbor during bad weather, this order alone would force them to move away. I shall try to catch up with them to tell them to move away in accordance with your orders. The two English frigates came to take the two merchant ships, one was called the *Minerva*, commanded by Captain Stott, and the other the *Thetis*, commanded by Captain Gell.² The two frigates carry 26 12-pounders and 6 guns on the quarter-deck. The frigate *Danae* could carry a similar amount of armament, if we were to have guns of the same size as the English, shorter than the 8-pounders I have on board. Their guns are much easier to handle in action. These frigates are no longer than ours. The frigate *Minerva* was faster, which the captain attributed to his copper sheathing. The *Thetis*, which was not so sheathed, sailed badly and I had as much an advantage over the frigate as the other had over me. The English officers among whom I came, as I reported to you, as I was trying in a straightforward manner to find ways to follow them without pretence, as my instructions stipulated, told me with great affectation that they had 15 ships of the line or frigates cruising from Cape Finistere to the Scilly Islands and stationed within the gulf. In addition, they appeared to me to expect the total loss of America, according to the news they had received about it.

I shall ask M. Rozily to remain on station in the river and I have turned over to him the seven Frenchmen who were reclaimed from the insurgent privateer, not knowing where my cruising will take me, nor the destination you will order for it, thus M. de Rozily will be in a position to have your orders carried out concerning them. . . . I am [&c.]

On board the *Danaé*, 29 December 1777
at St. Nazaire-par-Guérande.

Kergariou

L, FrPNA, Marine B⁴ 129, fol. 265–66.

1. See Lieutenant de Vaisseau de Kergariou to Gabriel de Sartine, 18 Dec., above.

2. H.M.S. *Minerva*, Capt. John Stott, and H.M.S. *Thetis*, Capt. John Gell, had orders to convoy back to England the Jamaicamen *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*, American prizes that had been restored to their owners by the French king. See Lords of the Admiralty to Captain John Stott, R.N., 24 Nov., above.

December 30

COMMISSIONERS FOR SICK AND HURT SEAMEN TO PHILIP STEPHENS

(A Copy)

Sir

Office for Sick & Hurt
Seamen 30th Dec^r: 1777.

We desire you will please to acquaint the R^t H^{bt}: the Lords Comm^{rs}: of the Admiralty, that the Keeper & Agent of the Prison at Forton, has informed us by his

Letter of the 28th Instant "that M^r. Huish an Attourney of that Town had called upon him & told him, that he had seen M^r. Missing, a Barrister at Law of Titchfield who had informed him that he had received Orders in the way of his profession, & if any Person died in the confining Hold, the Keeper & Agent would be Indicted for Murder; and that he had sent to the Coroner not to suffer any Person to be buried out of the Prison without taking an Inquest" And we beg leave upon this occasion to observe.

That what is called the confining Hold, is a Room divided off from an Apartment, the whole of which wou'd be otherwise filled up, as a common Ward, and the Prisoners lie upon Guard Beds, instead of Hammocks, and Provisions are made for this Room being properly Ventilated, and not becoming unwholesome, and no Prisoner has hitherto died in the confining Hold nor is there any probability of its happening in future, except in the case of sudden Death, as this part of the Prison, as well as every other is visited every Day by the Surgeon in order that such Prisoners, as are found, upon his Examination, Objects of it, may be received into the Sick Apartment; And he has particular Orders, that when any Men are sent from the confining Hold to the Sick Apartment, to report to Us the Nature of their Disorders, that proper directions may be given if necessary, for removing any other Prisoners that be remaining in that place; and for purifying it.

That with respect to the Coroners Inquest being had upon such Prisoners as may hereafter die in the Prisons, tho' this was never practiced with regard to Prisoners of War under our Care, We are humbly of opinion, that as such a precaution may be the means of preventing unnecessary trouble & expence by Prosecutions which may be commenced ignorantly or from Malevolent Motives; and especially as, if We are not mistaken, it is a part of the Coroners Duty, & it is incumbent on the Keeper of every Goal, to give Notice to him of any Deaths happening in It, it may be very proper that the respective, and Agents may have Instructions to give such Notice in case of any Deaths.¹ We are [&c.]

J Bell
Walter Farquharson
Vincent Corbett

Copy, UKLPR, S.P. Domestic (Naval) 42/51, 281–84. Docketed: "In the Lords of the Admiralty's/Jan'yry 3^d 1778." The copy was actually an enclosure to the Lords of the Admiralty's letter to the Earl of Suffolk of 2 Jan. 1778.

1. The Lords Commissioners ordered the Commissioners for Sick and Hurt Seamen to notify the Keeper and Agent of Forton Prison that he was to notify the local coroner in case of a prisoner's death, as was the practice in other jails. Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to the Earl of Suffolk, 2 Jan. 1778, *ibid.*, fol. 281.

NEW-LLOYD'S LIST (LONDON),
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1777

The *Minehead*, Blackstone, from N. foundland to Bilboa, is taken by the *General Mercer* Privateer, Capt. Babson, and carried into St. Andero.

The *Savannah*, Johnston, from Georgia for Nantz, with Rice and Indigio, is taken and sent into Plymouth by the *P. of Wales* M. W. Capt. Barrington.

LORD NORTH TO THE EARL OF SANDWICH

Bushey Park, 30th December 1777.

My dear Lord—I have received your letter and will consider the contents of it fully before Thursday. The question seems to be whether our information is clear and positive enough to justify or require an explanation with the Court of France. Our intelligencer has, in the course of this last year and a half, sent us many pieces of information which have proved true and some which have not turned out according to his report. He probably always spoke to the best of his knowledge, but in one or two instances he has been mistaken because he was misinformed. Many very important advices from him have since been confirmed to us in a very satisfactory manner from other quarters; however, I own I cannot help thinking him mistaken in some degree as to some of the particulars in the paper of secret intelligence which I sent to you.

When the French go the length of sending convoys to protect American ships, they must be ready for war and indifferent how soon it begins; as I rather think they would choose to defer it a few months longer, this report may have arisen from a promise of the French Court which they do not mean to keep, as they have more than once in the course of the last year deceived the Americans by false hopes.¹

I shall stay here tomorrow; and if your Lordship and Sir Hugh Palliser have any commands with me you will find me at this place, but as I have appointed Mr Jenkinson upon business I will not trouble your Lordship unless you have any commands for me. I am, my dear Lord [&c.],

North

The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1771–1782, edited by G. R. Barries and J. H. Owen, 4 vols. ([London]: Navy Records Society, 1932–38), 1: 261–62.

1. For the French court's promise to provide a convoy for the American supply ships, see the American Commissioners in France to the Continental Foreign Affairs Committee, 18 Dec., above.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS IN FRANCE

Hon^{ble} Gentlemen.(N^o 109)Nantes Decem^r 30. 1777.

Your Favour of the 27th Inst^l was handed to me last Evening by my good Friend M^r Carmichael. I am extremely sorry to inform you that all the proposed measures will be useless, as the Ships in Question² sailed at least 8 days ago under Convoy of a french & an english Frigate. I went however to M^r Montaudouin & from him immediately to the Lieut. General of the Admiralty; the Certainty of their Departure and the Impossibility of doing any Service in the affair were confirmed to me by the Latter. I therefore had only to express my thanks for their good Disposition & to lament that the Application was too late.—

I attempted yesterday to clear out the *Lion* but found that in the permission which I thought included all the Vessells this Ship was left out & she being under an arrest by name it could not be done. I must therefore hope that when the final orders come, this particular permission will come also. I must in the mean time inform you that finding it impossible to keep our men any Longer as they were, especially as we have made an addition of about 20 to the number I have permitted them all to

go on board the Ship, & order'd her immediately down to S^t Nazare where she will wait the last Word.—

A Man arriving from Bell Isle yesterday with News that our Enemies were cruising near the Coast in great numbers and that Cap^t Smith³ who went out about a Week ago was taken it is thought not adviseable for Cap^t Young to sail. Inclosed is a Copy of the Declaration⁴ which is made & which I have had registered in the Admiralty, a Copy of which I have the authority of the Chief Judge to assure you, is this Day transmitted by him to the ministry: An authenticated Extract I could not obtain as in such Cases is forbid.—I have the honor to be [&c.]

Jon^a Williams J

PS my last desired a Credit with M^r Grand for 200.000 Livres more which I hope you have been pleased to grant.—

L, ViU, Lee Family Papers. Addressed: "The Honorable/The Commissioners of/The United States." Docketed: "Dec^r 30th 1777/J Williams Letter"; "*Lion*, Young, Credit desired for 200,000^{li}"; "N^o 109."

1. Silas Deane to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 27 Dec. See note 2 to The American Commissioners in France to Comte de Vergennes, 26 Dec., above.

2. *Clarendon* and *Hanover Planter*.

3. Samuel Smith, *Hancock and Adams*.

4. "Acc^t of the Voyage of the Chasse Marree," a statement in French by Capt. Dionie of the coasting vessel *St. Jean Baptiste* that on 26 Dec. there were at Belle Ile two vessels of 36 guns, two of 26, and an armed sloop, all English, and that pilots reported cruising near the island three warships as well as a boat armed with 12 guns, and a 24-gun schooner, both English. ViU, Lee Family Papers, 30 Dec. 1777.

December 31

THE DAILY ADVERTISER (LONDON), WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1777

London.

Capt. Sutton, of the *Proserpine*, hath taken and brought into Portsmouth a French Schooner, called the *Jeune Nannett*, having a Cargo the Produce of America, viz. Tobacco and Staves.

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU LE BRETON DE RANSANNE TO GABRIEL DE SARTINE

[Extract]

Monseigneur

J'ai reçu Le vingt-huit Les ordres que vous m'avez Envoyé en Port-Louis pour me rendre ici. j'En Suis parti Le vingt-neuf & j'ai mouillé En rade De Brest Le Trente. Les Deux batiments insurgents¹ qui etoient dans La rivière de L'Orient Sont Sortis avec moi & m'ont demandé La permission de me Suivre jusqu'à La pointe du Bec du raz. Je Le Leur ai accordé. à Deux heures après minuit, ne me faisant plus qu'à Trois Lieuës de ce passage, j'ai été obligé de mettre En Travers En attendant Le jour pour donner dedans. Pour Lors Les Deux Bostoniens m'ont abandonné & pris Le Large. . . . J'ai L'honneur D'Être [&c.]

le breton de Ransanne

À Bord De La *Sylphide* En rade de Brest Le 31 Decembre 1777.

[Translation]

My Lord

I received on the twenty-eighth the orders you sent to Port-Louis for me to come here. I left the twenty-ninth and anchored in the harbor at Brest the thirtieth. The two insurgent ships¹ that were in the river at L'Orient left with me and asked if they could follow me up to the Point du Raz, and I agreed to this. Two hours after midnight, after having made no more than three leagues of this passage, I was forced to bring the ship to, waiting for daylight to go in. At this point, the two Bostonians left me and took to the open sea. . . . I have the honor of being [&c.]

le breton de Ransanne

On board *La Sylphide* in the harbor of Brest, 31 Decembre 1777.

L, FrPNA, Marine B¹ 129, fol. 284. Notations at head of first page: "approver Sa Conduite."; "armament a Brest M le Breton de Ransanne le 31. X^{bre}. 1777"; "Renvoy du 5 Vau soit"; "Rep le 9. Janvier 1778."; "approve his management"; "Brest Station, M. le Breton de Ransanne, 31 Dec. 1777"; "Return of the 5 ships"; "Answered 9 Jan. 1778."

1. Continental Navy ship *Alfred*, Elisha Hinman, and Continental Navy frigate *Raleigh*, Thomas Thompson.